

Reach

ISSUE 5 | JUNE 2012

THE PUBLICATION FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH

The Pullias Center: Changing Society for the Better

THE NEWLY NAMED Earl and Pauline Pullias Center for Higher Education at USC Rossier School of Education continues to make significant contributions to research, policy and practice to improve higher education. The center, formerly the Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis, is renowned for research that informs postsecondary education governance and policy worldwide, and for its outreach programs that improve college access and success for underrepresented youth.

A \$5 million bequest from the Pullias Family estate has allowed the center to be named in honor of the late Earl V. Pullias, one of the founding faculty of the University of Southern California's department of higher education. Pullias was the author of numerous books and articles on philosophical issues in higher education, and was widely recognized for his leadership and scholarly activity in the field.

"Horace Mann said that all children should go to school, and he said that because of something we have held true ever since, which is that education is a way out of poverty and a way into the middle class and upper class," said William G. Tierney, director of the center.

The interdisciplinary center is nationally recognized for its two successful college access and readiness programs for local underserved high school students, Increasing Access via Mentoring (IAM) and SummerTIME.

Additionally, the Pullias Center is a leader in research on postsecondary capacity, given the demands for a more educated workforce, and the role that for-profit colleges and universities might have in meeting these needs.

"The Pullias Center is not just theory driven. This is about creating action and being involved in communities. We're going into these schools and working with the institutional leaders to create changes," said Adrianna Kezar, associate director of the center. "It's really about creating change while we're doing research."

"The Pullias Center for Higher Education is an institute that is striving to implement social change that enables education to help people move on up and move out of poverty."

-William G. Tierney, Pullias Center Director



Always Learning
High School students
play **Collegeology**
Games's Mission
Admission on Facebook.

MESSAGE

From the Dean

Rossier prides itself on research that informs and transforms scholarship, policy and practice in the fields of K-12 and higher education.

This issue of Reach, featuring a brand new look and masthead, highlights a research center that has been at the forefront of this charge and is making a real difference in the field of higher education.

The newly named USC Earl and Pauline Pullias Center for Higher Education is able to continue this great tradition due to the generosity of the Pullias Family estate.

Recently, Director William G. Tierney spoke of the legacy of the late Earl V. Pullias and the future of the center. He also announced that a watch belonging to Pullias would be "on display in the center as a symbol of the timeless gift and contribution of the Pullias family and remind us to work even harder."

In the following pages, you will learn just how hard the Pullias Center faculty and staff have been working, and about the remarkable impact of this work not only on the field of education, but on the lives of students. And that is where it really counts. I think that Earl Pullias would be proud.



Karen Symms Gallagher, Ph.D.
*Emery Stoops and
Joyce King Stoops Dean*

USC
Rossier
School of Education

Pullias Faculty

FACULTY MEMBERS affiliated with the Pullias Center for Higher Education conduct research aimed at improving the postsecondary sector and increasing access to college. Among the center's roster of affiliated scholars and their areas of expertise:

Shafiqah Ahmadi, Assistant Professor of Clinical Education, focuses on diversity and legal protection of underrepresented students, including female Muslims and sexual assault survivors

Lloyd Armstrong, University Professor, is an expert in higher education strategy and policy, and the federal financing of science

Darnell Cole, Associate Professor of Education, specializes in college student experiences and performance, including those of African American, Latino, Muslim and Asian students

Zoë B. Corwin, Research Assistant Professor, is the project director for **Collegeology Games** and conducts research on college preparation programs and access to financial aid for underserved students.

Guilbert Hentschke, Professor and Richard T. Cooper and Mary Catherine Cooper Chair in Public School Administration, focuses on the finance and governance of public, non-profit and for-profit education organizations

Tatiana Melguizo, Assistant Professor of Education, specializes in higher education, affirmative action, and college graduation rates

John Brooks Slaughter, Professor of Education and Professor of Engineering, focuses his research on higher education leadership, diversity and inclusion, and access and affordability

Kristan Venegas, Associate Professor of Clinical Education, is an expert in higher education financial aid policy for minority students



Expert Leadership Working to Create Lifelong Change

Two Notable Higher Education Scholars Lead the Pullias Center in Putting Research into Practice

WILLIAM G. TIERNEY is Director of the Pullias Center for Higher Education, University Professor, and Wilbur-Kieffer Professor of Higher Education at USC. He is one of the nation's foremost scholars on college access for underrepresented youth and improving the performance of colleges and universities. For the past two decades, he has led the center in conducting research that informs policies and practices related to educational equity and postsecondary effectiveness.

In April 2012, Tierney was the first USC scholar to be elected president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). During his tenure, the organization will focus on issues pertaining to education and poverty.

Tierney's current research efforts involve remediation and college-readiness, access to college, governance in higher education, and the role of universities in underdeveloped countries. He has authored numerous books, journal articles and reports. Recent books include *The Impact of Culture on Organizational Decision-Making: Theory and Practice in Higher Education* (2008) and *New Players, Different Game: Understanding the Rise of For-Profit Colleges and Universities* (2007).



ADRIANNA KEZAR is Associate Director of the USC Pullias Center and Associate Professor of Education. She is a leading expert on the change process in higher education institutions and the role of leadership in creating change. She also conducts research on

strategies needed to increase access to and completion of college, and to improve teaching.

