

## 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GESU SYMPOSIUM ON TRANSFORMING INNER-CITY EDUCATION

November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010  
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

**Panelists:** Christine S. Beck, *President and CEO, Gesu School*  
Wanda D. Bigham, Ph.D., *Consultant to Higher Education and Pre-Collegiate Institutions, Former Assistant General Secretary for Schools, Colleges, and Universities for The United Methodist Church*  
John Bridgeland, *President and CEO, Civic Enterprises*  
George W. Bur, SJ, *President, St. Joseph's Preparatory School*  
Eric J. Furda, Ph.D., *Dean of Admissions, University of Pennsylvania*  
Richard Kahlenberg, *Senior Fellow, The Century Foundation*

**Moderator:** John J. DiIulio, Jr. Ph.D., *Frederic Fox Leadership Professor of Politics, Religion and Civil Society; Professor of Political Science; & Director of the Robert A. Fox Leadership Program, University of Pennsylvania.*

### TRANSCRIPTION OF PROCEEDINGS

#### **PERFORMANCE BY THE GESU GOSPEL CHOIR DIRECTED BY H. L. RATLIFF**

#### **TAAHIRA, GESU SCHOOL STUDENT:**

Good afternoon everyone. Welcome to Gesu's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium. It is an honor and a pleasure to be here and speak to you today. My name is Taahira \_\_\_\_ and I'm in the eighth grade. I have been attending Gesu School since I was four years old. The teachers and faculty here are wonderful! It really feels like my second home. My favorite subject in school has always been math. When I'm not doing school work, I enjoy reading, writing stories, swimming, and singing along to my favorite songs. Gesu offers many opportunities to its students. I'm a member of the Gospel Choir, the Forensics Team, the Akybra Theater Project, and Student Council. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I had the opportunity to compete in West Catholic's Academic Challenge. My teammates and I won first place in the English category. After [Applause]...thank you.

After graduating from Gesu, two of my choices for high school are the Baldwin School and Merion Mercy Academy. [Applause] For college, I'd like to attend Drexel University or Jefferson Medical College. My goal is to become a pediatrician or a biomedical engineer. I love Gesu and I am proud to be a student here. Thank you, and have a great day.

The chairman of our board, Mr. Gordon Cooney, will now introduce our panelists.

**GORDON COONEY:**

Thank you, Taahira, for giving us a clear reminder for why we're all here today. I also want to welcome you to Gesu's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on Transforming Inner-City Education. I was thinking earlier in the day that I really can't remember a time when this issue, inner-city education, has had more of a national focus than it does today. More and more people are coming to understand that transforming inner-city education is not only an issue of social justice, but it's an important issue for the future of our country. Today's focus is closing the college gap and we've assembled today an outstanding panel of seven thought leaders on this subject. The moderator today is Dr. John DiIulio. As many of you know, Dr. DiIulio is the Frederic Fox Leadership Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, where he heads the Fox Leadership Program. He previously taught at Princeton and was a Research Center Director. He's the author of over a dozen books and he founded nationally recognized programs to reduce youth violence, promote literacy, and mentor children of prisoners. Dr. DiIulio served as the first Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, and he has been involved with Gesu since 1997. Welcome, Dr. DiIulio.

**DR. JOHN DI IULIO:**

Thank you.

**GORDON COONEY:**

Chris Beck, right here to my right, is the President and CEO of Gesu School, a position she's held since 2003, and before being the President and CEO, Chris was a long-time member of Gesu's board. Chris co-founded the Arthur Ashe Tennis and Education Center in Philadelphia, and serves on it's advisory board. She's received numerous and local awards including most recently the 2010 Immaculata Medal from Immaculata University. Chris...

*[APPLAUSE]*

Dr. Wanda Bigham, at the end of the table, is a consultant to higher education and pre-collegiate institutions, regarding leadership, strategic planning, development, international education and exchanges, and governance. She served in a number of positions on the General Board of Higher Education of the United Methodist Church. In addition to working at numerous colleges and universities in various leadership positions, Dr. Bigham was the president of Huntington College, and the president of Marycrest College for a number of years. She's currently the president of the board of the National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Methodist Church, the Asia Pacific Federation of Christian Schools, and the University Senate of the United Methodist Church. Dr. Bigham, welcome.

*[APPLAUSE]*

John Bridgeland, is CEO of Civic Enterprises. He is a key leader in research and policy on America's high school dropout crisis, and has authored numerous reports on that issue. Previously, Mr. Bridgeland was the Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council and the USA Freedom Corps, and he currently sits on twelve non-profit boards. He was selected as the Non-Profit Time's Executive of the Year for co-leading Service Nation. Mr. Bridgeland, welcome.

[APPLAUSE]

Father George Bur, who I think everybody here knows, is the 31<sup>st</sup> President of Saint Joseph's Prep. Father Bur served Gesu School first as assistant pastor and as pastor of the Gesu Parish, and then as the president of Gesu School from 1993 until 2003. Father Bur managed the transition of the Archdiocesan Gesu School to its current status as an independent institution, establishing a governing board and a development program. Father Bur was then appointed to Director of the Jesuit Community at Saint Joseph University. Father Bur...

[APPLAUSE]

Eric Furda, was appointed Dean of Admissions at the University of Pennsylvania in 2008. He previously served as Vice President for Alumni Relations and Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Columbia University. Dean Furda, welcome.

[APPLAUSE]

Richard Kahlenberg, is the Senior Fellow of The Century Foundation, and previously a Fellow at The Center for National Policy. He writes about education, equal opportunity, and Civil Rights. He's a visiting Associate Professor of Constitutional Law at George Washington University and he is a Legislative Assistant to Senator Charles Robb from Virginia. He's the author of four books and the editor of seven Century Foundation books. He's written numerous articles for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *New Republic*, and others and has also appeared on numerous network television programs. Welcome.

[APPLAUSE]

We have an absolutely great panel today, and I know that Dr. DiIulio will do a tremendous job moderating this group and with that, I turn it over to you, John.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

Thank you, Mister Chairman. Well, welcome, and thank you for your kind introductions. Good afternoon, everybody.

**AUDIENCE:**

Good afternoon.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

We do church here. Good afternoon.

[LAUGHTER]

There you go, okay. I can't believe that a year has passed since our last Gesu symposium, but I am proud to report since last year, I've lost 23 pounds.

[LAUGHTER]

Now I've gained 41...

[LAUGHTER]

But I like, I'm a social scientist, so I like to sort of...on average if you take...anyway. I couldn't resist, I'm sorry.

[LAUGHTER]

I have to recycle that joke. But it's a blast being here. It always is, and today's topic, "Closing the College Gap: What Can Universities, Schools, and Communities Do?" is a big and important one, so I just want to frame it out for us, and then get on to the real show, which is our panelists. The first thing to be said about this topic is that there are lots and lots of people right here headquartered in metropolitan Philadelphia, who are addressing it in various ways, and that's just not true in every major metropolis. But we're blessed to have it be true here in Philadelphia, and I'm talking about a wide range of groups. I don't know if I haven't seen a Bob Jaeger here, there is and Carrie Stavrakos at the Partners for Sacred Places, which is the country's leading organization dedicated to the proper use and productive use of historic religious properties, the ultimate sacred places, civic purposes organization. They're a part of the solution. The Gesu, we're going to be hearing more about that in a moment from Chris. But as we know, there are many great schools fighting the good fight, trying to get kids in a position who are truly disadvantaged, to go through elementary school and through high school and go on to graduate from college. LaSalle Academy, another great independent Catholic school in the city, like the Gesu, is part of that solution.

I think I saw some of my friends from Saint Joseph's University, from the ACE Program, the Alliance for Catholic Education. Yes, there they are, Professor Jeannie Brady, et al, there, and putting young college graduates, some of them, several of them former Gesu students I'm proud to say, into Catholic schools to do two years of teaching service while earning a masters degree. They're a part of it. We'll hear in due course from my friend

and colleague...well, this time of year he's everybody's friend, Dean Furda, at Penn Admissions, and this...*Philadelphia Magazine* would like to further comment. We'll put that aside for now. But you know, the University of Pennsylvania, and Drexel, and Saint Joe's and...all the universities, I think, and colleges in our metropolis are interested in closing the college gap.

But as you can tell from just your own general knowledge and supplemented perhaps by some of the facts that are in that packet on your seat, facts about poverty in America, we're talking today about a problem that goes much deeper than say just the education dimension. Because poverty itself is behind the college gap and it's a growing, significant and severe problem in this country, and I'll leave the statistics to perhaps maybe some of the discussion later on this afternoon.

