

News Release

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Lumina Foundation President given NASPA National Award

Jamie Merisotis, Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education honoree

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Each year, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, recognizes members who are doing outstanding work in the student affairs profession. Jamie Merisotis, president and CEO of Lumina Foundation, was selected as the 2014 National Award recipient for Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education.

Under his leadership Lumina has an ambitious goal that 60 percent of Americans will hold college degrees by 2025. His work at Lumina only builds on the foundation he has established to increase educational opportunities among low-income, minority and underrepresented populations.

Merisotis co-founded the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), regarded as one of the world's premier higher education research and policy centers. While there, he also helped establish the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education, an unprecedented coalition of national associations whose members include Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

Alisa Federico Cunningham, senior associate at IHEP, worked with Merisotis. She says he lead the organization to be an important player on the higher education policy stage.

“He has been a major policy influencer as well as a thought partner and student champion,” Cunningham says.

Prior to founding IHEP, Merisotis served as executive director of the National Commission on Responsibilities for Financing Postsecondary Education, a bipartisan commission appointed by the U.S. president and congressional leaders. He authored the commission's final report, *Making College Affordable Again*, and many of the commission's recommendations became national policy during the 1990s.

Merisotis and the other National Award winners will be honored in March at the 2014 NASPA Annual Conference in Baltimore, Md.

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