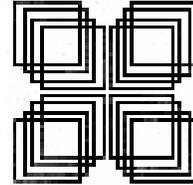




NASULGC National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

BUSINESS-HIGHER EDUCATION FORUM
In Affiliation with the American Council on Education



NEWS RELEASE

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University, Business Groups Applaud Formation of Interagency Group to Speed Advanced Technologies in Education

Move Seen as Step Toward “Building a Nation of Learners”

Washington, DC – October 23, 2003 – The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) applaud the creation by the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Education of an interagency working group to speed the development, application, and deployment of advanced technologies in education and training in the United States. (The related Department of Commerce release can be found at www.technology.gov)

“This is excellent news,” said Molly Broad, president of University of North Carolina and co-chair of the BHEF working group on learning & technology. “With the pending retirement of the baby boom generation and the continued expansion of jobs requiring college-level learning, higher education institutions must develop and adopt bold new approaches to teaching and learning. We welcome the formation of this interagency working group as a timely first step in focusing the resources of the federal government on this critical public policy issue.”

Added C. Peter Magrath, President of NASULGC and a member of BHEF: “This is a welcome announcement. NASULGC institutions are committed to the continued enrichment of the educational experience through the effective use of information technology. This interagency

working group can foster policies and pave the way for future federal support that can produce a truly transforming opportunity for our nation's colleges and universities."

Leaders of the BHEF, comprised of U.S. business executives, university and college presidents, researchers and administrators, see the agencies' announcement as a major step in implementing the education reforms outlined earlier this year in the forum's report, *Building a Nation of Learners* (See www.bhef.com for the full report and press release). That report issued a call for action for American leaders in the government, business, and education sectors to help erase the skills deficit American graduates face when entering the job market. It also outlined a five-point plan for continuous learning in the workplace to keep the United States competitive over the next 10 years.

"Today's announcement indicates our government leaders recognize and are committed to true change in American education," said Sean C. Rush, general manager of IBM's global education industry and co-chair of the BHEF working group with Molly Broad. "In America, higher education and business are inexorably linked. One cannot succeed without the success of the other."

In *Building a Nation of Learners*, BHEF had recommended the creation of a Presidential Commission on Learning, to be made up of representatives from Congress, the private sector, education, state and local government, as well as representatives from the Departments of Commerce, Labor, Education, and other relevant agencies. The Commission would "make specific recommendations on a strategic plan to the president, Congress and the American people by no later than the end of 2004," the report said.

NASULGC represents 214 of the nation's public universities and university systems, located in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Its members are dedicated to providing high-quality education and advancing knowledge through research and through engagement with their surrounding communities and states. Members enroll more than 3.5 million students and award more than a half million degrees annually.

The Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) is a membership organization of leaders from American businesses, colleges and universities, and museums. Founded in 1978, the specific goals of the group are to increase communication among the sectors, analyze issues of mutual concern, and deliberate on courses of action that will effect change in these areas.

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