But I want to begin with a positive anecdote, and then frame out the particular issue before us this afternoon with a few statistics. The positive anecdote...you'll forgive me, goes to pardonable pride in my own institution, the University of Pennsylvania. This is...I'm going to read to you just the top of a story that appeared in July, 2008, in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, and the title of the story written by Kia Gregory was, "With Curiosity, Confidence, He's Poised to Enter Penn," and I'm just going to read you briefly the first few paragraphs. Quote: "*Stephen Vaughn-Lewis is a tall and lanky, and sometimes stammers, but any first impressions of awkwardness vanish as he exudes a quiet confidence, often punctuated with a warm grin. It is a confidence that has grown over his eighteen years. He overcame homelessness, months of missing grade school, and stints in foster care. After his grandmother rescued him at age eight, he grew up in Strawberry Mansion neighborhood, where poverty runs deep. Few have better than a high school diploma, and gunshots turn young, black men like him into casualties of petty violence. Now with high school over, Stephen nervously awaits his next hurdle. With a full four year academic scholarship, he's heading to the University of Pennsylvania, an Ivy League School where African-American students are about twice as likely as white students to drop out. It is his first stop in becoming a surgeon. As he prepares for the arduous journey, Stephen is humbled by thoughts of, 'What if?' Quote, he says: 'There are a lot of people like me who just weren't that fortunate. What if my grandma hadn't taken me out of foster care? What if I wasn't fortunate enough to have gone to Masterman? I don't know where I'd be now.'*"

Stephen Vaughn-Lewis is an incredible success story, and I can speak to that directly because he is now several years into his education at the University of Pennsylvania, and although he's not with us here today, he's in Washington doing a Washington semester program. He gave me this tie, which I will explain. If you can't see it, it is a beautiful silk tie...no, Mr. Bridgeman, you can't have it. He buys me ties, I don't give him my ties. Stephen was in one of my seminars last year, and he befriended another student, a Penn student named Jin Guan, who's from Shanghai, China, and I won't give you all the details, because I'll make myself cry. But basically these two guys find each other, and you may recall the stories about some violence among and between African-American and Asian students at South Philly High...well, these two Penn students, one from Shanghai, China, and the other from Strawberry Mansion, Philadelphia, meet in this seminar and decide

they're going to get involved in that issue, and they do...and then when winter break came Jin Guan invited Steve to go to Shanghai with him for winter break, and here's a kid who hadn't been much beyond the confines of Philadelphia going to China. While they were there, he picked up for old Professor DiIulio this tie. So there it is, and I'm very proud of it. But Steve, as he says...Steve's an extremely bright guy, and I'll read it again. *"There are a lot of people like me who just weren't that fortunate,"* and that's what we're here to talk about today.

We're here to talk about, yes, the success stories, but to put a spotlight on the college completion gap. What do I mean by that? I'm quoting now from a report released just today, Mr. Bridgeland, by Civic Enterprises called, "Closing the College Completion Gap," which focuses in this case mainly, and Mr. Bridgeland will be talking about this, what faith-based organizations can do. But let me just crib briefly from the introduction to that report, to give you a sense of what we mean when we talk about the college completion gap in terms of some of the statistics.

Ninety percent of low income teenagers each year say they want to go to college, they plan to go to college, but only about half of these students will enroll, and only half of that half roughly will finish college. Only nine percent of low income eighth graders, whose parents did not attend college, will obtain a bachelors degree. Students from low income families, including those who are academically high achieving, like Rick Kahlenberg has written about so incredibly eloquently, and we'll hear about this more in due course as, "The Strivers," only nine percent of low income eighth graders, whose parents didn't attend college, will obtain a bachelors degree, and even if they are academically high achieving prior to college, they are far less likely to go on and attend college and graduate from college than their higher income peers.

High school graduates from low income families, who consistently score in the top quartile on standardized tests, are no more likely than affluent peers who score in the bottom quartile on these very same tests to go on and attend college.

The U.S. college attainment rate has been sort of stuck around thirty-nine, forty percent since 1970. Throughout most of the rest of the world and other advanced democracies, those rates have increased. In the U.S., they've stagnated.

Here about thirty percent, slightly more than thirty percent of white non-Hispanic American adults have at least four years of college, but only eighteen percent of African-Americans and twelve percent of Hispanics have reached the same level of educational attainment.

Now here's the rub, and here's why this is not just a problem for people who care about urban poverty and care about social justice per se the way I know all of us here do, but there's a very practical civic and economic dimension to this college completion gap problem, especially where the truly disadvantaged are concerned, and it is the jobs that do not require education after high school are becoming rare. They are rapidly disappearing.

By 2018, it's estimated that sixty-two percent of jobs will require college education. Half of these jobs will require at least...*AT LEAST* a bachelors degree, and the current college graduation production rates, there will be a shortage of twenty-three million college educated adults in the American workforce by 2025.

So it is not just a problem for people who care about urban poverty. It's not just a problem for people who care about inner-city education. It's a problem really for the whole society, and we're very fortunate here today to have a number of people with us on this panel who can speak to us about different ways of thinking about this problem and addressing the problem. So let me turn first to our own Gesu School president, Chris Beck, for a look at this problem from the vantage point of elementary education. Chris.

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

Thanks, John. First of all on Gesu's behalf, I want to thank all of you personally for being here. We're very honored. I'd also like to start out by saying I think the inequality in education in this country at every level should be unacceptable. It is just appalling, and I think it's wonderful that so many people care and that this is being addressed.

Obviously I'm here and we're all here at Gesu because I think and we think elementary school provides the cornerstone for bridging the gap, for providing educational justice, the basic skills and tools that kids need to move on. Yet at age three, the cumulative vocabulary for children in professional families is just over a thousand words. For working class families, it's 740 words, and for welfare families, 500 words. That's a lot to make up, and we all know how crucial it is that children master reading at grade level, by third grade, at least fourth grade, and yet the report released in May by the Annie B. Case...Annie B. Casey Foundation reported that eighty-five percent of poor, low income fourth graders in predominantly low income schools are failing to reach proficient levels in reading on federal tests...*EIGHTY-FIVE PERCENT*. It's overwhelming.

While young women of all races are making solid progress, young men, especially African-American and Hispanic, are in fact failing and dropping out. All you have to do is walk around the streets of this neighborhood to see that firsthand.

In the early nineties here at Gesu, a lot of young men were dropping out as early as fourth, fifth grade, because the lure of the street, it's not cool to be smart, et cetera, and Father Bur and Sister Ellen investigated this and did some research, and heard about the benefits of single gender classes. So they started single gender classes for third, fourth, and fifth grades, and it has worked. The male teachers, good role models, and the boys are staying, and more and more schools are considering this and following suit. It works.

A review of Diane Ravitch's bestselling book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, includes one of her strong messages, what one might call the Catholic school model is perhaps the most unappreciated influence on the nation's continuing public education debate, and there's no question that Catholic schools have a wonderful history of success in the inner city, and now many charter schools, many takeover schools

are also showing strong success, and it's all creating a lot of attention, which, as John pointed out, is terrific.

But it's not just about standardized tests, thank heavens, because our kids have a problem with standardized tests. But it's really about teaching young children accountability, responsibility, making the right choices in their behavior, working together, problem solving, and in terms of Gesu, because I have to toot our horn a little bit, we have a wide range of programs for all children, because we have un, admissions that is non-selective and focused on this neighborhood.

We have a wide range of programs for struggling students, those who might drop out, including literacy, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, after school and summer programs. We have three full-time special ed resource room teachers, and then at the other end of the spectrum, we have challenging programs for the most talented young people. We have a full time Advanced Math, Advanced Reading teachers, and overall, we have about twenty volunteers, who work on a regular basis.

One of the most exciting programs we, on a pilot basis, came from John DiIulio, and that is Youngest Scholars, and for the most talented and the lowest income children here, and we're hoping that will be able to be replicated.

But all combined with a non-selective admissions policy, we are able to have over ninety percent of our eighth grade graduates go on and graduate from high school on time. So...

[APPLAUSE]

We're proud of that, obviously. But the point is it can be done, and I surely look forward to hearing the rest of the panelists focus on other...the solutions as they all move up.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

Thank you, Chris. Thank you very much. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

I always feel better after Chris talks. I don't know what it is. Every time you talk I feel better. I don't need a psychiatrist.

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

Thank you, John. [Laughs]

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

I need Chris, I need Chris.

[LAUGHTER]

Wanda, in your present role and in your role as the Assistant General Secretary for the United Methodist Church, you've been a part of lots of conversations, I know, and lots of action that is relevant to this problem. So what do you think, first of all, what's your take on the college gap problem in general, and secondly, where do you think faith communities in general, other institutions can be most efficacious?

**DR. WANDA BIGHAM:**

Well, I think the system is broken or we wouldn't be having this conversation today, and I was pleased when I picked up *The Wall Street Journal* this week, and it had to do with the schools in the District of Columbia, and some successes that they were having there. But then, you know, is it going to stop? The thing that...the paragraph that jumped out at me was this, "*Nonetheless, year after year, our schools have been run for the benefit of the adults in the system, not for the benefit of the kids,*" and I'm telling you that around the country this is the case as well, it's broken...and we as the faith-based institutions and other people of goodwill are picking up the pieces, and it's a patchwork...and as the young man said, he got lucky...he got lucky. Somebody touched him, and how wonderful it is that we do touch as many. But it's a little bit like the story of the starfish that are dying on the beach and, you know, one, two, three, four, five get tossed back into the ocean, where they're going to live and thrive.

