Launched in April 2013 by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and its LEAP Presidents’ Trust, the LEAP Employer-Educator Compact now includes more than 250 business and nonprofit leaders and college and university presidents who have come together to ensure that all college students graduate with both broad knowledge and specific skills as well as practical hands-on experience putting knowledge to use in real-world settings.

**American University**

**President Cornelius Kerwin**

American University is a leading institution in combining academic and experiential education and has developed several significant opportunities for collaboration between our faculty and employer partners to benefit student professional development. In the class of 2012, 88 percent of graduating seniors (based on responses from 81 percent of the class) reported holding one or more internships during the course of their undergraduate education. One model at the School of Communication (SOC) provides substantive internships for students with well-established employer partners. SOC Dean’s Interns receive meaningful, real-world assignments that provide recognition and future pathways to jobs. For example, Dean’s Interns work in the *Washington Post* newsroom with *Post* staff members to develop stories for the newspaper and washingtonpost.com. Another model at the School of International Service offers graduate practica that give students real-world experience in project management and consulting. Students work in teams led by faculty mentors with expert clients including US and international government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and businesses to conduct policy and program analysis. For example, the National Geographic Society’s Printing and Digital Media team works to maximize the efficiency of the society’s international partnerships and revamp their international digital media campaign. The Save the Children team analyzes urban programming in Save the Children’s livelihood and child protection sectors. These and other models are successful because of well-established relationships between American University and employers. We continue to work with our employer partners to inform the education and development of our students. For more information, see: [www.american.edu](http://www.american.edu).

**California State University, Northridge**

**President Dianne F. Harrison**

California State University, Northridge (CSUN) has developed many partnerships with local companies and nonprofits through which it offers hands-on learning opportunities to students and from which it gains insights to influence changes in curricular offerings. It has a strong partnership between Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne (PWR) and the College of Engineering and Computer Science. PWR engages in technical collaboration with the college, participates in design clinics with students, and leaders serve on the College Industrial Advisory Board. Mission Community Hospital also has long partnered with CSUN to provide ongoing student internships and sponsor collaborative faculty/student research projects. At their community outreach and education center in the city of San Fernando, Mission Hospital installed a diabetic teaching kitchen with consultation from the CSUN
Magaram Center for Food Science, Nutrition and Dietetics. Faculty and students from the center and from the Department of Kinesiology provide community programming and special projects at the San Fernando site focused on nutrition education and physical activity as part of an obesity mitigation and prevention initiative. For more information, see: www.csun.edu.

Clark University
President David Angel
Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, has launched LEEP—Liberal Education and Effective Practice—as an organizing principle for its entire undergraduate program. Through LEEP, it is forging valuable connections among students and a wide array of global businesses, organizations, and communities. Clark is combining traditional liberal education experiences with intense world and workplace experiences. Through the LEEP Projects program, students work closely with faculty, graduate students, and leaders outside the university on a particular project or topic—such as assisting in consultations with local entrepreneurs, helping to analyze the results of a psychology study, or collecting field-based data on climate change. Clark also has a longstanding relationship with the Worcester public schools, is working with Massachusetts state legislators on issues of public family policy, and is developing projects using the analysis of psychological and sociocultural phenomena to promote positive human development policies and practices. For more information, see: www.clarku.edu/leep/.

The College of Wooster
President Grant Cornwell
Students in The College of Wooster’s Applied Mathematics Research Experience work in teams to solve real-world problems for local businesses. Wooster’s Independent Study program gives every student the opportunity to conduct research one-on-one with a faculty mentor, developing analytic, problem-solving, and communication skills. A discovery made during one of those projects helped launch ABS Materials, whose chief science officer is a Wooster chemistry professor, and which now employs several Wooster graduates. The college’s newest initiative is an integrated program of advising, planning, and experiential learning, called APEX, which helps students develop clarity of direction and put their ideas to work in the world before they graduate through a growing network of internship, applied research, and entrepreneurship opportunities. For more information, see: www.wooster.edu/academics/apex.

Drake University
President David Maxwell
Drake University’s mission statement emphasizes the deliberate integration of liberal education and preparation for the world of practice. Drake University works with many local businesses, nonprofits, and governmental entities to provide students with professional experiences. For instance, for ten years Drake has partnered with Meredith Corporation, a national media and marketing company that publishes such well-known titles as Parents, Ladies’ Home Journal, Better Homes & Gardens, and Fitness to offer an apprenticeship program to Drake students. Each year, about ten journalism and graphic design students are chosen to work up to twenty hours a week in paid internships at the company. Students receive academic credit and a professor oversees their apprenticeships and helps them draw connections between their academic work and the skill portfolio they are developing in the program. All of the students in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication also participate in a senior capstone project that often involves partnership with businesses or nonprofit organizations. For example, seniors in public relations recently worked on an initiative sponsored by Character Counts in Iowa, the Community Foundation of
Greater Des Moines, and the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa to promote civility in the state. Drake is also collaborating with the Principal Financial Group, other major Des Moines-based businesses and organizations, and the Business-Higher Education Forum to develop cross-sector collaborations that strengthen the education-to-workforce pipeline in the Central Iowa region. For more information, see: www.drake.edu/academics/undergraduate/majors/majors_magazines/ or http://www.bhef.com/solutions/cri/.

