

# The Guardians Initiative™

Reclaiming the Public Trust

## **What is the Guardians Initiative?**

The Guardians Initiative is a nationwide initiative led by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges to engage board members of the nation's universities and colleges as advocates for the enduring societal value of higher education.

## **What does the project entail?**

- A series of briefs on key topics to help governing board members become more effective leaders and provide them with information to better understand higher education
- A campaign to enlist and encourage board member advocacy by equipping them with tools to make them more forceful advocates for higher education as a whole

## **Why now?**

Prevailing public attitudes toward higher education—fueled by growing concern over its cost, students' employment prospects, campus sexual assaults, incidents of racial discord, and other negative publicity—have put institutions and those who speak for them in a defensive position.

The current narrative undermines the proven value of higher education as an economic, social, and cultural engine that advances the nation's democratic ideals.

## **What's next, and what can I do?**

- Become a Guardian—learn about American higher education and how it is performing.
- Start discussions and use the facts to engage with colleagues and with other policymakers and opinion leaders.
- Encourage your boards and presidents to broaden their awareness about the sector, to talk about your institution's successes and contributions to the public good and to engage in "big picture" discussions about the sector.
- Share your pride. Your trusteeship is an important national service.
- Check out the Guardians website at [www.agb.org/Guardians](http://www.agb.org/Guardians) for new information, upcoming briefs, and a toolkit to get your board started.
- Follow us on Twitter @AGBGuardians.