



## Postsecondary Completion Highlights

**Our Priority: traditionally underserved students in Arizona and Florida access, persist and complete a high-quality, postsecondary certificate or degree**

### About Our Work

Today, too many of Arizona's and Florida's high school graduates require remediation upon entry into college. Additionally, less than 40 percent of our states' working-age adults hold at least an associate's degree at a time when a larger percentage of entry-level jobs are requiring some form of postsecondary education<sup>4</sup>. In order to help even more students pursue and complete an education beyond high school, the Foundation assessed its postsecondary completion strategies in 2013 to ensure greater impact across both states.

The assessment led to a refinement of the Foundation's postsecondary strategies and to the creation of a dedicated program director position. With this added capacity, the Foundation gains a better understanding of the postsecondary education landscape, including best practices in effective support and scholarship programs especially for first-generation students in Arizona and Florida.

The Foundation surveyed a number of colleges and universities in Arizona and Florida to gather input on the kinds of postsecondary completion programs that already exist, where there was interest or activity aligned to Helios' revised strategies, and identification of opportunities to craft more comprehensive, effective programs that will impact more students.

Through those survey results, additional research and evaluation, a decade of investment history and a new staff person dedicated to this area, the Foundation is working to ensure traditionally underserved students access, persist and attain a high-quality postsecondary certificate or degree.

**The Foundation believes it can have a significant impact on Postsecondary Completion by:**

- Constructing scholarships to support postsecondary persistence and completion;
- Supporting students in successfully completing developmental education and transitioning to credit-bearing coursework and
- Guiding students toward certificate and degree pathways aligned with high-demand careers.

The Foundation's early support of the First Generation Scholarship Program in Florida continued to create opportunities for students to achieve a postsecondary education throughout 2013.