

Career College State Associations



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Introduction

In the late '80s, career school state associations were often seen as the primary line of protection against those forces that sought to remove our students and schools from state funding. They were reactive times that called for defensive measures.

But state associations today have become so much more, especially as their roles expand in a fast-paced, complex world where each state becomes a testing ground for larger issues.

At their best, 21st Century state associations have had to:

- Secure new state funding and maintain current funding for students and schools.
- Keep all career colleges and schools working together—cooperating, speaking with one voice and avoiding internal squabbles that can sap a sector's positive energy.
- Develop new collaboration models with in-state education associations, legislatures, state boards and agencies.
- Provide first-rate professional development programs for faculty, staff and senior school managers.
- Work closely with associate members to provide services and benefit information to schools that help reduce costs and increase educational effectiveness.
- Keep school staff up-to-date on changes at both the state and national levels.
- And most importantly, state associations constantly marshal their resources to resolve problems that hinder a career school's ability to attract, educate, retain and place students in jobs.

And what is truly amazing—state associations do all this with only a handful of member volunteers and a lean staff.

What follows is a series of profiles on the largest and arguably the most influential state associations in our sector of education. We hope that these brief reviews will not only raise awareness of the need for strong associations, but also spur more states without an association to consider starting one.

— *Dick Dumaresq*
PAPSA Executive Director
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