



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
December 14, 2015

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## **MI Universities Show Compelling Growth**

*Most Increase Key Outcomes and Perform Better Than National Peers*

DETROIT, Mich. — Michigan’s public universities are showing impressive gains, according to the 2015 update of Business Leaders for Michigan’s Performance Tracker for Public Universities. Business Leaders for Michigan (BLM) has identified higher education as both critical to producing the talent Michigan needs and a key economic sector that has the potential to build a New Michigan economy.

“Four out of every five Michigan public universities are increasing their enrollments,” said Doug Rothwell, President and CEO of Business Leaders for Michigan. “In the short term, this translates into more students here in our state boosting economic activity and generating new research. Over the long haul, however, higher enrollment means increased investment and potentially higher population, entrepreneurship, and opportunities for statewide economic advancement.”

This year’s key findings include:

- 12 of 15 institutions increased their enrollments
- 10 of 15 have six-year graduation rates better than their peer average, and 11 have increased their graduation rate in the past year
- 10 of 15 institutions have student retention rates better than their peer average, and nine have increased their retention rates over the past year
- 10 of 15 awarded more total degrees than their peer average, and 12 have increased their total number of degrees awarded

“These findings show progress in the right direction, but we have even more to be excited about in Michigan when we consider critical degrees awarded – those in fields such as science, technology, engineering and math,” Rothwell said. “Thirteen of 15 universities awarded more critical skills degrees than their peer average, and 12 increased their number of critical skills degrees awarded. These measures, more than any other, show how Michigan’s public universities are growing our talent pipeline—which translates into stronger economic opportunities for our state.”

(more)

Rothwell also notes that all 15 of Michigan's public universities have increased access as measured by the percentage of undergraduate students receiving federal Pell grants.

"We're making good progress in just about every category except making college more affordable – a reflection, despite recent improvements, of ranking among the bottom ten states for investment per student," Rothwell said. "While our progress should be celebrated, only significant improvements in affordability will close Michigan's education attainment deficit."

BLM has identified higher education as one of the state's six New Michigan opportunity areas, indicating it offers strong promise as a driver of statewide prosperity.

"A robust higher education system enriches our state's talent pipeline, attracts research dollars, and boosts economic growth," Rothwell said.

BLM's Michigan Performance Tracker for Public Universities is available at <http://mipublicuniversities.businessleadersformichigan.com>.

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**About Business Leaders for Michigan:**

Business Leaders for Michigan, the state's business roundtable, is dedicated to making Michigan a "Top Ten" state for jobs, personal income and a healthy economy. The organization is composed of the chairpersons, chief executive officers, or most senior executives of Michigan's largest companies and universities. Our members drive 32% of the state's economy, provide nearly 375,000 direct jobs in Michigan, generate over \$1 Trillion in annual revenue and serve nearly one-half of all Michigan public university students. Find out more at: [www.businessleadersformichigan.com](http://www.businessleadersformichigan.com).