

# Private Colleges: Paths to the Future

First in a series by Tom Kennedy, Hyatt-Fennell Executive Search

*"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." Author unknown, commonly misattributed to Charles Darwin*

My passion for most of my career has been dedicated to the private, NFP, mostly faith-based colleges and universities across the country. Almost all of these institutions are members of the Council for Independent Colleges (CIC).

*I am deeply concerned that so many have closed, and others are struggling to survive.*

**Over a 50-year span, it has been my privilege** to work with and visit the campuses of nearly 100 of these schools and I see the great contribution that they have made to their region and the country. Regardless of their faith orientation, all of them care deeply for their students and alumni. These alums are making a difference because of their *values-based, liberal arts education*. They are committed to leadership in the service of others especially those who are on the margins of society.

These colleges also serve as a major factor in their local communities. They make a significant impact on the economy and also serve as cultural centers for residents in the area. Some actually are the major employers in their region.

My experience also includes universities beyond the borders of the States. For the past 25 years, I have been working with Ana G Mendez University in Puerto Rico and previously partnered with an outstanding Jesuit University in the Philippines, Ateneo De Manila.

More recently, I have been vicariously living through my grandchildren's higher education activities. Among our 14 grandkids, five have recently graduated, six are now enrolled, and three more will be entering in a few years.

It is with all of these factors that my perspective on our schools may be of interest to the college community. *I firmly believe that our schools can turn the corner and secure their future.*

***Future blogs will focus on concepts and topics that are meant to stimulate discussions for an alternative future for our institutions.***

## ABOUT TOM KENNEDY

Tom Kennedy is an internationally recognized leader in higher education with more than 50 years of experience, both in the classroom and in executive leadership roles. Tom has consulted with over 100 U.S. based and international colleges and universities and specializes in accelerated and online delivery of adult education.

Tom's higher education leadership includes the establishing of New Ventures of Regis University, a private, non-profit, and as founder of the Online Consortium of Independent Colleges and Universities (OCICU) where he was responsible for the development of online academic consortiums with more than 80 colleges and universities. His proficiencies additionally include management of student affairs, athletics, development, and collaborative partnerships.

By working closely with organizations such as the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC), the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) and the Association for Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU), Tom is entrenched within the culture and challenges of private education. He has facilitated corporate partnerships with Coors, AT&T, StorageTek and Federal Express. He has served in the diverse roles of board chair, president, vice president, dean, coach, and faculty member and helped to create a dual-language program for Ana G. Mendez University System now serving over 2,500 students in Florida, Maryland, and Colorado.

Tom Kennedy offers experience, vision and leadership to guide colleges and universities in charting the course for a new era in higher education.

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