I have been working for the last seven years in the Division of Higher Education, leading the Division of Higher Education of the United Methodist Church. In that role most recently, I have been responsible for the one hundred and twenty-one institutions in the United States that are called United Methodist related. Ten of those are high schools, three of them are mission schools, one of them is in El Paso. They take in the students that some of them walk across the bridge from Juárez, and they come in maybe knowing English, maybe not. But it doesn't matter, that's not a part of the criterion for admission.

The seniors in that school go to college at better than a ninety percent rate. Boy, did they ever get lucky to be touched in that way. Two other mission schools, one in New Mexico and one in the Appalachian area in Kentucky also are finding those students who are low income, first generation college students.

Now I don't know about you. There's some of you out there that are like me. I'm a first generation college student. I'm from a low income family. I made a decision when I was in the eighth grade that I would go to college, mostly because I didn't want to spend my life on a tobacco farm in western Kentucky, and I was afraid to go to college for fear I would be unsuccessful and I was the high school senior, the valedictorian. That's hard for me to believe that someone who had achieved could be afraid to go to college, but I'm telling you that is the case. If your culture, if your culture has not been one that said you just automatically ought to go on to college, your mother did, your father did, somebody in the family, and so there's not only overcoming the fact that the students don't have the

funding, there is a cultural aspect as well, where somebody's got to say, "You can do this," and I was fortunate to have those people touch my life.

Well, throughout my life then I've been very sensitive to and very much a part of projects that related to helping students to get through school, stay in school, go to college. My first administrative position was as a director of TRIO Programs. Do you know TRIO Programs? Federal programs that started as a part of the Great Society. There were those to identify high school students, keep them in high school, get them into college. There were those in the college to keep them there. There are even ones now in math and science to keep them going on to graduate schools. I was director of three of those programs, and served on regional and national boards to help to promote them, and I testified before Congress a number of times to ask for more money for those programs, and they now have more than eight hundred million dollars working with thousands of students in twelve hundred colleges and universities.

As wonderful as that sounds, again, one has to be lucky to be a part of one of those programs. So in the colleges and universities, then I've twice been a college president, I would tell you that in every institution, every not-for-profit, faith-based or independent institution is encouraging its students to provide service, to provide service, go out and help someone, and in some places that is a requirement. At Huntington College, the motto was, "*Enter to grow in wisdom. Go forth to apply wisdom in service.*" Our student body, the student government association came to me one day saying, "*We have made a decision that no club will get funding unless it has provided service in the previous semester.*" I didn't do that. This is the students saying, "*It's our responsibility to help someone who needs it,*" and some of those things were directed toward youth. We had the athletes at the institution brought in students from a local elementary school that was resource-challenged, that's the new word...brought in elementary students, would bring them to the gym, they would get a snack after school. The athletes would help them with their homework, and after the homework was done, then they would play in the gym with the athletes. A very powerful message to those students in those elementary schools.

The colleges and universities that I have worked with both here and abroad are very much involved in providing service, and while the service may be for elderly or school children, or homeless or any variety of things, many of them are directed toward keeping students in school and getting them into college. Hamline University in Saint Paul has a program with the kindergarten, College Begins in Kindergarten. Willamette University out on the West Coast has a program for Native Americans in one of the local tribes. The College of Idaho has a program where it is providing bilingual orientation for both the students and their parents from the Hispanic/Latino community, and I could go on and on.

I'm delighted to say that recently there has been a recognition program, it's called The National and Community Service Corporation, and it's the President's Higher Education Community Service, and every year colleges and universities are invited to say, "Here's what we have done," either for general service or for service to keep students in school and promote their staying through the graduation period.

The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities along with the Council of Independent Colleges has a website called, "2020: Reaching the Goals for 2020 of Keeping Students in School." There is a Council on Opportunity in Education with a website saying, "Look what people are doing to keep students in school," and so I am just overjoyed that there is so much going on. There is this patchwork of service and more and more students are being served and are being reached. More and more of those starfish on the beach are being reached. I regret that the system has failed, but thank goodness for the people of goodwill, faith-based institutions who are reaching out to help that individual to make it through school and into college and university. It is so very important, and the data that had been provided about the welfare, not only of that individual, but his or her family and the people who follow in that family, if you can reach someone and get them through college, their family is going to be better off, and their children, and their children's children will be better off. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**DR JOHN DiIULIO:**

Thank you, Wanda. Oh, my gosh! Thank you so much, Wanda, and you are one of the people who has done those good works for sure, and I'm going to turn now to Mr. John Bridgeland. Before I do, I want to underline just one, as I can't resist, underlining one aspect of the many important things and true things that Wanda just put before us, the cultural dimension of this, because I, like you, was the first one in my family to go to college, which I have thirty-four first cousins in metropolitan Philadelphia, one deceased, and I was the youngest, which tire of reminding them of when we get together, and...but I was the first to go to college, and I went to the University of Pennsylvania when it was easier to get in...

[LAUGHTER]

And...a lot easier obviously, and I commuted. I lived at home and took the thirty-six, and there were a fair number of commuting students who were local and, you know, working class or working poor, and it was very difficult, but I will underline the cultural point, and I see some of my Penn students here, and they will find this absolutely impossible to believe. One of my teachers at Penn, Jack Nagel, who is still at the University, about to retire, he's now the Dean of the Social Sciences at Penn, will tell you that in my first two years at the University of Pennsylvania I did not speak.

[LAUGHTER]

Impossible, right?

[LAUGHTER]

Impossible. Now I can't be shut up.

[LAUGHTER]

I mean I don't...I talk through seminars, lectures, I can't shut up. But it is a cultural thing. People, you know, they're...and you know, it's ethnic culture, it could be racial culture, it's different neighborhood cultures, it's a culture shock for many students, especially disadvantaged students to go to college, and it's not to be forgotten. But obviously I got over that.

[LAUGHTER]

**DR. WANDA BIGHAM:**

As did I.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

As did you. Today Civic Enterprises, the organization that, of which Mister Bridgeland, who I lovingly call "Bridge," Bridge is the founder and CEO of, has issued, has released a report. The report commissioned by the Bill and Linda Gates Foundation, and the report's title is very much on point for us today, "Closing the College Completion Gap, a Guidebook for the Faith Community." Laura Moore...where is Laura? Laura, are you here? Laura, stand up, 'cause Laura is the primary author of this report. Laura...

[APPLAUSE]

She makes Mr. Bridgeland look very good indeed...

[LAUGHTER]

Mr. Bridgeland look very good. Bridge is, you know, and I talk about folks who I met. I met him first in the Bush White House, where I made many friends, but I did make one new friend, and it was John Bridgeland, who is a person of just enormous civic character and heart, and he has looked at this issue from...anybody who can pull together John McCain and Barrack Obama in the September before the November 2008 election and that Service Nation Summit deserves not only an award, but sort of a...we would call it a miracle. That's one miracle, right Father. You need three...three, okay? He's got one. But Bridge, this report and your other general experience, give us your take.

**JOHN BRIDGELAND:**

Great! Thanks, Brother DiIulio. I feel compelled to disclose I've gained eight pounds since I last visited the Gesu School.

[LAUGHTER]

Seriously, just such a privilege to work with John DiIulio and Rosalee, who I know volunteers here at the Gesu School. Literally, when you talk about faith-based institutions, John DiIulio is the person who really brought an understanding to the United States about the role of faith-based institutions in the public square, not just on education, but on welfare, on crime, on healthcare, and literally transformed, I think, the debate in so many wonderful ways. I also just want to mention that I was here about a year ago and interacted with many of the lovely students who gave that beautiful song in the choir, and actually wanted to begin my thoughts where Taahira began her thoughts, and I'll just note she didn't use a single note. She was speaking from the heart.

In 2004, John DiIulio and I were called by the Bill and Linda Gates Foundation and asked if we could help them advance this issue called the, what became the high school dropout epidemic and we came to Philadelphia and sat with a room full of young students and there was this woman, who was sixteen years old, very charismatic, kind of the leader in the group, and John and I were behind the glass and the focus group leader said, "Monique, what did you want to be when you were a young girl?" And she said, "I wanted to be an astrophysicist." And the moderator goes, "A what?" And she goes, "I wanted to join the NASA Space Program," and went on to tell us about her interest in science and math, and then a little later he asked, "So what are you doing now?" And her head went down and she said, "I'm on the streets," and so this became an emotional issue for John and I in terms of, John and me, in terms of looking at how is it possible for young people like Taahira, who have these big dreams, these big ambitions, you know, wants to go in the biomedical field, to go from that to dropping out of high school.

We discovered that one-third of all public high school students in the United States were dropping out of high school. Half of...about a half of African-Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics with extraordinary consequences to them. The individual costs...about forty percent of dropouts are completely idle. They're not working, they're not in school. The economic costs are extraordinary. Individually, if you graduate from college, you earn about a million dollars more over your lifetime than you do if you're a high school dropout.

