



# NEWS RELEASE

*from*

## AICUP

Association of Independent Colleges  
and Universities of Pennsylvania

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **AICUP HONORS GOV. ED RENDELL FOR EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDEPENDENT HIGHER EDUCATION IN PA**

**HARRISBURG, March 24, 2015** -- The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP) presented its annual Ben Franklin Medal for Distinguished Achievement on Behalf of Higher Education to former Governor Ed Rendell last night at the Harrisburg Hilton. The Benjamin Franklin Medal is awarded each year during AICUP's Annual Meeting to individuals or organizations that have made an extraordinary impact on Pennsylvania's colleges and universities.

In a statement released to the press, AICUP President Dr. Don Francis thanked Governor Rendell for his ongoing commitment to independent higher education in the Commonwealth.

"Governor Rendell has been a passionate and vocal advocate for higher education for many years. More than any governor in recent memory, he recognized the critical role colleges and universities play in the economic life of their regions, and he developed programs to stimulate that impact," Francis said. "The positive effects of his work are still evidenced in the independent higher education sector today, as our colleges and universities continue to grow and serve as economic drivers for their communities. His pioneering leadership has enabled our schools to not just exist, but to thrive, which they will continue to do for years to come."

Edward G. Rendell served as governor of Pennsylvania from 2003 to 2011. During his tenure and beyond, he spearheaded numerous state programs that have allowed colleges and universities to stimulate economic development in their local communities, serving as a vital asset that supports business, creates jobs and generates revenue. He also championed Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) funding for independent colleges and universities and encouraged the growth of dual enrollment programs in the Commonwealth.

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Governor Rendell, an alumni of the University of Pennsylvania and Villanova Law School, is the 24<sup>th</sup> recipient of the Ben Franklin Medal for Distinguished Achievement on Behalf of Higher Education, an award that has been given by AICUP to outstanding government leaders annually since 1992.

The Association of Independent Colleges & 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 89 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](http://www.aicup.org).

**NOTE: Photo attached.**

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