



NEWS RELEASE

from

AICUP

Association of Independent Colleges
and Universities of Pennsylvania

101 North Front Street | Harrisburg, PA 17101 | www.aicup.org

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CONTACT: DONNA KLINGER
717.232.8649 x 232
klinger@aicup.org

INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN ERIE AND NORTHWEST CONTRIBUTE \$784 MILLION TO PENNSYLVANIA'S ECONOMY

HARRISBURG, March 29, 2016 — Independent colleges and universities in Erie and Northwestern Pennsylvania produced 2,901 jobs and had a total economic impact of \$784 million in 2014.

“As the numbers show, the six independent colleges and universities in Erie and the Northwest play an important role in the regional economy, creating jobs, partnerships and business opportunities for Western Pennsylvanians,” said Don Francis, president of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania, which conducted the study.

AICUP surveyed its member colleges and universities and examined U.S. Department of Education data and other sources to arrive at an impact for Erie and the Northwest of \$784 million in economic benefit provided by the region’s six independent colleges and universities. Statewide independent colleges and universities in more than 60 communities contribute \$17.97 billion to Pennsylvania’s economy.

Erie and Northwestern Pennsylvania independent colleges and universities include Allegheny College, Gannon University, Grove City College, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Mercyhurst University and Thiel College.

Despite economic instability in the five years since AICUP last measured the economic impact of independent colleges and universities, the sector remains the fourth ranked private sector payroll in Pennsylvania. Only corporate management offices, hospitals and physician offices exceed independent colleges and universities in payroll.

“As our enrollment has grown to nearly 290,000 students—including large numbers of out-of-state and international students—we have weathered the recession better than most private industries and continue to offer good, family-sustaining jobs with benefits,” Francis said.

Among the findings:

- Independent colleges and universities in Erie and the Northwest directly purchased goods and services from the state's businesses totaling \$330 million in 2014. Statewide the sector spends \$6.8 billion annually on goods and services. The overall statewide economic impact of this spending is \$9.6 billion.
- Students attending independent colleges and universities in Erie and the Northwest directly spend \$50 million annually, benefiting book publishers, general merchandise stores, grocery and convenience stores, real estate rentals, amusement and recreation establishments, restaurants, clothing stores, telecommunications and utilities, furniture and home furnishing stores, wholesale trade industries and other businesses. Across the state, independent sector students spend \$1 billion annually or \$2.7 million a day at local Pennsylvania businesses. The total economic impact of this spending is \$1.7 billion.
- Independent colleges and universities in Erie and the Northwest provide 2,901 jobs and pay \$161 million in wages. Statewide independent colleges and universities pump \$5.67 billion in salary and wage dollars into Pennsylvania's economy by employing 78,764 residents, besting the annual payrolls of law firms, engineering service firms, commercial banks, temporary help businesses, pharmacy/drug wholesalers and full-service restaurants.
- Employees of Pennsylvania's independent higher education sector pay \$167 million annually in state income taxes and \$136 million in taxes to local governments yearly.
- Pennsylvania's independent colleges and universities spend over \$500 million annually on construction and renovation projects.
- In recent years, independent colleges and universities have built theaters, bookstores, mixed student housing, retail shopping and administrative offices to revitalize depressed downtown districts.

"Independent higher education continues to grow in importance as an industry, as an employer, and as an ignitor of prosperity in towns throughout Pennsylvania," Francis said. "The independent higher education sector also continues to have enormous economic impact by developing human capital for the Commonwealth's workforce."

The independent higher education sector is the largest of Pennsylvania's four sectors of higher education. Nearly 290,000 students attend independent colleges and universities in the state, accounting for 42 percent of all enrollments and 49 percent of degrees awarded in the Commonwealth.

A brochure containing the major findings in the report is on AICUP's website (www.aicup.org).

The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP), the only statewide organization that serves exclusively the interests of private higher education within the Commonwealth, exists to complement and support the work of campus leaders. With a membership of 88 private colleges and universities within Pennsylvania, the Association provides a variety of services and programs tailored specifically to the needs and situation of independent higher education. A list of AICUP's member colleges and universities is included on its website at www.aicup.org.

NOTE: Brochure attached.

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