



LEADERSHIP SPEAKS

by Joshua Spivak

Former Presidents Help Higher Education Institutions Handle New Challenges

Former Wagner College President and former Metropolitan College of New York President are leading a consulting enterprise which will help guide colleges, universities and secondary schools through the challenging modern environment.

Daunting Fiscal and Educational Challenges in Higher Education

Announcing a new model of consulting enterprise, former Wagner College President Richard Guarasci and former Metropolitan College of New York President Stephen Greenwald have launched Presidential Partners, LLC to address the daunting fiscal and educational challenges currently confronting higher education.

Known for their highly-regarded reputations in civic, experiential, and curricular reform and institutional transformation, the founders have assembled a highly experienced team from a wide spectrum of public/private universities and pre-collegiate leadership.

With the aim of guiding colleges, universities and secondary schools through today's particularly challenging environment, Presidential Partners offers high touch, affordable long-term partnerships.

Dr. Guarasci served Wagner College for 22 years, 17 as President, the longest presidential tenure in the college's history. He also has served as board chair of three major higher education organizations, including the American Association of Colleges and Universities.

Mr. Greenwald served as the head of the Hugh L. Carey Institute for Government Reform at Wagner College, and was president of MCNY for 8 years, from 1999 to 2007. He also has an extensive background in law and business, having served as the CEO of three public companies in the media industry.

Longer-Term, Effective, Personalized Solutions

The founders recognized a need for longer-term, effective, and more personalized solutions to the difficult issues facing higher education today.

"We started this practice because, as university leaders, we were disappointed with outside consultants and envisioned a practice where we and the colleges we work with become partners in designing sustainable solutions together," said Richard Guarasci.

"We aim to bring the expertise of our highly diverse team to bear on the work we do, tailored to the specific and unique needs of the institutions we serve.

A hallmark of the new practice is that at least one of the principals of the firm will personally oversee every project." —DR. STEPHEN GREENWALD, FORMER PRESIDENT OF

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF NEW YORK, HEAD OF THE HUGH L. CAREY INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNMENT REFORM AT WAGNER COLLEGE

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Presidential Partners brings a solutions-oriented methodology to higher education, built around the particular culture and legacies of client partners, at a time when colleges and

universities are facing difficulties of a different order than in the past, including:

- the growing nemeses of income and wealth inequality;
- the decline in population of future college-age Americans;
- the impact of technology on the higher education learning model that has not changed in any significant way in the past century;

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"For the first time, the long-accepted understanding that higher education is the surest pathway to success has been challenged." —DR. RICHARD GUARASCI

- a growing consensus among parts of the body politic that a college education may not be worth the cost and may not contribute to a better life;
- pressure from the public and politicians to lower tuition costs; and
- the absence of a suitable business model for a sustainable, affordable education.

Unique Challenges for Leaders in Education

"Educational leaders are facing unique challenges of a type that they have never had to deal with before," said Dr. Guarasci. "For the first time, the long-accepted understanding that higher education is the surest pathway to success has been challenged."

Presidential Partners has recruited as associates highly experienced and accomplished higher education veterans with decades of expertise in recruiting and enrollments; curriculum

development; faculty development; board-president relationships; presidential transitions; and institutional collaborations.

A particular area of expertise is the development and implementation of civic engagement programs: collaborations between a college and the community in which it resides to enhance the education experience for students and meet and solve challenges facing the community.

Dr. Guarasci is nationally known as a leader in civic engagement and served as Board Chair of both the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities and Campus Compact, the major organization focused on civic engagement.

Innovative and Successful Civic Engagement

As president of Wagner College, Guarasci initiated one of the most innovative and successful civic

engagement programs in the country, working with community leaders in the borough of Staten Island.

Dr. Guarasci notes that "the 'town' versus 'gown' battles have worn on educators for decades. It is important for collegiate leaders to prioritize civic engagement. It pays off as both an educational tool and as an investment by a college in the community in which it lives, and it offers a great experiential learning experience for students."

Greenwald, during his tenure at MCNY, expanded that college's experiential learning model to include new areas of learning such as media management, education and urban studies. He believes that "more students are looking for an education that combines traditional learning with work experiences as gateways to professional success."



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Joshua Spivak is a Public Relations Executive who provides strategic, high-level publicity and editorial campaign planning for a diverse client-base.

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