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DeVry University Convenes Panel to Discuss Educational Opportunities for Adult Learners in Illinois

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DOWNERS GROVE, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The state of Illinois has set a goal of increasing the proportion of adults in the state with a quality college credential to 60 percent by the year 2025[1]. Meeting this goal will require educational institutions to better serve adult learners, who now represent the state's majority of college students. To discuss ways to support this critical student population, DeVry University today convened a symposium on educational opportunities for adult learners.

More than 50 representatives from the fields of higher education, workforce development, community service and government attended the event at the university's Chicago Metro campus. Rob Paul, DeVry University president, moderated a panel discussion featuring Dr. James Applegate, executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE); Dr. Scott Campbell, vice president of higher education, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning; Anne Ladky, executive director of Women Employed; and adult learner Tyler Solorio, a U.S. Army veteran who is currently attending college on the G.I. Bill.

Adult learners' needs are highly variable, according to panel members. In Illinois, 28 percent of adults have a high school diploma but have never enrolled in any form of higher education[2]. Nearly two-thirds of working-aged adults do not have a college degree, yet roughly a quarter of them have attended higher-education institutions at some point[3]. Some are looking to change careers, while others want to further their current careers. Many need to balance school with work and/or family responsibilities, and many are the first in their families to attend college.

"DeVry University is committed to supporting the state's 60 percent by '25 goal. As a higher education institution with a rich history in Chicago, DeVry University's purpose is to empower students to reach their educational and career goals, and to assist employers in growing their businesses with the help of skilled employees," Paul said. "Flexible on-site and online learning options, courses designed with input from leading companies, and lifetime career services for alumni are just a few of the ways DeVry University supports adult learners."

The IBHE has calculated that reaching the state's 60 percent college attainment goal would net the state $600 million to $1 billion annually in additional tax revenue[4].

"Illinois has set a steep, but attainable goal that 60 percent of its population will attain a quality college degree or credential by 2025. Of the 17.6 million undergraduate students currently enrolled in college nationally, 75 percent are concurrently juggling work, family and school," Applegate said. "We must continue to tear down the silos between higher education, social services and workforce programs, and instead adopt multi-sector regional collaborations with common goals and shared metrics to support the new majority of students, who have new and different learning needs."

About DeVry Education Group

The purpose of DeVry Education Group is to empower its students to achieve their educational and career goals. DeVry Education Group Inc. (NYSE: DV; member S&P MidCap 400 Index) is a global provider of educational services and the parent organization of American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine, Becker Professional Education, Carrington College, Chamberlain College of Nursing, DeVry Brasil, DeVry University and its Keller Graduate School of Management, Ross University School of Medicine and Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine. These institutions offer a wide array of programs in healthcare, business, technology, accounting and finance. For more information, please visit http://www.devryeducationgroup.com.

[1] https://www2.illinois.gov/gov/P20/Pages/Metrics.aspx
[2] http://www.ibhe.org/masterPlanning/materials/070109_PublicAgenda.pdf
[3] http://www.ibhe.org/masterPlanning/materials/070109_PublicAgenda.pdf
[4] http://ibheillinois.blogspot.com/

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