



December 1, 2010

Benefits of Career Colleges

To the Editor:

Re “[Report Finds Low Graduation Rates at For-Profit Colleges](#)” (news article, Nov. 24):

The Education Trust report you cite unfairly criticizes the career education sector and devalues the education and commitment of its 3.2 million students. Comparing private-sector colleges and universities to other types of institutions does not consider the larger percentages of high-risk students we serve.

When the graduation rates of lower-income students and those with other “risk factors” are compared across not-for-profit and for-profit institutions with similar demographic profiles, the results favor career colleges, not traditional schools.

At least the Education Trust concedes that graduation rates at two-year career colleges are much higher than those of community colleges.

Finally, using graduation rates only of first-time, full-time students, as the Department of Education and Education Trust do, for analytical judgments and policy recommendations makes no sense given that a large percentage of today’s postsecondary students do not fit that description.

We can hope that Washington learns one valuable lesson from this report — there is no single silver bullet metric for measuring the value of education, as has been suggested by the Department of Education in its wrongheaded “gainful employment” proposal, which by imposing new rules for federal aid would limit higher education access for millions of students over the remainder of this decade.

Harris N. Miller

President, Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities

Washington, Nov. 25, 2010