If we were to cut the dropout...the nation's dropout rate in half, we would save the country about eighty-four billion dollars annually in productive income and lower social welfare costs, a whole host of...even Colin Powell, who's taken this issue on for the country and (inaudible) dropouts so it's in all fifty states, talks about how it's a threat to our national security, and I think it really is.

Since that report was issued, we've looked at the perspectives of teachers, of parents, shattered the myth that low income parents of children in low performing schools either don't care or don't want to engage. It's in fact those parents who see the need for college the most, and want to do the most to engage with their young child. But they don't see a means or way of accessing the school.

Fast forward...on November 30<sup>th</sup>, we're going to release a report to the country and a broad-based sort of strange bedfellows coalition around a plan of action on the dropout

issue, and what's so interesting, it's a classic engineering problem. We know exactly who these students are, we know what schools they attend. There are about 2007, it's a horrible term, they call them "Dropout Factory High Schools" in the United States, and we know their feeder and elementary schools.

The President has challenged the country to graduate ninety percent of the class of 2020, so that means the three point six million students in third grade today, and if you could build off of models like the Gesu School, where you have early warning systems that identify the ABC's of dropout, absenteeism, poor behavior, course failure, get them the appropriate intervention...It was so fascinating, many of you work with city, our communities and schools, or are at least aware of them. It was that model, working in about ten what were called "Ground Zero Schools" in the United States where the City (inaudible) participant...Wanda talks about the power of national service, would come in at six thirty in the morning, they would greet every student by name. They would know their interests. They would work to connect their interests to their class work. They would be there for the extended learning time in partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs and Big Brothers, Big Sisters for mentoring and tutoring. They would be there after the kids finish their sports or other after school activities or extended learning time and to walk them home in these neighborhoods that are sometimes not all that safe to walk home in. Working together with communities and schools in the Diplomas Now Project, dramatic decreases in chronic absenteeism, poor behavior, and significant increases in math and reading.

We took this data to Senator Kennedy and said, "Why shouldn't we deploy national service as a key strategy to end the dropout epidemic?" And he about jumped out of his seat, and that's what propelled the passage of what eventually became the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. So I think national service has a role to play in addressing this issue. Today we're issuing a report that focuses on the role of faith-based institutions in closing the college completion gap and John already gave you much of the key data. But it really is a workforce and skills gap issue. Just to put a fine point on it, there are ninety-seven million high wage, high skilled jobs today in the United States, and we have forty-five million people who are actually educated, trained, and prepared to fill those slots. So through out-sourcing, the HB-1 Visa Program, we're basically drawing all this talent from abroad to fill jobs that are here.

Now conversely, we have a hundred million workers for lower skilled jobs to fill sixty-one million positions, and that's why unemployment is at about ten percent. So we have basically Great Depression levels of unemployment in this country, and we could educate our way out of the economic crisis and I think that's what we're going to have to do.

When we looked at the role of faith-based institutions in closing the college completion gap, and by the way it's twenty percent of those who enter two year institutions, community colleges to get their one or two year degree will graduate in three years, just twenty percent, and forty percent who enter a four year institution will graduate in six years, and interestingly, the Department of Education measures the University of Pennsylvania and all these wonderful institutions around the country in terms of the

degree to which we graduate a student in six years, not four years, but six years, a hundred and fifty percent of the rate, and interestingly, we've also through federal policy had terrific incentives for access to college: Pell Grants, student loans. Everything's driven towards access, and ideas are emerging to tie those powerful financial incentives, just like the GI Bill did to college completion, and to create a culture of college completion.

Rick Warren and John DiIulio like to say that faith-based institutions have four comparative advantages: one, they are a social trust, they're trusted in their communities; two, they have the power to transform lives, as we see here at this school; three, universal distribution...they're everywhere, they're in every low income community; and four, they have the power to mobilize volunteers and resources, provide facilities. So one idea is to use the power of faith-based institutions all across America, with these four comparative advantages they hold to help address both the high school dropout epidemic and the college completion gap.

John Pepper, I'll close with this, who is the CEO of Proctor and Gamble in Cincinnati, and who was so concerned that he couldn't draw any talent from the Cincinnati marketplace for the jobs at P&G, saw that in Cincinnati it had one of the highest dropout rates in the country, and so he formed the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative with faith-based partners...and these faith-based partners would take low income kids from over the Rhine in other areas outside the Cincinnati area to visit colleges and universities. They would go onto the campuses and get them admission and financial aid packages on-site. In terms of a college going culture, it also overcame the fear for a lot of these young people to see what college was like, and actually have the experience...and the pastor from that program said that faith-based institutions are a "sleeping giant" in our country and in our city, and we need to awaken that sleeping giant and connect to millions of young people around American with the supports they need to help not only finish high school, but complete college.

So today we're releasing this report that Laura Moore largely wrote and John DiIulio and I co-authored, and the goal is literally to help ignite faith-based institutions around the country to help close the college gap. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**JOHN DIIULIO:**

Thanks, Bridge. It's going to be fascinating to see what happens next because it is, it really is...so much is already being done. But my gosh, if they really get in harness, who knows? Who knows? I'm going to turn now to, I said this many occasions over the last thirteen years...If I ever grow up, which is unlikely, this is who I want to be when I grow up...

[LAUGHTER]

...Father Bur. Now my wife and kids might have a problem with that.

[LAUGHTER]

I understand. There may be some cognitive dissonance here that's coming, but in all seriousness, we are here at the Gesu School for lots of reasons. But going back to the origins of saving this school when it was to be closed, Win Churchill and Father Bur, present at that creation, and my engagement with the Gesu has been enriched not only in terms of the school, but as a friend and a mentor and a true priest and pastor in George Bur, and I don't know how he finds the time, and his fingerprints are on so much good, but the Ignatian College Connection in particular, which really addresses this head on is another one, which I didn't even know, by the way until I got involved in this issue, that you were behind it, but I should have guessed, so Father Bur, tell us what you think.

**FATHER BUR:**

Thank you very much, John. It's a great pleasure for me to be in this wonderful setting with all these wonderful people. I've worked as a school administrator for about twenty-five years, but only twenty percent of the time focused on the non-traditional student's preparation and retention through college, and I did that as part of my work at Saint Joseph's University beginning in 2003, 2004. Then at the university we knew that the non-traditional Philadelphia and Camden students found little to attract them to SJU.

So I worked with the admissions office to design a program to attract the representative group. Of course, fortunately we Jesuits never start from scratch after 450 years. So we have, just as in many urban areas here in Philadelphia, we serve in elementary, middle, and high school programs and so we started with the Jesuit-related student populations in Camden and Philly, because we knew that at least these students and their parents might have some vague idea that they could recognize the Jesuit connection. So we focused on high school kids who had graduated from here, high school kids who had graduated from Holy Name School, our school in Camden. We focused on students who were part of the Breakthrough Program that ran programming at Saint Joseph's University, and we also focused on the African-American and Latino students right behind me here at Saint Joseph's Prep, all together about 125 students in each of these cohorts and we called the program, as John mentioned, Ignatian College Connection, after the name of our founder, the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius Loyola.

Two important facets of these programs, and we're not the only one doing this, preparing the students well to get into college, and then working to retain them. So we began with the high school classes of 2005 and 2006, ran typical programs for parents and students, how to get ready for college. We invited these high school students to college prep activities and social activities on the campus, and we knew that such programs would assist the members of the cohort, whether they eventually enrolled at Saint Joseph's University or at another college.

So the 125 students sort of self-selected, you know, and we received a fairly consistent response from about one in five. Twenty-five to thirty kids took part each year, and in recent years actually the program has invited students from other schools. But we keep the preparation program small, not only to retain a personal touch, I mean this is the skill that has been developed here at Gesu School and at Saint Joseph's Prep and at other places, a personal touch with the students. But there's also a practical issue...financing a Saint Joseph's University education for a family with high need absolutely limited our ability to enroll such students and though many in the preparation program typically choose other colleges, it's tough to have some committed student who's made SJU their first choice, and then not have the means to enroll them.

But in any case, of about thirty participants each year, the university is able to enroll about six to ten of them...and in this current academic year, the ICC students presently enrolled at Saint Joseph's University over the four years number a total of thirty. So their loans involve they're, of course, endowments of the university. There's some designated gifts and grants. But the resources that the university devotes to this program are pretty significant and the students have the Jesuit president, Father Lannon, and the university board to thank for starting this program and encouraging it to grow.

Now part of the work, of course, is to monitor the student's performance, their mandatory study and social sessions for these students, sometimes as often as every week. Saint Joseph's University is not a highly selective school based on SAT results and GPA's, but these measures do screen out many an applicant. So our work with the non-traditional students includes helping them prepare for the SAT. But we also focus on other things: leadership, commitment, communication skills, things like this. The first advice I got from a principal of one of the schools was, "Make sure the parents are involved. Make sure the parents are involved," and this has proved to be very helpful in the lives of these students.

