TOOL SUMMARY
The “Presidential Commitment” charges community college chancellors and presidents to sign-on to a National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE) movement and provides specific activities to embed entrepreneurship into a campus and community.

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP MOVEMENT
NACCE envisions “democratizing entrepreneurship” through community colleges. Millions of people are turning toward entrepreneurship to take responsibility for their futures and build strong economies in their communities. At some point, community college students will either take an existing job or create one. Our message aims to expose people to the power of entrepreneurship and inspire individuals to create their own jobs. In some instances students of entrepreneurship will create not just their own jobs, but also jobs for others.

At the community college level, the impact of democratizing entrepreneurship takes different forms among different participants:

- Self-employed – creating their own jobs as:
  - Consultants
  - Solopreneurs
  - Freelance workers
  - Contract workers
  - Direct sellers
  - Lifestyle consultants

- Small businesses – creating jobs for others in sectors including:
  - Restaurants
  - Trades (carpentry/plumbing/electrical)
  - “Main Street” retail businesses

- Growth companies – creating jobs for others by cultivating new ideas and scalable innovations by:
  - Exploiting new technologies
  - Commercializing existing research
  - Modifying and improving existing products
  - Engaging venture backing
Community college graduates, often with minimal resources, are creating companies in their communities and contributing significantly to the economic vitality of their localities and the nation. Recognizing the critical role of community colleges in bringing people from where they are to where they have the potential to be, NACCE understands, advocates for and serves the forms of venture creation listed above.

This movement in entrepreneurship has far-reaching impact on our educational approach, choices and priorities; our approach to job creation; and how we view our communities, our economy, our vitality as a nation and our global standing.

COMMITMENTS OBJECTIVE
The objective of creating a Presidential Commitment that community college presidents will sign onto is to ensure that community colleges are involved in one of the most profound discussions in the nation. It is imperative that the presidents’ identity and role be maximized by:

- Positively and clearly advocating the critical role of the community college in the entrepreneurship space.
- Expanding the reach of community colleges’ partnerships with organizations across industry sectors.
- Positioning community colleges as a major player in the national—and global—entrepreneurship discussion.

PRESIDENTS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP
We believe five commitments are crucial for community colleges to advance entrepreneurship in their communities. By accepting our invitation to this forum, you agree to begin advancing these objectives in the 2011 – 2012 fiscal year. The sequence of these commitments will be critical to form the foundation of entrepreneurship. For fiscal year 2011 – 2012, emphasis will be on completing commitments 1 – 3.

1. **Develop Transparency of Community College and Community Assets**
   The community may view the community college as open access institutions that are gateways for additional education (transfers to universities) and educating people for “realistic businesses” such as self-employment etc... While this is an important role of the community college, how can their role in spurring entrepreneurial activity in their communities be expanded? What other assets or “access points” does the college possess that could positively impact the rate of entrepreneurship in their community?

   - **ASSESS INVENTORY:** Inventory potential common-use facilities, equipment or tools. What underutilized capital infrastructure could be “leased” out on an hourly or daily basis? Shared resources of all kinds can fuel startups and job creations by lowering the hurdle for capital investment.
   - **MAKE ASSETS TRANSPARENT AND AVAILABLE:** How can community colleges make inventoried assets transparent to the community and develop a system for sharing costs of those assets. Some items to consider might be liability insurance needs; review programs such as TechShop [http://www.techshop.ws/](http://www.techshop.ws/) to see how this might be done.
• LEVERAGING COMMUNITY ASSETS: Besides the community college’s own assets, there may be assets in the greater community that can be leveraged. Can these be identified? Open a dialogue with supportive businesses on non-cash resources that can be leveraged as services that the college can divide, manage and sell to the small business community. Cash is king, but in this economy your supporters may have many underused assets that could be better used by the college. Commercial property, equipment, land leases, bandwidth, patents and other IP are just a few. In some cases goods may be written off by the businesses as in-kind contributions.

2. Create Internal & External Teams Dedicated to Entrepreneurship

INTERNAL—Establish an on-campus team of administrators, faculty, and staff to meet on a regular basis and discuss all activities related to entrepreneurship. Make sure representatives are from every area of the campus that touches entrepreneurship from academic, workforce development and continuing education (including non-credit).

• Engage your Board of Trustees (many may be entrepreneurs) in your commitment to entrepreneurship by discussing these commitments in ongoing board meetings. This clear communication will unleash additional entrepreneurial potential in your community when the Trustees recognize the role of the community colleges in promoting job creation.

• Working with the Board determine how new relationships can support your efforts.

• Involve your Alumni Office to ensure that the college is identifying alumni involved in entrepreneurship.

• Read and discuss the first two publications in the series “Helping Entrepreneurs Succeed, the Role of Community Colleges” (produced by NACCE) reporting answers to questions at the end of the chapters back to NACCE to compile and share out with all the institutions involved with the commitment.

• Identify ways to infuse the culture of your college with entrepreneurship.

EXTERNAL—Identify groups outside of the community college (Meet-ups, Universities, SBDC’s, Women’s Business Centers etc…) that are supporting entrepreneurship to create an easily navigated landscape of resources available to current or potential entrepreneurs in your community.

• Actively cultivate economic partnerships with other economic development groups in the area to identify ways community assets could be better used.

• If your area has a group focused on creating and supporting business owners, assign key people from your college to join it and attend their regular functions. If there is no such group, start one!

• Offer free meeting and conference space to entrepreneurial groups outside of the school within the community

• Work to identify “gaps” and overlaps to most efficiently serve the community.
• Create a community-wide triage point for entrepreneurs. With your community partners, create a “Triage Team” to meet with new and potential business owners for assessing their needs and identifying businesses with fast growth potential. Not all potential and current entrepreneurs know exactly what their needs are; therefore, a process of key diagnostic questions will reveal likely needs, useful resources and their most appropriate partners.

3. Increase Entrepreneurs Engagement in Community Colleges
Many successful entrepreneurs either attended a community college and/or believe that community colleges are an excellent starting point for an entrepreneur.
• Review stories of commitments by entrepreneurs in other communities (NACCE has material) to see what is possible.
• Identify and engage five entrepreneurs in your community who believe community colleges can and should be used by would-be entrepreneurs.
• Invite them to provide input on how they can support the college.
• Mentorship.
• Advisory group.
• Find entrepreneurial success stories within your community and beyond that originated within your college through alumni tracking – then promote these stories with NACCE and other community colleges.

4. Engage In Industry Cluster Development
• Become informed about regional industry cluster development.
• Identify and contact their state or regional economic development groups to discuss.
• Take part in a NACCE webinar on the subject describing how one college did this and took charge of positively impacting their local economy.

5. Create Buzz and Broad Exposure of your College’s Commitment to Entrepreneurship
• Bring at least one community-wide event to your college this year such as Start-up Weekend.
• Share out your commitments to the local media and NACCE for wide-spread distribution. Use this as an opportunity to publicly “journal” your progress to the outside world.
• Share outcomes and best practices from your commitments annually at the NACCE conference and/or through NACCE’s journal, Community College Entrepreneurship.