



STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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## **New SHEEO President Embraces Challenges to Improve College Affordability, Equitable Opportunity for Success**

(BOULDER, Colo.) - College affordability and equal opportunity for student success are crucial higher education challenges that incoming [State Higher Education Executive Officers Association](#) President Robert E. Anderson, Ph.D., has prioritized as he begins his new role this week.

“Dr. Anderson is an innovative leader with a deep understanding of the substantial challenges and opportunities in higher education,” said SHEEO Chair Eileen I. Klein, who is the president of the Arizona Board of Regents. “Coupled with his keen awareness of the issues, Dr. Anderson is uniquely positioned as the new SHEEO president to advance public policies and educational practices to help states fulfill their responsibilities to deliver high quality, low cost education.”

In May, after a diligent and thoughtful search process, the [State Higher Education Executive Officers Association](#) appointed Anderson as the new president. Former SHEEO President George Pernsteiner announced his retirement earlier this year, after nearly four years as president of the organization.

At the recent [64<sup>th</sup> SHEEO Annual Meeting](#), Anderson met with national higher education officers and affirmed his commitment to other significant priorities, including working with states to improve college readiness, bolstered by strategic initiatives to enhance teacher quality. He underscored his pledge to national educational attainment goals, especially to increase attainment in underserved and low-income populations as well as adult students. SHEEO anticipates a second, multiyear phase to roll out and pilot “Adult Promise” programs in the five selected states. These programs will address the unique affordability challenges of adult students that arise from exhausted financial aid eligibility, dependent care issues, and a host of other financial issues that create barriers for adult student success.

“At the heart of my great passion for education are the students,” Anderson said. “Education is one of the cornerstones of our great nation, enabling generation upon generation of students to achieve success and fulfillment, and contribute to the prosperity of the United States. I am so excited to begin

my work at SHEEO because I will be working on behalf of all students to increase access and success to higher education.”

At the SHEEO Annual Meeting, Robert Donley, Ph.D., immediate past chair of the SHEEO Executive Committee, enthusiastically welcomed Anderson to his new role as president. “Dr. Anderson is an outstanding leader with the commitment to make real transformations and advance the value of public higher education. I look forward to all the energy and passion he brings to SHEEO.”

Anderson’s extensive experience includes his most recent role as interim chief academic officer and executive vice chancellor for academic affairs for the University System of Georgia. As a senior leader at USG, he addressed academic program approval, college completion initiatives, distance education, new delivery models, K-12 policy, teacher education, and grants administration and evaluation. Recently, he restructured the system’s learning support paradigm, which resulted in significant completion gains within credit-bearing gateway courses.

Previous to his role at USG, Anderson served the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission for seven years as vice chancellor for policy and planning and executive vice chancellor for administration. In these positions, he directed academic affairs, fiscal affairs, legal affairs, financial aid and WVNET, the state’s computing infrastructure unit, for both the 10 college four-year system and the 10 college community college system. During his tenure, he acquired and managed competitive grants totaling more than \$20 million that were funded by organizations including Lumina Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and Complete College America, as well as a federal GEAR UP grant. Each of these grants was targeted at improving college access and completion.

## **About SHEEO**

*The State Higher Education Executive Officers is the national association of the chief executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education. Founded in 1954, SHEEO serves its members as an advocate for state policy leadership, a liaison between states and the federal government, a vehicle for learning from and collaborating with peers, a manager of multistate teams to initiate new programs, and a source of information and analysis on educational and public policy issues.*