

# Moon Shot for Equity: Carthage, MATC, UWM, UW-Parkside commit to National Moon Shot for Equity

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Carthage College, Milwaukee Area Technical College, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside are joining a national initiative led by education firm EAB aimed at ending equity gaps in higher education by 2030. These institutions comprise the first regional consortium of higher education institutions to sign on to the “Moon Shot for Equity.” Carthage, MATC, UWM and UW-Parkside will work together and with EAB to help more underrepresented students of color and other historically underserved populations graduate from college.

**Leaders from all four institutions and EAB will share more details about the Moon Shot for Equity and answer questions from the media at a virtual launch event on Wednesday, Oct. 21, at 9 a.m. CT. [Click here to join the Zoom event](#) and enter meeting passcode “40U5U5.”**

“UW-Milwaukee and our regional higher ed counterparts are completely committed to this initiative and continuing our work to eliminate equity gaps in our region. This is one of the most important things we can do to advance the future of our state,” UW-Milwaukee Chancellor Mark Mone said.

According to data compiled by the Higher Education Regional Alliance, 56% of white students in the seven-county Milwaukee region earned a degree or certificate within six years in 2020. Only 32% of Hispanic students and 20% of Black students completed degrees or certificates in that time frame.

“Wisconsin is dead last in the country in the high school equity gap for Black students, and in the bottom seven of all 50 states for Hispanic students,” Mone said. “These gaps continue into higher education, and we find this unacceptable. We need to provide fair and equitable access to college and successful graduation for all our students.”

As part of the Moon Shot initiative, all four institutions will receive equity-

mindfulness training from outside experts and implement 15 research-based best practices proven to remove systemic barriers to success. Participating schools will receive expert guidance from national Moon Shot mentors [Houston GPS](#) and [Georgia State University](#).

“UW-Parkside’s commitment to eliminate persistent equity gaps is unwavering, and while we have made progress over the past decade we have more work to do,” UW-Parkside Chancellor Debbie Ford said. “Joining with our Milwaukee region higher education colleagues, EAB, national experts and philanthropies for the Moon Shot for Equity positions us to provide more students, especially students of color, a pathway to a university education.

“As a first-generation college graduate, I know the impact of higher education, and now it is time to pay this forward for the next generation,” Ford added. EAB will provide schools with technology and advisory services, as well as research that will help to enhance the work ongoing at each institution. Organizers hope that the Moon Shot collaboration in southeastern Wisconsin will inspire two- and four-year institutions in other regions of the country to band together to take part in the initiative.

“As we look to continually improve our systems and processes, it often seems daunting to make real progress. It helps to know that other communities, regions and institutes of higher education have faced similar challenges, persevered and succeeded,” said MATC President Vicki J. Martin. “We know we can close our equity gaps in education — and impact equity gaps in employment, housing and income — because we have learned from those who have already done this important work and applied best practices that fit our college.”

Participating institutions also will partner with local high schools and community-based organizations to help more underserved students attend college by providing them with resources and information on how to identify best-fit universities, search for scholarships and connect with counselors. These resources, offered through [College Greenlight](#), will be provided free of charge.

“These disparities have existed far too long in every sector of higher education, public and private,” said John R. Swallow, president and CEO of Carthage. “In the same way that a national effort brought the moon within reach in the 1960s, we can plant a flag for equity in southeastern Wisconsin by channeling our collective will and expertise.”

The name of the initiative derives from another ambitious national goal. NASA’s successful moon shot more than five decades ago proved that obstacles can be overcome by fully committing and working together in innovative ways, EAB Chief Executive Officer David Felsenthal said.

“Through the Moon Shot for Equity, regions like greater Milwaukee will confront racial inequality in college completion and at the same time, boost economic recovery in their communities by producing more college graduates,” Felsenthal said.

Visit [eab.com/moonshot](http://eab.com/moonshot) to learn more about the project.