Georgia State Wins Major National Award For Dramatic Increase in Graduation Rates

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Georgia State University was recognized as the national leader in efforts to dramatically increase graduation rates by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) Tuesday, Nov. 12.

The association, which represents 219 public research institutions and other organizations, named Georgia State the inaugural winner of its Most Visible Progress Trailblazer Award for “its exceptional progress with increasing retention toward or completion of a bachelor's degree during the last three years.”

Georgia State has increased its graduation rates by 22 points in the last 10 years, the most dramatic rise in the nation.

The APLU noted Georgia State's student success programs, led by Vice Provost Timothy Renick, that have had a major impact on increasing the university’s graduation rates.

Georgia State is one of a handful of large institutions nationwide using new technology to track students from the moment they arrive on campus to ensure progress to graduation. With the university's early warning tracking system, struggling students get the intervention they need to get back on track, improve or change their academic path.

"One by one, the university mined the data to locate the most significant obstructions to student success and then piloted interventions, ran data, refined the programs and scaled them up," the APLU said.

"Georgia State is one of the nation's leaders in developing and implementing innovative programs aimed at ensuring student success," said Georgia State President Mark Becker. "This award is another example of how our work is gaining significant national recognition in the media, by policy makers and by our peers in higher education."

"Georgia State has made student success its highest institutional priority and we are pleased to be recognized as national leaders in the field," Renick said.

Georgia State also received the first Student Success Collaboration Award from the Education Advisory Board in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 8. The university was cited for its leading contributions to national efforts to increase college completion.

Earlier this year, the institution was named one of six universities highlighted as models of national higher education reform by the New America Foundation. The foundation cited Georgia State as a “Next Generation University” for its rapid increases in graduation rates and its ability to hold down costs.