



# Higher Education in Puerto Rico: Conditions and Context

**A conversation with  
Puerto Rican leaders**

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2pm ET**

Environmental scan completed with the generous support of the Ascendium Education Group



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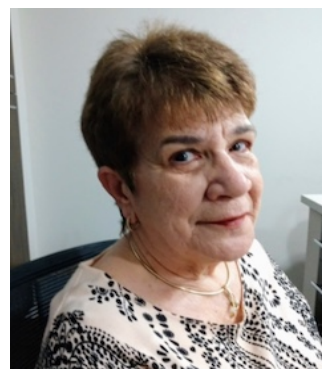
# Presenters



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## Higher Education in Puerto Rico: Conditions and Context Influencing Institutional Resilience



The **total population** and **K-12 educational pipeline** has declined, potentially affecting the future college-going pool of applicants.

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Full-time **retention rates** have increased in the last 15 years, despite drops in **enrollment** and are higher than the national retention rate.

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The **cost of attendance** across all sectors has been increasing over the last 20 years and there is a significant gap between students' cost of attendance and the grant aid they receive.

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**Graduation rates** have been on the rise at private 4-year institutions but have remained relatively stagnant at public 4-year institutions.

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Despite an increasing share of the population attaining a postsecondary degree, Puerto Rico's **unemployment rate** is high.

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# Future Research: Institutional Resilience in Puerto Rico

1. Why has the population that has earned an associate's degree or higher increased despite a decline in the population over the last 10 years?
2. How does the decline of the younger population, affect institutions of higher education in Puerto Rico?
3. How have private 4-year institutions increased their students' graduation rates while their expenditures have decreased?
4. How can institutions better support their students financially given the significant gap between grant aid and cost of attendance?
5. What explains the high unemployment despite an increase in the population that has earned a postsecondary degree?

## **Forthcoming: case studies on institutional resilience**

by *Excelencia* in Education in partnership with *Fundación Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades*  
& with the support of the Ascendium Education Group





**Source:** Labandera, E., Santiago, D., and Laurel, J. (May 2021). Washington, D.C.: *Excelencia* in Education.  
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