The first Latino that we recruited from Camden, I remember her mother was in the interview when we first talked with her, and she stayed...her mother stayed with her all along, and that's the reason she's being successful. Typically too, you know when you have one in five kids showing up, you know one of the reasons they show up is 'cause their parents wake them up in the morning, and some of them drive them to the events at Saint Joe's or wherever. So the parents are really important.

The first two cohorts graduated Saint Joseph's University in 2009 and 2010, and fifteen of the original nineteen in those two years graduated at Saint Joseph's University in four years, and another one of the nineteen is delaying her graduation by a year because of sickness.

Now we try to enroll the best possible kids from each cohort. But despite good financial packages, we could not compete for many of the students that took part in the program. I know six such students, and I could name others over the years, chose Villanova or Spelman, Ursinus, Dickinson, Scranton, Eastern, and four of these six students who went to these schools, they graduated eighth grade from here, and we wanted them to graduate

from Saint Joseph University. But maybe I should be a little more open-hearted about this. We should be spreading the Gesu students around and making a way for other kids at Saint Joseph's University.

There are now three Gesu School graduates from among the first sixteen, and one of them is now back here teaching at Gesu School, and another...

[APPLAUSE]

There's another teaching at Catholic elementary school in West Philadelphia. These two are part of the Alliance for Catholic Education Program. It's a terrific program, and these two teachers are just a small sign that our efforts here and through college will contribute to a better future.

Well, this program is all home grown. It's small, but it's not alone. It's similar to successful national programs, such as The Posse Foundation Programs that work with similar groups of non-traditional students at about forty academically strong colleges and universities including Penn. Like SJU, these forty colleges and universities provide the financial aid packages for the students and like the Ignatian College Connection at SJU, the Posse Foundation provides the program that selects and nurtures the students through high school and college.

Our program, of course, depends on schools like Gesu to prepare our non-traditional students for a fruitful high school, and then a fruitful college experience. So I want to thank Sister Ellen and Chris Beck...

[APPLAUSE]

...and all those involved here at Gesu. Without programs like this, our program would not be able to succeed. So thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**DR. JOHN DiILUIO:**

Thank you, Father. I would never, ever, ever, ever challenge the truthfulness of Father Bur, but the thought that you were indifferent as to whether one went to Villanova or not...

[LAUGHTER]

...leaves me, I think we really need to bring in the truth serum here.

[LAUGHTER]

But okay, okay, we'll let you go on that, and I know from direct personal experience or semi-direct, my daughter, Elizabeth, who graduated from Penn in '09 and did a year as an Americorps VISTA at Saint Joe's, it's a very (inaudible word) world we live in here, Father, she spent last summer working in the ICC at Saint Joe's, and what a remarkable program, and boy if the Jesuit Twenty-Eight ever took this up in tandem, imagine where things could go. Then we'd get the Methodists and the Jesuits.

[LAUGHTER]

I mean you know, and universities, and the schools. You can see where this is going. But let me turn now to my...(inaudible word) Then I'm going to ask my dear friend, Rick Kahlenberg to bat clean-up. But here my good friend and colleague at the University of Pennsylvania, Dean Eric Furda, and let me just say in all seriousness, I've been around for twenty-eight years in university administration life, and I've seen a lot of directors of admissions and so forth, but I have never in my career in all honesty met anyone quite like Eric Furda in this business, because he came to Penn, he had been there early in his career, so it wasn't like he didn't know the place. But he came to Penn, and immediately made an impact, and the impact was not just in getting a handle on what is a very complicated twenty-seven, twenty-eight thousand applications admissions. But established as a top line priority, thinking about how Penn can and should be of greater service to the community and to the truly disadvantaged, and Father Bur mentioned Posse. I know we're going to hear more about that from Dean Furda in a minute. So without further ado, Dean Furda take it away.

**DEAN FURDA:**

Thank you very much and thank you all. I'm truly humbled to be on this panel, and hearing from all of you today. I do see Professor Tierney in the front row coming in from Fox Leadership. Like to welcome and acknowledge you in the program.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

Well, he's still upset about the "Villanova" actually...

**DEAN FURDA:**

Okay.

[LAUGHTER]

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

...is the thing. That's why he's not smiling. So don't think that ...

**DEAN FURDA:**

If I'm a little nervous today, it's because there's always someone in the audience and so in the third row is Carrie Brodsky, a Penn alumni, who literally interviewed me for my first job when I graduated from Penn in 1987. So there's always that one person in the crowd you look over at.

[LAUGHTER]

Like, "Oh, no, there goes the heartbeat." There goes the heartbeat. So given that we're in Philadelphia, I think it's important to start off this way in the context for education, the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States: "*We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*" Everyone in this room is familiar with Amendment Ten, Powers of the States and People, "*The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the States are reserved to the States respectively or to the people.*" Education is not discussed in the Constitution of the United States.

Amendment Ten then gives it to the states, gives it to the people...which then means you have to go to the states. The Pennsylvania Constitution, Article Three, Section 14, the Public School System...Section 14, "*The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth.*" Now we know over the years that this has been tested whether Pennsylvania and so many other states have provided that thorough and efficient education as outlined in the Pennsylvania Constitution. In the end, it comes down to localities, and I think the power today is really bringing together Philadelphia and thinking about the opportunities that we can have for our children and our students here.

So why is a person, I guess, 27,000 applications sitting on this panel? Thinking about college completion and the number and the students that are going to college, the reality is we can take a look at the U.S. demographics as one piece they're changing dramatically, and they're already changing in our applicant pool. So states like Pennsylvania, states like New York, our backyard states are decreasing in college-bound age families, college-bound age students.

When you take a look at demographic growth, it's in the southeastern part of the United States, southwest. Obviously, the economy the last couple of years has even started influencing that. But it's not our backyard. When you take a look at data from the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, it's not only that the demographics are shifting geographically, but you're seeing the dramatic increase in Latino students across the country, and for schools in the Mid-Atlantic and the Northeast, taking a look at those demographics, you know that particularly in those families, you know, families aren't sending their children far away to go to college. So we have a geographic gap, we have a racial ethnic gap as we take a look at our pipeline moving forward.

Certainly, the economy is on everyone's mind. I don't need to touch on that. Any challenge that we've had prior is exacerbated now. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, their Research Services Division has come out with a new report, a three part series called "College of 2020." It's focusing on three areas: students, technology and facilities, and the faculty of the future, and part one for the students they're talking about why go to college, who should go to college, and certainly everything that's been cited here today you understand the economic impact and the social benefit of going to college.

But what shape college is going to take is going to be very, very different, and the University of Pennsylvania, this study cites that places like Penn are going to be around. What shape they're going to take, how we're teaching students, but the four year research, residential colleges and universities already with some level of national and international reputation, will be here. But what shape will they take?

At the other end of the spectrum, which are very versatile and leverage technology, are the for-profit schools, and they're growing and they're being successful in educating a group of students, not only the traditional college-bound age, but also a growing population, the adult learners. So we need to take a look at this, even at the most selective colleges and universities. Doctor Gutmann, President Amy Gutmann, of the University of Pennsylvania, made the compact as part of her compact when she became President six years ago, access to education. She was the beneficiary of a full scholarship. She was first generation college, and a full scholarship for her to go on to university, and look what she became, a college...a university president, and former provost.

"Access," what does that really mean? There's different tools that we can consider as we consider access. One tool is financial aid, and we've already heard about that, needing to have the types of scholarships, and grant and aid programs that will enable families to come to our universities and colleges. We have a "no loan" policy at the University of Pennsylvania, which means that any student that's qualified for a need-based financial aid, they'll have a small job commitment on campus, about 2,000 dollars a year, and the rest of it will be in grant money, no loans are taken out. So a student can graduate debt-free.

What we're seeing, particularly in the last couple of years for families, particularly those in the middle that are still qualifying for some need-based financial aid, families with adjusted gross income of around a hundred and eighty, to two hundred thousand dollars even. But the families are needing to then take out loans to pay for their family contribution, and pay that monthly, maybe spread out the payments over a ten month period. So even with generous financial aid policies, we're seeing real strains on the individual families, and I'll talk about that a little bit more.

My sense from the college admissioncy, as we're reaching out geographically and to a wide range of groups socio-economically, traditionally under-represented groups on our campus as well, is that you have to figure out what works in the local area. You're not sitting here in Philadelphia saying, "Well, gee, this worked here, and I think that's where we'll go, and we're going to get names from the College Board, and we're going to send

letters, and we're going to send e-mails and then we'll send a financial aid brochure, those messages aren't reaching families, and so we've been working with and creating a database of community-based organizations that when we go into different areas of the country and we do travel extensively, that we're making and building those contacts right now. I'll just cite a few that I think have been successful for us over the years. Certainly I want to talk about one in particular.

