

# Higher education key to our future

Our future is tied to education.

To stay competitive in the global economy, we must get much more serious about education – especially higher education.

Sure, colleges and universities could be doing a better job of directing students toward high-need fields, but the overall trend is unmistakable. The future will require a deluge of highly skilled workers. And education – in all its forms – is still the only reliable route to becoming highly skilled.

The U.S. workforce stands at just over 140 million. The Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that between late 2007 and early 2012, 5.8 million jobs requiring a high school diploma or less were lost. During this same period, the number of jobs for people having at least a bachelor's degree actually increased by 2.2 million.

According to McKinsey and Company, if the world continues on its present trajectory, there will be an international surplus of some 93 million low-skilled workers by the end of the current decade; roughly a third of those will be in developed countries like the United States.

McKinsey also estimates that there could be a global shortage of some 85 million medium- to highly skilled workers by 2020.

Finally, the Boston Consulting Group reports that by 2022, the U.S. economy could

add as many as 14 million new jobs, most of them requiring some postsecondary education. They note that by 2018, at least 63 percent of all jobs will require some education beyond high school.

Much to the chagrin of those who simply choose to deny the reality of whatever it is they happen to disagree with, the numbers don't lie.

Those who choose not to extend their education beyond high school are going to be left behind.

The writing is on the wall.

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**Page 4-A**