

Advancing Educational Equity and Access for All Learners

A Widening Gap

ACT believes that every person should have the ability to go as far as their talent and effort take them. As social inequality has increased in the United States, so have inequities in opportunities to learn and thrive for students growing up in low-income families, and especially for those who would be the first in their family to graduate from college.

Talent and potential are widely distributed across society—and opportunities to learn and succeed should be, too. ACT's decades of innovation, research, and advocacy uniquely equip us to inform, assess, and improve learning—and, ultimately, help close achievement and equity gaps.

Among those who took the ACT[®] test in 2014, underserved students were just as likely to be interested in STEM fields as were students overall—though only 25% of them were prepared to succeed in college STEM coursework.

Consolidating ACT Social-Impact Efforts and Expertise

The ACT Center for Equity in Learning leverages the talent and resources of the ACT Office for the Advancement of Underserved Learners and the ACT Foundation to work toward one aligned purpose and goal: helping underserved and working learners achieve education and career success. The Center's efforts will generally focus on ages 14 through 26—because people can begin to work legally at age 14, and because the likelihood of completing a credential or degree with value in the labor market declines after age 26.

Informing Action through Research

ACT and ACT Foundation research demonstrates that underserved and working learners need specific types of support to reach key milestones in college and career readiness—and the Center for Equity in Learning's work is grounded in that understanding. We work closely with partner organizations to help individuals understand the skills they need to navigate life's transition points and achieve success.

Increasing Opportunity, Access, and Success

The Center for Equity in Learning seeks to improve educational access, opportunity, and success for underserved learners, many of whom are also working learners. By focusing on equity, we are examining and addressing barriers to opportunity related to family income, race and ethnicity, and accessibility, as well as other issues that intersect with these areas of focus.

Through purposeful investments, employee engagement, and thoughtful advocacy efforts, the Center for Equity in Learning supports innovative partnerships, initiatives, campaigns, and programs that help all students achieve education and career success.

We believe that high-quality assessments and other resources can be used to improve learning—and close achievement and equity gaps. Current ACT initiatives to close the equity gap include:

- Fee waivers for the ACT test
- Free access to ACT Online Prep™ for students who qualify for an ACT test fee waiver
- Free access to ACT® Kaplan Online Prep Live for students who qualify for an ACT test fee waiver
- Free online college and career planning tools through ACT Profile

Read more about these initiatives at equityinlearning.act.org.

The Center for Equity in Learning will build upon these efforts—and establish new initiatives and partnerships—to provide underserved and working learners with access to the information and resources they need to succeed in education and the workplace.

Partnering to Advance Educational Equity and Access

The Center for Equity in Learning works with a network of partner organizations to advance shared interests in research and advocacy and to support efforts aimed at closing equity gaps. A sample of our partnerships includes:

[American College Application Campaign®—American Council on Education](#)

[Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund](#)

[Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents](#)

[Better Make Room Campaign](#)

[California Association of African-American School Administrators](#)

[Civic Nation](#)

[College Advising Corps](#)

[College Horizons](#)

[Council for Opportunity in Education](#)

[Excelencia in Education](#)

[Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce](#)

[National College Access Network](#)

[National Indian Education Association](#)

[National Council for Community and Education Partnerships](#)

[UCLA Institute for Globalization, Immigration, and Education](#)

[UNCF \(United Negro College Fund\)](#)

[Univision Communications, Inc.](#)

Interested in partnering with us?
Visit equityinlearning.act.org.

