

EMBARGOED UNTIL March 22, 2021, 10:00 a.m. ET

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AASCU Names 32 Higher Education Leaders to Its 2021 Millennium Leadership Initiative

WASHINGTON, March 22, 2021 — A new class of 32 exemplary, senior-level higher education professionals will participate in the 2021 [Millennium Leadership Initiative](#) (MLI), a premier leadership development program of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU).

MLI provides individuals traditionally underrepresented in the highest ranks of postsecondary education with the opportunity to develop skills, gain a philosophical overview, and build the network and knowledge needed to advance to the presidency.

“During the past year, it has become more evident how important diversity, equity, and inclusion are,” said Dr. Mary Evans Sias, director of the program and assistant to AASCU’s president. “With the selection of this class, we are hoping to reflect the diversity of this nation and the institutions that our protégés serve. We are proud to welcome our next class and are grateful to them for joining with us to secure the higher education leadership pipeline.”

Since MLI’s inception 22 years ago, 662 protégés have graduated from the program. One-fifth of MLI graduates have become a president or chancellor, and more than one-third have advanced significantly to other leadership positions within higher education, including at the state level.

“As a protégé of MLI’s inaugural class in 1999, I gained an invaluable network of colleagues and honed leadership skills that I’ve used throughout my presidencies,” said AASCU President Dr. Mildred García. “I look forward to meeting with and mentoring members of the 2021 class. These leaders will help higher education continue to advance and overcome unprecedented challenges.”

In 2020, AASCU restructured MLI in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021 institute will also feature virtual programming—four meetings a month from March 17 to May 26. Additionally, it includes a tentative, in-person meeting in the fall. Protégés will also have a yearlong mentorship with an experienced president or chancellor and four months of professional coaching from a retired president or chancellor.

View the [full list of protégés](#).

The [American Association of State Colleges and Universities](#) (AASCU) is a Washington, D.C.-based higher education association of nearly 400 public colleges, universities, and systems whose members share a learning- and teaching-centered culture, a historic commitment to underserved student populations, and a dedication to research and creativity that advances their regions' economic progress and cultural development. These are institutions Delivering America's Promise.