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## Report: Status Quo in Higher Education Threatens America's Global Competitiveness

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA., Oct. 29, 2008 — America is no longer among the top ten most educated countries in the world, and it is one of only two nations in which young adults are less well educated than middle-aged adults. To keep the United States and American students competitive globally in the twenty-first century, policymakers, citizen boards, and leaders of colleges and universities must work together in a more ambitious, directed, and cooperative way, according to a new report from the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB).

The report, **Aligning American Higher Education with a Twenty-First Century Public Agenda**, offers recommendations for those with a stake in higher education governance on how to improve the American higher education system. It is the result of a conference, "Examining the National Purposes of American Higher Education: A Leadership Approach to Policy Reform," held at the Miller Center in June. Participants including Virginia Governor Tim Kaine and leading higher education administrators, scholars, and practitioners from across the country began with the premise that the U.S. is in danger of falling far behind the rest of the industrialized world in the educational level of its citizenry, and that it must produce one million more higher education degrees and certificates each year to lead the world in education by 2025.

Specifically, they addressed questions including:

- How has higher education responded to demands to better educate people, particularly in fields related to competitiveness in the global economy?
- Why have some policies and institutions failed, while others have succeeded?
- How can leadership at both state and national levels improve higher education?

"Knowing the extent to which the U.S. is falling behind other nations in meeting the educational challenges of the twenty-first century, the message is clear," said AGB President Richard Legon and Gerald L. Baliles, Director of the Miller Center. "The status quo is not acceptable and the magnitude of required change demands the attention of all responsible for policy development and implementation."

Recipients of the report include state higher education executive officers, state legislators, and university and college governing boards nationwide. Additionally, through a partnership with the National Governors Association, the report will be sent to each state's governor.

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<http://www.millercenter.org>

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*Founded in 1975, the Miller Center of Public Affairs is a leading nonpartisan public policy institution that aims to fulfill Jefferson's public service mission by serving as a national meeting place for engaged citizens, scholars, students, media representatives, and government officials to research, reflect, and report on issues of national importance to the governance of the United States, with special attention to the central role and history of the presidency.*

*The Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges is the only national association that serves the interests and needs of academic governing boards, boards of institutionally related foundations, and campus CEOs and other senior-level campus administrators on issues related to higher education governance and leadership. It strengthens and protects the United States' unique form of institutional governance through its research, services, and advocacy and is committed to citizen trusteeship of American higher education.*

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