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### **120 Community Colleges Are Chosen to Compete for \$1-Million Aspen Institute Prize**

*By Jennifer Gonzalez*

The Aspen Institute announced on Monday the 120 community colleges eligible to compete for its first \$1-million prize to reward excellence at two-year institutions.

The community colleges chosen represent the top 10 percent in the country, according to the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. President Obama announced the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence during the [White House Summit on Community Colleges](#), in October. The purpose of the prize is to recognize community colleges with outstanding academic and work-force outcomes.

The institute hopes the top colleges will serve as models and laboratories for identifying practices that can elevate community-college education nationwide, said Joshua Wyner, executive director of the College Excellence Program.

The Aspen Prize is financially supported by the Joyce Foundation, the Lumina Foundation for Education, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, and the JPMorgan Chase Foundation.

A [full list](#) of the 120 community colleges eligible to apply is available at the [institute's Web site](#). Eight to 10 finalists will be named in September, with the final prize winner and two to three runners-up announced in December. The winner will receive approximately \$700,000, while the runners-up will share the remainder of the \$1-million.

The community colleges, which represent 32 states, were selected from a national pool of nearly 1,200 colleges using available public data on student outcomes. The community colleges chosen have demonstrated high standards in learning and college completion and have established that they are training grounds for jobs that pay competitive wages.

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**greenhills73** 3 hours ago

I've been all over the Institute's web site and find info on the prize except the list. I must be a dummy so can somebody please just tell me how to navigate the list?

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**jennifergonzalez** 2 hours ago

The Aspen Institute is aware of the issue and trying to fix it. Thanks for the comment.

[Like](#)



**pgreene** 1 hour ago

This is an exciting endeavor supporting a critical part of our educational system. If I had one wish it would be to expand the approach from work force development as only about "training grounds for jobs that pay competitive wages" to include recognition of the important role that community colleges play in teaching about the start-up and growth of businesses. In other words, preparing their students to create jobs that pay competitive wages.

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