Certainly the work that Gesu is doing and Schools That Can, which Gesu is a part of, is tremendous. "A Better Chance," ABC Organization, Penn has graduated more ABC alumni than any other institution in the country. Right here in our own backyard, The Stepping Stone Foundation. KIPP Schools, we have a number of KIPP Schools here in Philadelphia. The Founder of the KIPP Schools and KIPP Foundation is a Penn grad. QuestBridge, we're going to start reading those applications this week. They basically, they take census type data, going into demographics and taking a look at household level data, neighborhood data, census data, to identify where there's clusters of low income students, and so we're getting names from them and students are then applying to places like Penn, and a wide range of institutions and are getting matched almost like a medical school match program. So the socio-economic criteria is the key driver there.

Another group that we're just starting to work with is called AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination. They're in forty-five states. Of all the organizations I've mentioned, they probably have the furthest reach. The Posse Foundation is an organization that we partnered with in Miami last year. When I visited with Debbie Bial, who is the Founder and President of the Posse Foundation, great recognition of their organization over the last twenty years, they have an alumni base at this point. This is a leadership program. A leadership program built around public schools in urban areas. I'd love to get them here in Philadelphia.

We partnered with them in the city of Miami, and we just enrolled our first eleven students, who are in the class, and here's something about selective admissions. We went down there to choose a posse of about eight to twelve students, and we interviewed just over twenty students, and we formed the first posse with eleven students, and we straight up admitted seven other students of that group that are not part of the posse, but were identified through that process and most likely we wouldn't have known about them.

But this is the reason why I feel that Posse really works, particularly with our experiences in Miami. The superintendent of schools there, who's a dynamic leader, Alberto Carvalho, went out and said to all the schools, to all the principals, to all the teachers, "You're going to identify the best students, you're going to nominate them for this program," and after Penn signed on, Mount Holyoke signed on, as well as Hamilton College. Last year in about a four week period, they had over eight hundred nominations to consider our schools. This year it's well over nine hundred. There's forty-five high schools in Miami, and we have over nine hundred nominations and they're going through a selection process and we'll go down to Miami in mid-December and interview all those students, thirty-one students this year. So who knows? I'll probably end up with thirty-one students.

[LAUGHTER]

But this is what we're learning from this program specifically. After they're admitted in December, they go through a thirty-two week intensive college prep program, ranging from everything in terms of writing and other types of skill-based assessments, and you know, working with students in those areas, but also what is it going to be like going to a place like the University of Pennsylvania.

For them, geography does play a factor. What is the student body like? How are you going to make that transition? And we're learning a great deal from that organization, as well as QuestBridge that I mentioned, and that is, what does it mean to be poor on a college campus like the University of Pennsylvania? You know, some things are right at face value. Being poor may not be, and even with our generous financial aid policy, something that as educators we know this is happening, but we're getting more data behind it, even with that college work study job on our campus, a lot of these students then are holding other jobs and are essentially working thirty to forty hours a week, while taking on an academic load at any of our institutions. Just think of where they're starting compared to all the other students.

So taking a look at what courses...it's one thing to take a look at graduation rates. Where does the pause, and that's a term that our faculty has or committee has created right now, because the students are doing pretty well in their freshman year. It's starting that third semester that beginning of the sophomore year and then particularly what courses that we call "gateway courses" are the students starting to kind of fall behind a little bit, particularly in the critical areas of math education and science education, and then where are we after six years. It actually, it catches up after six years, but there is a real pause in that second, third, fourth year, and then we can start having some interventions early on that will then help the students graduate after six years. But we're learning about a number of those pieces right now when we formed, our faculty is formed, an advising kind of construct called Penn Pathways. What's the road to success at Penn once you are admitted?

So there's a couple of different pieces that I'd like to bring up in my closing remarks. The work of the Fox Leadership Program...Doctor Ira Harkavy in the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, Civic House. Penn has kind of three pillars for our admission: teaching, research, and service, and by having programs like Fox Leadership as a prime example, bringing our students in to really focus on leadership skill and leadership development to help other students and to identify students that, you know, should be at a place like Penn. I owe them a great deal of gratitude and debt. I am concerned though about some of our leaders on campus, especially those that are in programs like Posse. We go to them too often. They're almost the poster children of, "Oh, you know, here's a success story," and guess what? I could say that working part time jobs and doing other things, but all of our offices are calling those students as well to represent the institution and represent themselves. So we have to be careful about that. In the end though, it was humbling when I was at a meeting of about thirty-two colleges and universities called the

COFHE Schools, the Consortium of Finance and Higher Education, and they reminded us at that meeting that less than one percent of all students that go to college in the U.S attend our institutions.

So what we want to make sure of is as we're bringing in students from around the globe and certainly through places like Miami and in our backyard of Philadelphia, that we're able to educate that next group of leaders. So they can go out and do the type of work that is taking place in Fox Leadership and when there are graduates, that they could really lead the charge to make sure...When I think of surveys of about thirty years ago, if we did some things thirty years ago when there was a call to national arms, hopefully those students when they graduate, they're not going to be sitting thirty years from now saying, "We should've done something." Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

I have to say I'm so proud of...I mean I am a Penn parent and alum, and donor, small "d" donor...but and administrator, but I am really proud of Penn, and as part of this movement, and very, very proud to be a colleague of Dean Furda, who's brought us, and he's really turbo-charging this effort, and I really appreciate it. I want to turn now last, but not least, to Mister Rick Kahlenberg, Richard Kahlenberg, and I just have to say there are some Penn students here, and so now I have living proof. Last year in one of the classes, I brought in Asha Rangappa, who was Princeton class of '96, and she's now the Dean of Admissions at Yale Law School, and she was one of my Princeton senior thesis students, and a number of the students came up afterwards and said, "Oh, boy, Princeton...you go back pretty far." I said, "Oh, I go back, I go back farther than that." So here's a Harvard, 1982. Rick was one of my students in my sophomore tutorial. I thought that everybody was this brilliant and so forth. I was kind of spoiled with the cohort of students I had in his sophomore tutorial. If Tom Clark were here, he'd disagree that you were the most brilliant of that cohort, by the way. But Rick and I go back all that way, when my wife, Rosalee, and I were Head Resident Tutors at Harvard, and the Penn students here can ask Mr. Kahlenberg after whether in fact I, you know, whether I just started in my curmudgeonly old age putting lots of comments and so forth on papers. I think he will testify that I've been doing it for twenty-eight years.

Rick, you have, you know, I think it's appropriate to end with you because probably more than anybody on this panel you have looked systematically and intensively at sort of the fundamental aspect of this problem, which is...well, even if you get them there, and there are some hidden barriers as well to getting them there in terms of admissions, and other things, how do you get them through? Now your book, *Rewarding Strivers: Helping Low Income Students Succeed in College*, really is sort of the state of the art and the state of our knowledge on the subject, and it has both some pretty dire statistics, but also some pretty, I think, illuminating and hopeful prescriptions. So take it away last, but not least, Rick Kahlenberg.

**RICK KAHLENBERG:**

Thank you, John. So I knew John before he was a big time professor and part time stand-up comedian.

[APPLAUSE]

I have to say that one of the raps on a place like Harvard is that you're taught by grad students instead of professors. In this case, I can't think of any teacher who's had a more profound influence on me than John DiIulio, and those of us, we just had our 25<sup>th</sup> reunion, and a bunch of us were sitting around talking about how important John was to us and Rosalee was there too, supporting us and so I'm really pleased to be here, John, and I just want to say before I make my comments also how impressed I am by the efforts here at the Gesu School to put people on a path for graduation, given the obstacles that students in this school have faced, and your ability to turn around lives is really tremendous, and I owe, all of us owe a debt of gratitude for those of you who are involved. I'm going to make a couple of observations and I know we're probably going long, so I'll try to be brief. I'm going to talk about higher education, but I have also written about K through twelve education. So if we get back into that, I'd like to reserve the right to weigh in there as well.

Okay, first observation is at the higher ed level, we clearly are not tapping into the talent of poor and working class kids that is out there, and here I turn to the Civic Enterprises report that the two Johns put together along with the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, and they found that there are three point four million low income and working class kids who are high achieving in this country, in the K through twelve setting, and yet as John noted, I'll put it a little more bluntly here, smart, low income kids are less likely to go to college than dumb, rich kids, and so there's something profoundly wrong there that we have to try to address in a larger sense.

Second observation has to do with the selective colleges, and I focus on that in part because that is where our leadership class comes from in this country. Fifty-four percent of heads of corporations and forty some percent of the leaders in government come from twelve institutions. So it does matter who goes to the selective institutions and we... The Century Foundation released a report a few years ago that found that at the hundred and forty-six most selective colleges and universities, seventy-four percent of the students came from the richest quarter of the population and three percent from the lowest socio-economic group. So in other words, you're twenty-five times as likely to run into a rich kid as a poor kid on these selective campuses.

