



COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION



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ACE, CASE Endorse New Public Service Campaign on Value of College
*“Proud Sponsor” seeks to tell a more complete story about the broad social
impact of higher education*

MILWAUKEE – Wis. (FEBRUARY 10, 2025) – The American Council on Education (ACE) and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) are among the first national organizations to endorse a new public service campaign designed to highlight the many ways higher education improves life in America. The ‘Proud Sponsor’ campaign created by Serve Marketing seeks to address misconceptions about higher education by inviting all Americans, whether they hold a college degree or not, to consider the remarkable value it brings to our communities, economy, national security, health, happiness, and way of life.

“Colleges and universities across the country empower individuals to succeed and entire communities to grow and prosper. Simply put: Higher Education Builds America,” said Ted Mitchell, president of ACE. “The Proud Sponsor campaign demonstrates just how important higher education is to our nation’s continued success and vitality.”

ACE recently launched its own campaign, aiming to influence public policy debates with the message that [#HigherEdBuildsAmerica](#). It views the Proud Sponsor campaign as a powerful complement in the shared effort to build broad-based support for higher education.

Over the past decade, such public support has ebbed at an alarming rate. A [2024 Gallup survey](#) found just 36 percent of Americans have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in higher education, down from 57 percent in 2015. Other findings show worrisome erosion in the perceived value of a college degree, despite the abundance of research showing significant personal, societal, financial, and career benefits.

“Higher ed leaders recognize the decline in perceived value as a significant threat. Higher ed marketing and communication professionals, in particular, are focused on how to most effectively communicate the impact of their institutions in their communities, on the workforce, and in society. They share a keen and growing interest in aligning their efforts to convey institutional impact across the sector, the nation, and around the globe,” said Sue Cunningham, president and CEO of CASE.

The Proud Sponsor campaign will soon unveil additional major endorsements, which will be added to the [campaign website](#) as they are confirmed.

Too often, higher education is perceived as only benefiting those who earn a degree. At the same time, all Americans are navigating an uncertain future shaped by a rapidly evolving job market and changing perceptions of the ‘American Dream.’

The truth is that higher education is a core part of America’s social and economic infrastructure, a dynamic force that propels our personal, communal, and national progress. This grassroots campaign aims to highlight the compelling role colleges and universities have played in our nation’s history—how higher education has been the engine driving progress, innovation, and prosperity in the United States—while encouraging continued investment in higher education for our collective future.

“The value that higher education brings to American life cannot be overstated and better communicating its full impact is a necessary first step,” said Tamalyn Powell, senior vice president of higher education at BVK and president of Serve Marketing’s board of directors. “As divisiveness around higher education grows and more people question its value, this campaign seeks to reaffirm that college remains as vital to American success as ever.”

The campaign’s central theme is “College: Proud sponsor of America at its best.” It emphasizes higher education’s essential contributions to a prosperous economy, a thriving democracy, healthy communities, and robust national security—all fundamental to building a strong America.

“The United States would not be the global economic powerhouse it is today were it not for its colleges and universities,” said Powell. “If Americans hope to continue enjoying the benefits of today’s ‘knowledge economy,’ it’s vital that we maintain the strongest possible system of higher education.”

The message will be shared across multiple media platforms to reach the widest possible audience. A centerpiece of the Proud Sponsor campaign is an anthem video, produced in partnership with Bowstring [Studios](#), highlighting the far-reaching impact of higher education on society as a whole. The website whycollegematters.org invites visitors to explore the many ways colleges and universities enrich lives, benefiting individuals and communities alike, regardless of whether they hold a degree. A series of ads in digital and print platforms will highlight the positive impacts of higher education across our nation and the world. The campaign will also include messaging that speaks to the transformative personal benefits of earning a college credential.

The first phase of the campaign will be launched via organic social media and a PSA campaign in partnership with iHeartMedia. As momentum grows and more sponsors and partners join the effort, the campaign and media presence will continue to expand.

If you work in higher education, represent a business or organization that benefits from the talents of college graduates, or are passionate about the future of the United States, we invite you to join the Proud Sponsor campaign. Your support will help spread the word about the vital role that higher education plays in improving American life. We are actively seeking partners to endorse or sponsor the campaign. If you’re interested in getting involved, please contact Tamalyn Powell at

tamalyn.powell@servemarketing.org or Greg Summers, senior advisor at Serve Marketing, at greg.summers@servemarketing.org.

About Serve Marketing

Serve is the country's only all-volunteer, nonprofit advertising agency, whose mission is to give underserved charitable causes a stronger voice in the community. Since 2002, Serve volunteers have created behavior-changing public service campaigns for over 50 local and national nonprofit causes from Shaken Baby Syndrome, statutory rape, and teen homelessness to foster care and gun violence. Most recently, Serve's work was honored by the White House for its role in helping reduce teen pregnancy in Milwaukee.

About ACE

ACE is a membership organization that leads higher education with a united vision for the future, galvanizing our members to make change and collaborating across the sector to design solutions for today's challenges, serve the needs of a diverse student population, and shape effective public policy. As the major coordinating body for the nation's colleges and universities, our strength lies in our diverse membership of more than 1,600 colleges and universities, related associations, and other organizations in America and abroad. ACE is the only major higher education association to represent all types of U.S. accredited, degree-granting colleges and universities. For more information, please visit www.acenet.edu or follow ACE on X (formerly known as Twitter) [@ACEducation](https://twitter.com/ACEducation) and LinkedIn [american-council-on-education](https://www.linkedin.com/company/american-council-on-education).

About CASE

CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) is a global, not-for-profit membership association dedicated to advancing education to transform lives and society. It supports over 97,000 professionals across 3,100 institutions in 80 countries, providing guidance, standards, and resources for those in fields like alumni relations, development, communications, fundraising, government relations, and marketing. CASE equips professionals at all career stages, from universities and schools to cultural institutions and nonprofits. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., with regional offices in London, Singapore, and Mexico City, CASE fosters a global community of volunteers and partners to advance education worldwide.

About Bowstring Studios

Bowstring is a global creative content studio specializing in connecting brands with audiences across all channels. With over 20 years of experience, Bowstring delivers impactful content through a vertically integrated production team, enabling them to scale from single productions to expansive, multi-channel campaigns. Known for their world-class storytelling, Bowstring partners with clients of all sizes to craft tailored solutions, from commercials and branded entertainment to experiential marketing and corporate communications. Their expertise spans a diverse range of industries, ensuring strategic, engaging content that maximizes client impact and extends brand reach.

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