

Advanced Placement Report to the Nation: Participant Biographies

Gaston Caperton

President
The College Board

Gaston Caperton, former governor of West Virginia, is the eighth president of the College Board, a not-for-profit membership association founded in 1900 that consists of more than 5,200 of the nation's leading schools, colleges, and universities. Among the College Board's best-known programs are the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) and the SAT®.

Since his appointment in 1999, Caperton has transformed the College Board into an organization that takes bold steps to connect greater numbers of students to college success while raising education standards. Under Caperton's leadership, the College Board dramatically changed the SAT, the nation's premier college admissions test. Most significantly, it added a new writing section that has begun to elevate the importance of writing on the nation's education agenda.

Caperton believes that the high standards found within the College Board's Advanced Placement Program courses transform schools and change lives. During Caperton's first seven years as president, the number of low-income students taking AP courses has more than tripled. The rigor of the AP Exams has held steady, yet student performance has improved. Caperton also wants to make the AP Program a catalyst for a greater appreciation of globalization's influence on education in the United States. His campaign to initiate a new series of AP world language and culture courses has resulted in the development of AP Chinese, Italian, and Japanese.

Other programs he has established include College Board and EXCEerator™ Schools that help prepare underserved middle and high school students to enter college and graduate, and the nation's predominant, comprehensive Web site,

collegeboard.com, serving approximately 8 million individuals a year, primarily students and parents planning paths to college.

After graduating from the University of North Carolina, Caperton went to work for a small insurance agency in Charleston, West Virginia. Under his leadership, the company grew into the tenth-largest privately owned insurance brokerage firm in the nation. Gaston Caperton has received many awards, including eight honorary doctoral degrees.

Kyle Daniels

Student
University of Maryland

Kyle Daniels is a freshman at the University of Maryland, College Park, where he is on a full scholarship and is majoring in biochemistry. While in high school at Eleanor Roosevelt in Greenbelt, Maryland, Daniels took AP® Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, AP English Language and Composition, AP English Literature and Composition, AP Physics B, and AP U.S. History. He says taking AP courses in high school boosted his confidence and solidified his interest in science. It also allowed him to enter the University of Maryland with more than 30 college credits. He was on his high school swim team and now swims breaststroke on the University of Maryland's club swim team. In his spare time, Daniels also coaches 11- and 12-year-olds on his hometown swim team. During high school, he gained valuable research experience while working part-time at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Daniels helped scientists with "insect biocontrol" experiments and examined the possibility of using a fungus for pest control in agricultural settings. Daniels plans to pursue a career in scientific research.

Celina Guerra

Student
Harvard University

Although she was born to former migrant farm workers, Celina Guerra's interests have led her in a different direction. She is a freshman at Harvard University, where she is majoring in political science and literature, with a minor in philosophy, and hopes to pursue a career in law. While in high school at Edinburg North in Edinburg, Texas, Guerra took AP[®] Calculus AB and AP Calculus BC, AP English Language and Composition, AP English Literature and Composition, AP Biology, AP U.S. History, and AP Government. Guerra says these AP courses truly prepared her to excel in college and helped her achieve her childhood dream of attending Harvard University. "At Harvard I can now keep up with and excel in classes with students from magnet and prep schools. It doesn't matter where you're from. AP is an equalizer," she said. Guerra was the first freshman at Harvard chosen to be part of the Harvard Mock Trial Team "A," which includes only six students from the entire university. As part of her community outreach efforts, Guerra started Fill the Helmet, a student-to-student fund-raiser to help Hurricane Katrina victims that spread throughout Texas. She enjoys acting and playing the flute, and is part of the Harvard University Flute Ensemble.

L. Lynn Krebs

AP Coordinator
Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee, WI

Lynn Krebs has served as the AP[®] Coordinator in the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) system for five years and has worked in the field of education since 1972. In her current position, Krebs is responsible for developing a viable AP program for the district and seeking funding sources. As Coordinator, she has helped develop district-based AP Summer Institutes and has worked with teachers to write curricula and to develop an awareness of AP course content. Previously, she was the director of the Office of Guidance and Career Education for MPS. In that leadership position, she helped obtain a College Board/EQUITY 2000 Grant and two consecutive Dropout Prevention Demonstration Assistance Grants for programs in her system. Krebs is a member of a number of educational organizations including the Wisconsin School Counselor Association, which she chaired during 1989-90. In 1981, she earned her master's degree in counseling from DePaul University in Chicago, and subsequently obtained her Ph.D. in counseling psychology and educational research from Indiana University, Bloomington.

H. Viscount "Berky" Nelson Jr.

Director, Center for Student Programming
University of California: Los Angeles

H. Viscount "Berky" Nelson Jr. has headed the Center for Student Programming at the University of California: Los Angeles since 1981. His office advises more than 700 students, staff, and faculty organizations and enforces regulations for the 34,000 students who use the university facilities. Nelson began his career teaching at the University of California at Los Angeles. He has held a number of teaching positions, including Associate Professor of Urban History and United States Survey Courses at Dartmouth College and Visiting Scholar at the University of Minnesota. He also has taught and written extensively on African American history. Since 1988, Nelson has been a Reader for the AP[®] U.S. History Exam. He served as a Table Leader from 1989 to 1993 and from 1995 to 2006. As an AP Table Leader, he was responsible for training Readers and monitoring their progress and reliability. Nelson is looking forward to participating in the AP U.S. History Reading as Table Leader again this year. Nelson obtained his master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1962 and later earned his Ph.D. from the same institution in 1969.

Trevor Packer

Executive Director, Advanced Placement
Program
The College Board

Trevor Packer has served as the executive director of the Advanced Placement Program since 2003, following five years as manager of the AP Program's operations. In his current role, Packer is responsible for the AP Program's ongoing development, and he has enacted plans to increase services for small rural schools, double the number of AP courses in world languages and cultures, and align AP curricula and assessments with "best practices" at colleges and universities. A former lecturer and instructor in composition and literature at Brigham Young University and John Jay College, Packer has authored a manual on composition pedagogy, published on Willa Cather and abolitionist Sojourner Truth, and is currently working on a book examining Virginia Woolf's relationship to the Pre-Raphaelites.