Eastern Connecticut State University
President Elsa Núñez
Since 2006, Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) has worked to create many more opportunities for applied learning. Through an initiative called Liberal Arts Works! (LAW), ECSU is developing a university-wide experiential learning requirement. Students engage in such activities as internships, co-ops, and undergraduate research projects. ECSU has developed many business and community partnerships to expand the opportunities students have to work or do paid internships while in college. One particularly successful example at ECSU involves a recently launched Work Hub. With support from Cigna, a Bloomfield, CT-based insurance company, ECSU has renovated a building in which Cigna offers students paid internships. After training at Cigna’s corporate headquarters, the students work on campus under the guidance of a Cigna mentor on coding and technical requirements for the firm. The partnership allows many more students to do internships without the burden of traveling to off-campus locations. After just one year, several students have both participated in internships and have been offered full-time paid positions upon graduation. For more information, see: www.aacu.org/aacu_news/aacunews12/august12/feature.cfm.

Miami Dade University
President Eduardo J. Padrón
Miami Dade College (MDC) partners closely with industry leaders to arm the next generation with the skills to succeed in many workforce fields, including technology, biological sciences, health, business, teaching, and law enforcement. One especially successful example is MDC’s partnership with Florida Power & Light (FPL). Through this partnership, MDC students are trained by industry experts, mostly provided by FPL, in a learning environment that prepares them for available jobs, adding value to FPL by reducing costs in training and mitigating high turnover rates. The partnership has experienced great success for all parties; FPL has a pipeline of qualified candidates from which to draw new employees, and MDC is able to educate students who will receive direct employment at the end of their training. Students, who are the greatest beneficiaries, know that they have a high-paying job waiting for them. In 2012, MDC graduated its fifth class to undergo the program, for a total of ninety-four graduates. The program’s curriculum conforms to national standards, giving graduates the qualifications to work in other nuclear facilities besides FPL facilities. MDC’s School of Science is also preparing a new generation of biological scientists and lending support to the college’s industry partners. Built with the recommendation of the region’s employers in mind, MDC’s Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences program combines a strong academic curriculum with extensive hands-on training. A capstone internship with a prospective employer or private/public partner moves beyond the classroom, allowing students to put their skills to the test in the real world. MDC students also benefit from strong partnerships with such local health care giants as Baptist Health of South Florida, as well as hundreds of clinical sites throughout the county. These partnerships enhance the educational curriculum of the college and equip future health care leaders with the hands-on training that is critical to quality care. For more information on MDC’s many workforce education programs, see www.mdc.edu.
Middlesex Community College
*President Carole A. Cowan*
LifeLinks, Inc. is a private, nonprofit company that provides services and support in Southern New Hampshire and Northeast Massachusetts for people with developmental disabilities. Middlesex Community College’s Social Science division initially worked with LifeLinks to establish a certificate in human services. Through a subsequent partnership between the division, business and industry programs, and LifeLinks, Middlesex began training LifeLinks employees in various areas of CPR, First Aid, Medical Administration, etc. Middlesex also participates in the Middlesex 3 Coalition—a regional partnership of communities in the Rt. 3 corridor that work with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. The coalition works to advance the economic development of the region, including improving the educational outcomes of residents. MCC will be hosting and coordinating an event for the Coalition in Advanced Manufacturing in the spring of 2013. For more information, see: [https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/workforcetraining/](https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/workforcetraining/).

Oregon State University
*President Edward J. Ray*
Oregon State University has a long tradition of experiential learning through research and internships with industry partners. The university was a founding member of the Multiple Engineering Co-Op Program (MECOP) in 1978, which has grown to more than 120 member companies, including Intel, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Daimler Trucks North America, Garmin, and Boeing. Nearly 500 students from the College of Engineering and the College of Business participate in MECOP, completing two six-month paid internships as part of a five-year degree program. Other internship programs include outdoor and athletic apparel, with Oregon State sending student interns to Nike, Adidas, Columbia Sportswear, and others. The university and Samaritan Health Services have partnered to develop a new sports medicine facility on campus, with opportunities for student internships, training, and research. And in another industry partnership, Intel and the School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science formed the Intel Learning Company, where freshman students work in teams on real projects to gain valuable work-ready skills in programming, teamwork, and leadership. For more information, see: [http://www.oregonstate.edu](http://www.oregonstate.edu).

