



New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities; and 2012, Innovation in Higher Education, Northeastern University). For example, in a 2011 poll conducted for our Association by Penn Schoen & Berland Associates, 93% of New Jersey residents agreed that "it is vital to New Jersey's economy that we have excellent and affordable state colleges and universities" (57% strongly agreed, 36% agreed, and 7% disagreed ).

Polling is only a first step in helping Americans reach conclusions about aspects of higher education that need to be jettisoned, changed, or enhanced and preserved. Discussions among lay citizens, opinion leaders, government officials, and higher education representatives are also important. Our Association has conducted such discussions, as have other higher education bodies in the past. Richard Stockton College's Higher Education Strategic Information and Governance program, part of the College's Hughes Center for Public Policy, is planning to convene such meetings in the Garden State next year.

With informative polls and informed discussions, our state and nation will be more likely to enact policies that will effectively keep college affordable and help meet other important goals regarding college access, diversity, and educational outcomes. But we have to ask the right questions first.

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