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CONTACT: Edie Irons
510/883-7315
Gretchen Wright
202/371-1999

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Lauren Asher Named President of the Institute for College Access & Success

Berkeley, CA – The board of directors of The Institute for College Access & Success has named Lauren Asher president of the nonprofit policy and research organization, which is home to the Project on Student Debt. Asher served as the Institute’s second-in-command since 2005, shortly after the organization was founded, and as its acting president since February 2009.

“Lauren’s passion for expanding opportunity, along with her keen understanding of how to combine high-quality research and analysis with strategic communications and advocacy, make her a major asset to the Institute,” said the Institute’s board of directors in a statement. “She has been instrumental in creating the organization’s strong reputation and positive results, and we are confident the Institute will continue to thrive under her leadership.”

An expert in policy analysis and issue-based communications, Asher’s background includes management roles in advocacy, government, and philanthropic organizations, including senior positions at the Kaiser Family Foundation, National Partnership for Women & Families, and U.S. Department of Labor. Immediately prior to her work at the Institute, Asher founded and ran Asher Policy Consulting, with national, state and local nonprofit and foundation clients working to improve the lives of children, youth, and working families. She holds an M.P.A. from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and a B.A. from Brown University.

“The Institute will continue to be an independent, data-driven advocate for students and families: working to make college more affordable, reduce the burden of student debt, and improve the odds of getting a degree or certificate,” said Asher. “I am honored and excited to be leading the Institute at such a critical time for college access and success.”

Asher succeeds Robert Shireman, the Institute’s founding president, who is now the Deputy Under Secretary of Education at the U.S. Department of Education.

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An independent, nonprofit organization, the Institute for College Access & Success works to make higher education more available and affordable for people of all backgrounds. By conducting and supporting nonpartisan research, analysis, and advocacy, the Institute aims to improve the processes and public policies that can pave the way to successful educational outcomes for students and for society.