

**JOINT STATEMENT BY NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERS ON  
TODAY'S DECISION BY THE U.S. SUPREME COURT IN GRATZ V.  
BOLLINGER AND GRUTTER V. BOLLINGER**

Washington, DC (June 23, 2003) - American higher education welcomes today's U.S. Supreme Court decisions in the two cases before the court addressing admissions at the University of Michigan--Gratz v. Bollinger and Grutter v. Bollinger. In both cases, the court not only upheld racial and ethnic diversity as a compelling state interest, but also reaffirmed the importance of giving colleges and universities leeway in the admissions process. These decisions enable our institutions to maintain their strong commitment to be welcoming places to students of all races and walks of life and to continue to pursue a wide range of legally permissible means of attaining a diverse student body.

In the amicus briefs that we and some 50 other higher education associations filed with the Supreme Court in February, we argued that the court should not impede colleges' and universities' pursuit of diversity, based on the following logic:

- \* Our nation's long tradition of government giving colleges and universities wide latitude in academic matters has been critical to the preeminence of American higher education;
- \* Leaders of every type of college and university hold student diversity to be educationally valuable, and there is ample evidence supporting that belief; and
- \* The government has a compelling interest in maintaining the student diversity needed to sustain the quality of American higher education.

The court specifically upheld the law school admissions policy as narrowly tailored and constitutional, and while the court struck down the particular means employed by the University of Michigan to achieve diversity in the undergraduate case, we are extremely pleased to see that all of the majority and concurring opinions of the justices hold to the same three principles set forth above. We applaud the University of Michigan for so vigorously defending them.

Now comes the hard work of scrutinizing and implementing the details of these important decisions. We are confident that colleges and universities, gratified that they can move forward on the basis of a decision by the nation's highest court, will seek out the most effective paths to diversity and thus fulfill their role in the nation's historic quest for equal opportunity for all.

Signed,

**Robert C. Andringa**, President, Council for Christian Colleges & Universities  
**Myles Brand**, President, National Collegiate Athletic Association  
**Geraldine Bednash**, Executive Director, American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
**George R. Boggs**, President, American Association of Community Colleges  
**Roger J. Bulger**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Association of Academic Health Centers

**Mary Burgan**, General Secretary, American Association of University Professors  
**Fr. Charles Currie, SJ**, President, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities  
**Constantine W. Curris**, President, American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
**Judith Eaton**, President, Council for Higher Education Accreditation  
**Richard Ekman**, President, Council of Independent Colleges  
**Antonio R. Flores**, President, Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities  
**Nils Hasselmo**, President, Association of American Universities  
**Brian L. Hawkins**, President, EDUCAUSE  
**Kay J. Kohl**, Executive Director, University Continuing Education Association  
**C. Peter Magrath**, President, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges  
**A. Dallas Martin, Jr.**, President, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators  
**Arnold L. Mitchem**, President, Council for Opportunity in Education  
**Carl C. Monk**, Executive Vice President, Association of American Law Schools  
**James E. Morley, Jr.**, President, National Association of College and University Business Officers  
**Yolanda T. Moses**, President, American Association for Higher Education  
**Stephen J. Otzenberger**, Executive Director, College and University Professional Association for Human Resources  
**Vance T. Peterson**, President, Council for Advancement and Support of Education  
**Carol G. Schneider**, President, Association of American Colleges and Universities  
**Debra W. Stewart**, President, Council of Graduate Schools  
**Jerry Sullivan**, Executive Director, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
**Ray Taylor**, President, Association of Community College Trustees  
**Richard W. Valachovic**, Executive Director, American Dental Education Association  
**David Ward**, President, American Council on Education  
**David L. Warren**, President, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities