



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ISAC Hosts 12th Annual College Changes Everything[®] Conference: Moving Forward Together

Virtual Event, to be Held July 11- 15, 2022, Will Offer 45 Livestream Sessions

CHICAGO – The state's premier college access and success and career readiness event - the [12th annual College Changes Everything[®] \(CCE\) Conference](#), hosted by the [Illinois Student Assistance Commission \(ISAC\)](#) and statewide partners, will be held July 11- 15, 2022. This free online event will bring together a diverse audience of stakeholders from across the state, including college access practitioners; high school leaders, counselors, and case managers; college and university leaders and administrators; employers and workforce development professionals; policymakers and elected officials interested in higher education and career readiness; and learners themselves. Participants will share information, ideas, and best practices that promote access to postsecondary education, help ensure degree or credential attainment, and work to develop and promote effective career pathways. The conference supports the state's goal of increasing the proportion of adults in Illinois with high quality degrees and postsecondary credentials to 60% by the year 2025.

“We are fortunate to have a highly collaborative and creative education community in Illinois that came together to address myriad challenges we have never before faced in supporting students and families,” said ISAC Executive Director Eric Zarnikow. “The result is a lot of learning about what works (and doesn't work), new innovations and ways to better engage students and families, and important steps in improving equity and access for all our students. Those learnings, together with the significant commitment to education from Governor Pritzker and the General Assembly as reflected in the FY 23 budget, will be critical to increasing opportunity and success for all our students.”

The conference will kick off on Monday, July 11 with an opening plenary session, *Moving Forward Together in Support of Students*, exploring what we've learned and what we can expect moving forward. The panel discussion will be led by Deputy Governor for Education Martin Torres, with leaders from our state education agencies, including Eric Zarnikow, Executive Director of ISAC, Dr. Carmen Ayala, State Superintendent of Education, Illinois State Board of Education, Dr. Brian Durham, Executive Director, Illinois Community College Board, and Ja'Neane Minor, Chief of Staff, Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Two additional plenary sessions will cover specific learnings from the pandemic that will bring us into the future. In *What's Next? Reshaping College-Going Student Supports and Services Due to the Pandemic*, student-serving practitioners will discuss how they are rethinking the best ways to engage and support students considering the changes they've made to services, policies, and more due to the

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pandemic. *Beyond the Pandemic: Learning Renewal and More Initiatives Supporting Our Students*, will focus on learning renewal efforts and other student-centric initiatives statewide to engage and support students.

Forty-five (45) livestream sessions will cover a wide array of topics, including pathways programs and career supports; improving equity, access and success for traditionally underrepresented students; equity in workforce development; student and educator mental health and wellness; Illinois initiatives such as the PaCE Framework and the Illinois Equity Working Group; Public Service Loan Forgiveness; financial aid appeals; tools and resources to support college planning and success, and much more. Virtual speed networking table sessions will be available each day to provide an opportunity for attendees to develop new connections and collaborations.

The conference is free, but registration is required. To register for the conference and view the full conference agenda visit <https://www.collegechangeseverything.org/events/2022-cce-conference-information.html>. Use #CCE4me to join the conversation on social media.

The College Changes Everything Conference is sponsored by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission in collaboration with partners: Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois College Access Network, Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities, Advance Illinois, Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University, Generations Serving Generations, ACT Now and Women Employed.

About College Changes Everything

College Changes Everything® (CCE) is a college access movement that recognizes that college can be a life changing experience not only for students, but also for families and communities. In Illinois and across the nation, those who obtain education beyond high school not only see a significant impact on their potential career prospects and future salary, but also change levels of poverty, life expectancy, crime, and obesity rates in their communities. CCE is an essential part of helping Illinois reach its goal of increasing the proportion of adults in the state with high quality degrees or credentials to 60% by 2025. Find out more and join the conversation at collegechangeseverything.org.

About ISAC

The mission of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is to provide Illinois students with information and assistance to help make education beyond high school accessible and affordable. ISAC provides comprehensive, objective, and timely information on education and financial aid for students and their families—giving them access to the tools they need to make the educational choices that are right for them. Then, through the state scholarship and grant programs ISAC administers, ISAC can help students make those choices a reality. Find us at isac.org or on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ILStudentAssistance) (@ILStudentAssistance), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ISACfinaid) and on Instagram @ISACfinaid.

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