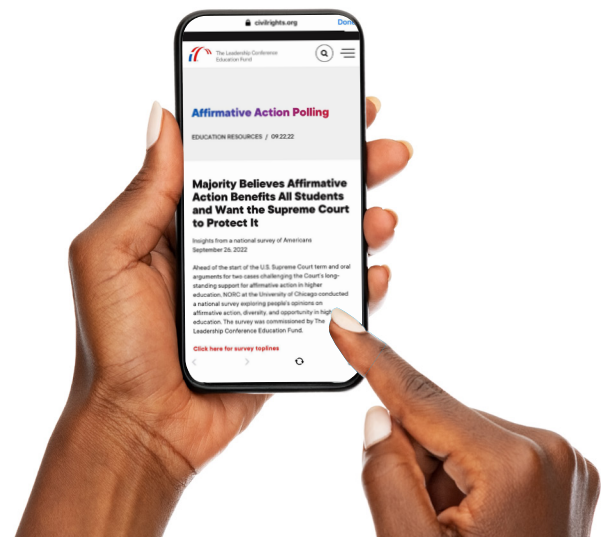


# TALKING POINTS FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

## Diversity is the greatest strength of our multiracial democracy—and essential to the success of our economy.

- We live in an increasingly racially diverse society. As a nation, we cannot afford to forfeit the benefits of the talents and gifts of every student and worker in our country.
- Students from every racial and ethnic background, and especially Black and Latinx students, may be impacted by the Supreme Court decisions in the UNC and Harvard cases. As members of our future workforce and leaders of industry, they must have the opportunity to fulfill their potential through equal access to higher education.
- Our national security, our ability to compete in a global economy with scientific and technological innovation, and the health of our multi-racial democracy depend on producing leaders and a well-trained workforce capable of navigating and thriving in a racially diverse society.
- Leading American companies report that employing a racially diverse workforce gives them a competitive advantage in our increasingly global economy. This is why 82 corporations and businesses submitted briefs to the Supreme Court in support of upholding affirmative action and equal access to higher education.
- In 2016, Dalberg and Intel issued a report finding that improvements in ethnic and gender diversity in the technology workforce could lead to \$470 – \$570B in new value in the technology industry and add 1.2 – 1.6% to national GDP.
- A broad cross-section of sectors of American society, including military leaders, major corporations, small business owners, educators, students, and individuals from all backgrounds, support advancing equal opportunity in education through race-conscious admissions.
- A May 2023 AP-NORC [poll](#) found most respondents (63%) do not think the Supreme Court should prohibit the consideration of race and ethnicity in college admissions.
- A September 2022 nationwide [poll](#) found that 70% of respondents agree we need racial diversity in addition to diversity within students' economic backgrounds to achieve true equality.



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# TALKING POINTS FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

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## **A true multiracial democracy cannot tolerate a segregated higher education system that closes the doors of opportunity to many talented students of color.**

- All students deserve a fair shot at going to college, regardless of their family's income, where they grew up, or their racial and ethnic background.
- Due to pervasive racial inequalities in primary and secondary education, as well as racial bias in standardized testing, traditional indicia of merit under-identify many talented students of color. For example, even with affirmative action, [Black students make up only 6%](#) of first-year students at selective colleges and universities—which is less than over three decades ago.
- We need to open the college gates wider to underrepresented students, not roll back policies that promote racial diversity, access, and opportunity.
- Removing the tool of race-conscious admissions hinders critical efforts to foster diversity and increase access to education.
- We all have an important role to play in remedying the systemic racial discrimination that denies students of color an equal opportunity for a quality K-12 education and to compete for admission to our nation's selective colleges and universities.

## **Students of all races benefit from affirmative action in higher education.**

- Race-conscious policies have played an important role in ensuring that people of color, including Asian Americans, have had an opportunity to go to selective colleges and assume leadership roles in the workplace and in all sectors of our society.
- Leading American businesses have confirmed that the ability to relate to people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds is an indispensable skill for job candidates. Students of all racial backgrounds benefit from racially diverse learning environments and are better equipped to succeed in diverse workplaces and serve a diverse clientele.
- [Research](#) shows that diverse learning environments help all students build skills associated with academic success, including critical thinking, problem-solving ability, student satisfaction and motivation, general knowledge, and intellectual self-confidence — not to mention that cross-racial interactions can reduce prejudice and stereotypes, enhance empathy, and open minds.



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# TALKING POINTS FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

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**Irrespective of the Supreme Court's decision, we all have an obligation to continue to foster diversity and inclusion in the workplace and create opportunities for all people to succeed.**

- It is important to know exactly what the Supreme Court did and did not decide in these cases. SCOTUS' decision is limited to the consideration of race in admissions at Harvard and UNC. It is not about diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in education or employment, including outreach and recruitment initiatives, affinity groups, training, and other measures; affirmative action in employment; environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals; government contracting; race-neutral policies governing K-12 selective admissions, or other measures.
- While talent and potential can be found in students and workers of all backgrounds, opportunities to fulfill that potential are not equally accessible. It is imperative we support and implement policies that help identify, cultivate, and support all students and workers in having the opportunity to thrive.
- Ensuring that underrepresented students can overcome obstacles to educational opportunity and have a fair shot at good jobs is the right thing to do for our society at large.
- The Supreme Court's decision ignores well-established social science, pedagogy, and the lived experiences of many Americans who know that bringing together people of different backgrounds makes our classrooms and workplaces richer and our nation stronger.
- As we strive toward a more equal society, we must work to eliminate entrenched barriers to opportunity that can unfairly disadvantage people of color, including identifying and dismantling barriers in admissions processes that may disadvantage students of color.