Now there have been some important efforts made by the selective institutions to diversify by race, and that's all to the good. In admissions, the research suggests that if you are African-American or Latino, your chances of being admitted are thirty percentage points higher given a particular academic record than if you're white or Asian. But a study, the same studies find that no benefit is provided in the aggregate to low income or working class students, no benefit...and in fact we know that there's another

book we released recently on legacy preferences in college admissions and that basically there's an affirmative action program for the wealthy that gives an extra a hundred and sixty SAT points on average to children of alumni.

So the research that we released in this book called, *Rewarding Strivers*, you all may have a copy of the kind of the summary, finds that the current system of preferences, which basically provides considerable weight to race and ethnicity and no weight to low income students has it exactly backwards if we want to try to reward those students who have faced the largest obstacles. That is to say today if you are socio-economically disadvantaged, you're expected to score three hundred and ninety nine points on the SAT lower than the most socio-economically advantaged student.

The racial gap is still there. Black students on average are expected to score fifty-six points lower than white students. So we now have a system where there are large preferences based on race and no preferences based on class, when the obstacles test suggest that we should be doing something like the reverse.

The Supreme Court is likely to take up the issue of affirmative action maybe in time for the 2012 election. There's a case involving the University of Texas at Austin, which is winding its way up to the Supreme Court, and I think we'll likely see a, with this very conservative Supreme Court, efforts to curtail the use of race and I think it's important that we have some contingency plans in place to really reward strivers of all races.

But the third thing I'll mention is, because John asked me to speak a little bit about some good news and some programs that are working, in the *Rewarding Strivers* book, we also have a chapter on the University of North Carolina, which has a special program called, The Carolina Covenant, that makes sure that there is sufficient financial aid for low income students of all races, but also that there is sufficient support. So they have, you know, pizza parties for the students who are Carolina Scholars. These are students who are two hundred percent of the poverty line or below. There are special mentoring programs and one of the encouraging things was that they, when they asked professors whether they would participate in mentoring Carolina Scholars, they had an overwhelming response. Many more wanted to do it than they had the funds to support. So there's a lot of support among the professors. There's peer mentoring as well, and the preliminary results in the study that Ted Fiske, from the...former *New York Times* editor on education wrote for us, suggest that the graduation rates increased by ten percent once the program was instituted, compared to a control group that was of the same income level, but didn't have the supports in the Carolina Covenant Program.

So I think that's one sign of the type of thing that we need to do. Fiske concluded that the financial aid aspect was very important, in part because it prevented the need for students to take jobs in order to support themselves. So I'll close there, and thanks for having me.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

Thank you so much, Rick.

[APPLAUSE]

And so I'm just...this has been, I think, more than maybe any other year, each panelist so completely and totally on point and on target, I'm going to jump right to, right into the audience if I may. Do we have a microphone out there that we can go around if we want to take a few questions? And I wanted to second, I don't ever want to be outdone in being blunt, Mr. Kahlenberg, so I'll say the privileged, pampered, and protected need to step aside. How's that? Okay. All right...make some room for strivers. Okay, yes:

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #1:**

Hi, my name is Naomi Leapheart, and I currently teach in E3 Center off of Girard Avenue toward the Northern Liberties area. I'm also a Penn alumna, so...yeah. A lot of what you've been talking about really resonates with me. I'm first generation college from Detroit, Michigan, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I guess my concern is that oftentimes when we talk about leveling the playing field we talk about ramping up financial aid, we talk about supporting programs like Posse, that have these really sort of time intensive interventions for kids who really want to go on to college. But so much of what I learned at Penn and what I put into practice now into my life is that the information and the relationships that my student peers had access to before high school, during high school, and then at Penn made the difference, and I would even guess, I would even venture to say that now in my life it's been about Penn, yes, but it's been about the relationships that I was able to cultivate while I was at Penn, and so what role do universities have? What role does the community have in sort of disrupting this privileged information that just...poor kids don't just get...don't get access to until it doesn't matter whether you get a financial aid check if you don't know how to navigate the system.

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

Right.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #1: So...**

**DR. JOHN DiIULIO:**

That's a great question and I'm going to ask Dean Furda to actually take a crack. But let me just say very quickly one of the things that is, you know, a reality, especially at the, as we were talking about college completion, and it's not just the elite universities, it's the majority of universities, but even at, you know, your typical college or university, kids who are middle class or upper middle class who go there have a lot of social capital and economic capital in the bank and tank, they have a rolodex effect. So who gets a summer internship? Who gets this job or that job? Or who's aided, you know, in going through searching through the college placement process? One of the things that I think we try to do at Penn, these days at least, is try to be sensitive to that fact, so that we sort of, in the Fox Program in particular, play that role. In other words, try to bring in kids who, you

know, aren't already there, so to speak. But Dean Furda, you know better than I do. What do you have to say?

**DEAN FURDA:**

Well, it's interesting. We heard the word, "patchwork" before, and I think as we take a look, even with a group of organizations that I listed, most of these are working with students very early on, and most of them are partnering with the school districts or other organizations within the community, and I think that's really the key, because once you're within a place like the University of Pennsylvania, you're part of a network, there could still be barriers to certain information. But I think those are different barriers that we can address. But I think as we're really discussing preparation and then how to navigate a college process, whether you're going to a place that's admitting most of the students that are applying or all of them to highly selective, it's really starting at the grassroots level with organizations that are partnering with individuals in the community, and, you know, I'm sitting here thinking about, you know, K thru eight, and not, you know, kind of the junior guidance counselor. There still is a digital gap, and we acknowledge that. But I do think that the opportunities for access to information is much broader now, but how do you act on it? And even a great website is not going to replace a great teacher.

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

John, could I...?

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Yes, please.

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

I'll just do a quick response. I'm really interested in the fact that culture has been mentioned so many times, and even in your question, we see this at the middle school right here, the impact and negative impact of the media, of the social media, of the street, of drugs on the corner, of lack of exposure to a lot of things *our* children were exposed to. Many of our children just are not, it's not available. So it's at a different level for the same thing.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

No, it's true. You know, some of you know, and some of you have heard this, but when I was a kid, I went to Saint Barnabas, the old Shamrocks, and with a group of six other guys, we were recruited to go to a, I won't mention the name, the Haverford School, mainline school, and it was a culture shock, but the experience was you got there, "Man, how did these people get all of this stuff?" They knew everybody, and I mean people who were damn near idiots, Rick...

[LAUGHTER]

...You know, were able to, you know, succeed where, you know, whereas...is that too blunt, Mr. Bridgeland? Is that impolitic?

[LAUGHTER]

You know, you had bright people and not so bright people. But, unlike in my neighborhood, if you were not so bright and you acted like a goof, you were going to stay behind. Out there you'd act like a goof, and you seemed to get, not get in Penn, maybe Princeton.

[LAUGHTER]

So, and that's a reality that has to be addressed for real. You have to get real about that. Right? Bridge, do you want to...

**JOHN BRIDGELAND:**

I want to just add a quick...You always make us blush with your bluntness, I love it. But it was a wonderful question, because when we looked at all these faith-based examples around the country and then we asked the faith-based leaders in partnership with the CEOs of major corporations with whom they were working, because the workforce and the skills gap issue was a real draw, in terms of organizing local communities, because there was an organic need, which was, "We don't have the skilled workforce to meet needs here in Philadelphia or Cincinnati or San Antonio, Texas, and we, when we asked all these leaders of these programs what was it fundamentally that you're bringing to these young people, you know what answer they gave us? Social networks, and they said, "How did I get a job?" "Through a social network." "How did I find out about financial aid, or how did I get into college, or what even the requirements were to graduate from high school and get into college?" "Social networks."

One last thing: we convened a group of poverty experts around the country right, left, and center, and we expected to hear about the earned income tax credit, and food stamps, and you know what they ended up talking about? The power of social capital, and maybe that's one bold strike...

**JOHN DI IULIO:**

And can I just follow up, not to extend this. I want to go to Wanda. I'm going to George and Rick for just a second. You know, we talk about colleges and the elite colleges, right, and the strivers and these networks, right? Cause I think you hit, you just put your finger on the raw nerve of this whole deal, and what about if you go to one of the Catholic high schools or one of the prep schools here, you may not go to a top school. It's not easy to go to a top school. Let's not even talk about all the top schools right now. But you're going to more likely go to college or university. So cracking that egg first, whether it's if you can

go to the Prep, you know, Saint Joe's Prep right, that's a big deal. I mean that's just, you've changed the odds, or if you can...do you guys, do you agree with that, Father Bur and Rick? I mean is that, in terms of the social network impact that maybe having, focusing more on the K thru eight and like what the Gesu does and other schools do, LaSalle Academy does, trying to get kids into high schools, where they're more likely to get some social networking and connections and a little more of a launch pad. Is that...?

**RICK KAHLENBERG:**

Do you want to go first?