Kezar is widely recognized and cited for her groundbreaking research on non-tenure track and adjunct faculty in higher education. She is a prolific author with 14 published books. Her most recent book, *Embracing Non-Tenure Track Faculty: Changing Campuses for the New Faculty Majority*, details the findings of her review of faculty contracts at institutions regarded as potential models for their support of contingent faculty.

Making College Access and Readiness the Mission

A New Suite of Games Called **Collegeology Games** Teaches Students Strategies for Getting into College

OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES, countless low-income first generation college students have benefitted from highly successful mentoring and college readiness programs through the Pullias Center for Higher Education.

Now, the center is magnifying its impact with a new digital game on the social networking site Facebook that teaches high school students strategies for getting into college.

The online game, called *Mission Admission*, is part of the **Collegeology Games** suite of games created in partnership with the Game Innovation Lab in the USC School of Cinematic Arts and the Center for Outcomes Research and Evaluation in the USC Schools of Engineering and Education.

Collegeology Games began with the card game *Application Crunch*, released last year. It has been used by college counselors in underserved high schools throughout the country.

“We’re trying to reduce the mystery in the college application process,” said Tierney. “We know we need more people to become college educated, and we know there are people in high school today who could go to college but don’t know how to do it.”

He said that while the recommended high school counselor to student ratio is 250:1, California has one counselor for about every 800 high school students, even higher in low-income communities. The ratio is 400:1 nationally. Cutbacks to school budgets further

threaten the ability of college counselors to effectively assist students.

Collegeology Games are designed to act like roadmaps to college for students in these overcrowded schools who lack meaningful college guidance. These students are often the first in their families to be thinking about higher education.

“**Collegeology Games** teach students how to set goals, choose extracurricular activities, accumulate resources, and meet deadlines so that they improve their odds of getting into the university of their choice and obtaining the financial aid that they’ll need,” said Zoe Corwin, director of the project.

Observational and survey data from school-based playtest sessions with 220 high school students showed increased college-going efficacy and levels of college knowledge.

The project initially received support from the USC Office of the Provost, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation, and TG. Later, it received \$1.5 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES), and an additional \$1 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



Playing for Keeps
Los Angeles students play **Collegeology Games’ Application Crunch** card game

59%

PERCENTAGE OF LOW INCOME STUDENTS WHO QUALIFY FOR HIGHLY SELECTIVE SCHOOLS WHO EITHER FOREGO COLLEGE OR ENROLL IN LESS SELECTIVE SCHOOLS

1M

ESTIMATED SHORTFALL OF CALIFORNIA WORKERS WITH SKILLS LEARNED IN COLLEGE BY 2025

60%

PERCENTAGE OF CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN WHO ARE NOT PREPARED TO TAKE COLLEGE-LEVEL WORK

1:800

COUNSELOR TO STUDENT RATIO IN LOW-INCOME SCHOOLS IN CALIFORNIA

7th

THE U.S. RANKS 7TH IN THE WORLD FOR THE PROPORTION OF WORKERS AGED 25-34 WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE

Major Research Grants Awarded to Faculty

Since October 2011:

Estela Mara Bensimon is PI and **Alicia Dowd** is co-PI for a **\$500,000** Ford Foundation grant to build campus and system capacity to support state college completion plans in four states.

David C. Dwyer received a **\$100,000** grant from the Morgridge Family Foundation in support of USC Hybrid High School, an innovative charter school which opens this fall in downtown Los Angeles, and is accessible up to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, and year-round. Dwyer also received a **\$150,000** grant from Next Generation Learning Challenges in support of the school.

Dean **Karen Symms Gallagher** received a **\$2.2 million** grant from the National Science Foundation for Math for America Los Angeles, a five-year fellowship program based at USC, Claremont Graduate University, and Harvey Mudd College for recent college graduates and mid-career professionals who make a commitment to teach math in public secondary schools.

Adrianna Kezar is consulting on a three-year **\$250,000** project from the Keck Foundation to study undergraduate STEM performance at 12 colleges and universities in California.

Harold O'Neil is PI and **Robert Rueda** is co-PI for a **\$240,000** grant from the U.S. Department of Defense, with UCLA as the prime recipient. The research project focuses on the role of instructional strategies and problem-solving in the STEM game environment.

Gisela Ragusa is PI and **Guilbert Hentschke** is co-PI for the GANAS (Goals and Needs in Accelerated STEM) project funded by the U.S. Department of Education, with East Los Angeles College as the prime recipient. The five-year project is funded for **\$651,552**, and aims to increase STEM degrees and transfers.

William G. Tierney received a **\$160,000** grant from the College Access Foundation of California to support scholarships for students in the Increasing Access via Mentoring (I AM) program, one-on-one mentoring and guidance in the college application and financial aid process, and the SummerTIME program, an intensive writing and college readiness program for first-generation Los Angeles students.

Brendesha Tynes was awarded a **\$798,276** grant from the National Institutes of Health to study racial discrimination online and the impact on adolescent adjustment over time.

How California Can Make it Happen

WITH CALIFORNIA EXPECTED to face an estimated shortfall of one million college-educated workers by 2025, William G. Tierney and Guilbert C. Hentschke co-authored a report urging the state to look to nonprofit and for-profit private colleges and universities to meet its future demands.

“Making it Happen: Increasing College Access and Participation in California Higher Education” presents eight public policy recommendations that might enable legitimate private providers to take on additional students.



Scan this code with your smart phone to read the report.

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