Tulane University
*President Scott Cowen*
Through its Center for Public Service and partnerships with such organizations as Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans (CCANO) and New Orleans Outreach, Tulane students participate in service-learning activities and public service internships as part of their “public service graduation requirement” and gain work experience in such areas as outreach and recruitment, program management, educational services, fundraising, needs assessments, legal services, outreach counseling, event planning and management, and construction safety training. Both New Orleans Outreach and CCANO also are represented on the Tulane Center for Public Service Community Advisory Board and, therefore, contribute substantively to the creation and ongoing improvement of experiential learning experiences for Tulane students. For more information, see: [http://tulane.edu/cps/](http://tulane.edu/cps/).
University of La Verne

President Devorah Lieberman

The University of La Verne has a well-established partnership with the Fairplex of Southern California, the largest business and entertainment complex in inland Southern California. The university partners with the Fairplex Child Development Center (CDC), which provides essential services to the community while also functioning as the site for practical and experiential learning for students pursuing a Child Development Degree. Through this partnership, the CDC staff continually build their knowledge of best practices based on the latest early childhood education research, providing our students with practical experience based on the leading edge of educational approaches. As part of the La Verne Experience, the university-wide signature initiative, a strategic partnership with the City of Pomona is also being developed that expands an existing partnership with the Pomona Unified School District (PUSD). Together, the university and PUSD have established Professional Development Schools, public school sites that provide a clinical setting for the preparation of future teachers. Similarly, the university has a long-standing partnership with Vicenti, Lloyd and Stutzman, an accounting firm that has provided internships for La Verne accounting students for more than thirty years. The university also has an emerging partnership with Target designed to integrate employment skills and expectations into new curricular offerings. For more information, see: www.laverne.edu.

University System of Maryland

Chancellor William E. Kirwan

As part of an initiative sponsored by the Business-Higher Education Forum, the University System of Maryland (USM) is leading a multi-campus effort to bring the unique resources of institutions in the system to address Maryland’s STEM workforce needs. The University of Maryland College Park, in partnership with Northrop Grumman, is creating the nation’s first undergraduate multidisciplinary residential cybersecurity honors program. The University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) is developing a project that connects STEM undergraduates to new career pathways by applying their knowledge to innovation and entrepreneurship, which will begin with a focus on chemistry and link STEM undergraduate education to business, R&D, and innovation. For more information, see: www.usmd.edu/usm/.

Wake Forest University

President Nathan Hatch

Wake Forest University’s newly reconfigured Office of Personal and Career Development (OPCD) has a new mission to “teach and equip all Wake Forest students to navigate the path from college to career with clarity, confidence and competence.” The university provides a range of curricular and cocurricular offerings to all Wake Forest students with a vision “to inspire, challenge and prepare all students to find careers that reflect their values and lead to lives of connection and meaning.” Among many programs, OPCD offers a “career course sequence” through which students explore their own goals and strengths prior to moving on to an exploration of career options and the preparation needed to pursue those careers. OPCD also works with employer partners to maintain a robust “College to Career Community”—a network of alumni, faculty, and business leaders and practitioners to whom students can reach out for advice or guidance on particular careers or pathways. For more information, see: http://www.aacu.org/aacunews13/march13/feature.cfm.
Washington and Lee University

President Kenneth Ruscio

Through such programs as the Johnson Opportunity Grants and the Shepherd Program for the Interdisciplinary Study of Poverty and Human Capability, Washington and Lee students combine their commitments to engaged citizenship with their development of professional identities in a wide variety of fields. Johnson Opportunity Grants allow students to participate in summer internships and creative projects of their own design in fields of their interest. The Shepherd Poverty Program also has an eight-week summer internship component that connects with a sustained and integrated set of curricular and cocurricular experiences. Two other programs that connect the problem-solving and analytical skills students develop at Washington and Lee with practical experience are the Roger Mudd Center for Ethics and the Entrepreneurship Program, both of which connect students with alumni and other practitioners throughout the year in workshops, business competitions judged by executives, and ethics institutes in which practicing professionals in law, business, medicine, and journalism analyze case studies with students.

- Shepherd Poverty Program: [http://www.wlu.edu/x12034.xml](http://www.wlu.edu/x12034.xml)
- Johnson Opportunity Grants: [http://www.wlu.edu/x33333.xml](http://www.wlu.edu/x33333.xml)
- Entrepreneurship Program: [http://entrepreneurship.wlu.edu/entrepreneurship_program/](http://entrepreneurship.wlu.edu/entrepreneurship_program/)
- Mudd Center for Ethics: [http://www.wlu.edu/x52188.xml](http://www.wlu.edu/x52188.xml)