**FATHER BUR:**

Yeah, I actually do agree with that, John, and one of the things that we tried to do with our outreach to the community to encourage non-traditional students to come to Saint Joe's, was to bring the information into the neighborhood. So we brought the information down to Saint Joseph's Prep, and invited everybody from Gesu and everybody we could find that might be interested in it, and just last week we had a financial aid seminar at Saint Joe's Prep, and there were a lot of North Philadelphia people there that aren't necessarily related. So there's a way in which we can use the institution to do some of the sharing of information that people need in these neighborhoods.

**RICK KAHLENBERG:**

I completely agree and you've got me into my, the speech that I wanted to give about K through twelve education, and I'll make it very brief. Probably the single best thing you can do for a low income child is give her a chance to go to a middle class school, where there are peers who are going to actively encourage achievement, and where there are the type of networks that you're talking about. Now I love what you are doing here, and I love what the KIPP folks are doing, but ninety percent of students go to public schools, and right now we have a system that is highly segregated by both socio-economic status and race. The Century Foundation just a couple of weeks ago released a study in Montgomery County, Maryland, which found that if you are a low income public housing student, and you are randomly assigned to two sets of schools, a middle class set of schools that received less funding per pupil, or a higher poverty school where you received more, extra funds for lower class, smaller class size and that sort of thing, where did you do better? You did, I don't know how to transit it, but point four of a standard deviation, better at the middle class schools, in terms of math achievement. The math achievement between low income kids and middle class kids was cut in half over the elementary school time period. But what that whole discussion missed was what you're mentioning, John, the social network. So on top of that, these low income kids who were fortunate enough to be assigned to public housing in a more middle class area, are meeting friends who will help them get jobs down the line, who will talk about the fact they are going to college, and encourage it, and I think until we deal with that issue of economically segregated schools, we're not going to be able to have genuine equal opportunity in this country.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

I was just saying, we'll turn to Wanda for comment, but I just wanted to say, as well, I think it's a good thing to note, a bit of good news for our region, that our Catholic prep schools and our Interact schools, our Haverford's, our Chestnut Hill Academies, our Episcopal's and what not, have all stepped up more the last decade or so, I think, in this region, sensitive to this issue. We're not where we should be, but they're much better than they used to be back in the day. Wanda:

**WANDA BIGHAM:**

Okay, two things I want to say. In terms of going to a college or university, and feeling that you lack that information, and I know exactly what you're talking about, it seems to me that in the last fifteen or twenty years, there have been some special efforts made in addition to whatever there may have been before to break down into smaller groups, and one that comes to mind is the efforts for freshmen to put them with a faculty member and a student member and do them in small groups, so that they can ask questions without feeling threatened by being in a group like this. You've learned, you've learned to ask questions in this big group, and this is wonderful, and John has found his voice as well.

[LAUGHTER]

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

I'm still struggling, but I'm trying.

[LAUGHTER]

**WANDA BIGHAM:**

But in breaking down for freshmen, and getting them into clubs and into small classes, they find their voice and they can ask these things. But the second thing I want to say is this: to empower students to ask. I have a mantra that I have used with the students wherever I've been that says, "Nobody is looking for you, nobody is responsible for you, and nobody owes you anything." I had to look, it's been awhile since I've said that. "Nobody owes you anything." I said, "I am the world's biggest optimist," okay, "but I'm a pragmatist as well that says if you want something for your school, for yourself as a student, as a teacher, whatever, you are responsible for it, and it does not matter whether you are tall or short, or rich, or poor, stand up and ask for what you need, and to the schools, we've mentioned how much service college, faith-based colleges and universities are providing, I would have to tell you that as a college president, I don't know what this school needs. So if you have something that Gesu School needs, or your school needs, and there's a college or university nearby, go to them. Tell them what you need. See if

they can provide it. But don't assume that they know and are just unwilling to help. So take responsibility, and act.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

I saw a bunch of hands go up and down. Yes, ma'am.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

Uh...

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

How are you doing? Nice to see you again, how have you been?

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

Okay....

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

There's a mic right behind you.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

I was going to say that what you said was perfectly on time. We have a program where our seniors have a career service mentoring on Friday afternoon component, so that because of the social networking that is lacking, we also have a college senior seminar class, where they are...where they apply for colleges.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Say where you're from again. Tell me where you're from.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

Philadelphia Mennonite High School.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Philadelphia Mennonite High School.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

The only urban Mennonite High School in the country, and we've just gotten through accreditation, this is our thirteenth year.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Here here.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

But...to God be the glory. We are looking, I am so excited about being here. Let me just thank the whole panel. There are so many things that I was not aware of that are available and so we will be taking advantage of those things. I guess my question to you is sustaining, how you can sustain the private, say Christian schools like Gesu, to get these kids through. We've had a hundred percent college acceptance of all of our grads the past twelve years, but just maintaining and sustaining ourselves is a challenge, so if anybody has anything and you said go to the colleges, colleges...I'm coming to you...

[LAUGHTER]

We need to know how to, you know, when we have these kinds of programs, how to sustain them...

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

President Beck?

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #2:**

...So that the kids can get...

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

President Beck would like to respond.

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

Well, I just want to have one quick say. I said this in our last board meeting, because we're always concerned about sustainability, and I read something, "If you become relevant, you would become sustainable." I think that says it all. Thank you. I think we're relevant, so...

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Thank you, thank you.

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

We'll become sustainable.

**WANDA BIGHAM:**

There you go.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

With a capital "R." I think we have time for one more and I've seen, yes, sir. Here comes the mic.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER #3:**

Hi, my name is John Curry. I was wondering if anyone has focused on the cost structure of colleges in terms of closing the college gap, and if anyone has focused on the large tuition increases that we continue to see?

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Well, let me tell you, I'll, so as to spare Dean Furda any aggravation or heartburn when he gets back to Penn, the question was about the cost structure of colleges. Now look, are we all friends here? Can we talk truthfully? It's a disgrace, it's a disgrace, and you know, we have, and nobody, and it's not just the elite schools, it's not, it's everybody, okay? There's a thing out, it's a new concept, it's called productivity. It means you do more with what you have. That means at all levels, faculty having to do more teaching, taking on administrative responsibilities. If you look at where the costs, these tuition increases have come, and again, it's not just the big, elite schools, it's the middle-sized colleges and universities, there has been a growth in administrative staff, things that faculty did thirty-five and forty years ago, faculty do not do now. They don't. So somebody like me is an oddity in that, you know, you teach, you do this, you run a program, you have administrative responsibility, and I feel like I have lots of free time. You know, we only get three months off. You know? You know...

[LAUGHTER]

And then if I teach three classes, I'm in the classroom, are you ready? Nine whole hours. Whew!

[LAUGHTER]

My godfather, who was a construction guy, you know, I don't want to go into it, you know? So you know, of course, we do have to prepare our notes because James Madison might have come back to life and changed what he was thinking.

[LAUGHTER]

But so let's get real about the cost structure. Now are there real costs? Are there real pressures? Of course there are, and are there responsible college and university presidents, like our own, trying to deal with that in a creative way? Absolutely, but the reality is that we, you know, we have a moral obligation to bring these costs into line, so that we can make these institutions at all levels more accessible. But it has been sort of a runaway train for the past three decades, and I think mainly in the context of this, you know, economic crisis since 2007. Even the mightiest of the mighty, the Harvard's and the Princeton's have had to figure this out. We at Penn are proud, because we're so tuition driven and relatively poor, that we've always had to play it much more closer to financial margin. But I think that issue is absolutely central and it can't be looked past. I can't believe that we are out of time. But we're not out of luck, and one of the things I want to stress most of all in closing is the moral obligation that I think was stated explicitly or was implicit in the comments of each person on this panel. The moral obligation to do more and better at all the various stages and phases to close this college gap. It's something that is important morally. It's something in which the civic health of the nation really does depend. So I want to thank Chris Beck, and John Bridgeland, and Rick Kahlenberg, and Father Bur, and Eric Furda, and Wanda Bigham. I want to thank them all, and I want to thank you once again. So enjoy, God bless you, and thank you once again.

[APPLAUSE]

**CHRISTINE BECK:**

And thank you, John, more than anything, and you will hear from one more student.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

All right, thank you, and now what do we get to do now, Chris, anything good? All right! Now the finale! All right!

**SEMAJ , GESU STUDENT:**

Good afternoon.

**JOHN DiIULIO:**

Good Afternoon.

**SEMAJ , GESU STUDENT:**

My name is Semaj \_\_\_\_\_, and I am in the eighth grade, and I am in the eighth grade, and I am the president of the student council.

[APPLAUSE]

I would like to thank everyone for attending the Gesu School's Thirteenth Annual Symposium, and we would like to thank our distinguished panelists with these gifts.

[APPLAUSE]

**CHRIS BECK:**

Are you going to say anything else?

**SEMAJ, GESU STUDENT:**

No.

**CHRIS BECK:**

Leave the (inaudible) gifts out. Thank you.

**SEMAJ, GESU STUDENT:**

You're welcome.

**CHRIS BECK:**

Right now I suppose we should do a picture, and that is the end of the program. Thank you all so much.

[APPLAUSE]