Should I stay or should I go?

Survey of Recent College Graduates
Success in the new economy will be increasingly concentrated in those regions with the right combination of smart people and good ideas. It is crucial that Greater Philadelphia be well positioned to capitalize and build upon its existing base of knowledge assets.

— Greater Philadelphia’s Knowledge Industry: Leveraging the Region’s Colleges and Universities in the New Economy (2000)

Four years ago, Greater Philadelphia drew a line in the sand:

“Success in the new economy will be increasingly concentrated in those regions with the right combination of smart people and good ideas. It is crucial that Greater Philadelphia be well positioned to capitalize and build upon its existing base of knowledge assets.”

Four years later, under the leadership of the Knowledge Industry Partnership, Philadelphia is writing the game plan on how to collaboratively address workforce issues through its regional “One Big Campus” initiative. As part of this landmark effort, we are pleased to present the findings from one of the most comprehensive surveys of recent graduates to date, which sheds light of why the region’s education levels lag behind other knowledge regions.

The results are surprisingly encouraging—and provide a clarion call for regional stakeholders interested in ensuring Philadelphia emerges competitive and prosperous in today’s knowledge economy.

With the release of its Knowledge Industry Report in 2000, The Pennsylvania Economy League took a close look at the impact Greater Philadelphia’s impressive mix of colleges and universities has on the region.

The report concluded that while Philadelphia’s 83 colleges and universities are indeed economic engines, and our 300,000 enrolled students represent a potential talent stream to rival any major metro, we are not among the top-tier of knowledge industry regions—and in fact are being closely tailed by a set of up-and-coming regions.

What these regions appear to have in common is a high level of education attainment, typically more than 40 percent, as compared to Philadelphia’s 29 percent. In today’s knowledge-driven economy, this puts Philadelphia at a distinct disadvantage.

Greater Philadelphia’s Knowledge Industry: Leveraging the Region’s Colleges and Universities in the New Economy (2000)
Executive Summary

In January 2004, the Knowledge Industry Partnership (KIP) conducted a web-based survey of 2,550 graduates who attended college in the Greater Philadelphia area and graduated in the spring or summer of 2003. Twenty nine different colleges from the region (see inside front cover) participated by contacting graduates. The data represents a diverse sample of graduates in terms of place of origin, place of residence, degree, class status, field of work, ethnicity and general attitudes and opinions about the region.

The Good News: Philadelphia retains more graduates than most people think.

64% of all graduates remain in the region after college.
Contrary to conventional wisdom, almost two-thirds of all undergraduate and graduate students choose to remain in the Philadelphia region after earning their degree. By comparison, Boston, widely regarded as the market leader for higher education, retains only 50 percent of its new graduates.

86% of graduates originally from the area stay in the area.
Philadelphia does especially well in retaining native Philadelphians. This is a testament to the region’s popularity among those with a first-hand appreciation for all it has to offer. Once again, Philadelphia’s retention of homegrown graduates is currently higher than Boston’s (72%).

The Challenge: Philadelphia does not do as well in retaining non-native graduates.

29% of those not originally from this region stay after graduation.
After taking up residence for at least a year and typically much longer, more than 15,000 new graduates leave the region annually in pursuit of work somewhere else. Contrary to Boston, which retains 4 out of 10 (42%) of its non-native graduates annually, Philadelphia holds onto fewer than three out of ten.

The Bottom Line: Until Philadelphia is able to retain more non-native graduates, it will continue to suffer a net loss of knowledge workers.

For every 10 students who graduate from high school in Philadelphia and go onto college, 4 students will end up residing elsewhere after college.

The Opportunity: Philadelphia has the potential to retain more students.

Philadelphia already has the key ingredients needed to not only attract college students, but keep them here after they graduate:

- The infrastructure necessary to provide ample internship opportunities
- Strong academic programs in fields of study most likely to retain students
- The vast cultural and professional resources of a major urban center
- Affordable cost of living and plentiful housing stock

Judging from the region’s relatively high retention of native college graduates, Philadelphia now has the proof these ingredients work.

Those who truly know the region realize it’s not just a great place to go to school, but also to build a career.

Philadelphia should focus more resources and activities on its non-native students. In other words, make sure they come to know the region as intimately as Philadelphians do. As our findings confirm, those who develop a first-hand appreciation for all that Philadelphia has to offer—both on and off campus—are not so quick to pack their bags come graduation.

If Philadelphia was able to match Boston’s retention rate of non-native graduates, 2,400 new knowledge workers would be joining the region’s workforce each year. The economic impact of this shift would be tremendous. This new population would help recast the region’s image as an attractive location for other young, college-educated knowledge workers—including those currently attending college elsewhere who will be seeking a vibrant urban experience where they can prosper and thrive.

Herein lies the main issue resting at the center of this report.

When talented, temporary residents ask themselves, “Should I stay in the region after I graduate or go somewhere else?” far too many make the personal and professional decision to leave.
There are two times when young educated people … future scientists, engineers, executives, and artists … typically pack their bags during their college career: first, when they leave home for college and again when they graduate. Should I Stay or Should I Go? aims its sights squarely on the second major move—the transition from college to career.

This report focuses on the students already residing here, who are completing their degree and eager to share their talents with the world. Growing this demographic will improve the region’s youthful image, which in turn will further improve Philadelphia’s ability to attract more students and young professionals to the region.

Taking a look at the Knowledge Industry Partnership’s Survey of Recent College Graduates (see chart, opposite page), Philadelphia does a very respectable job of retaining its own college graduates.

Native Philadelphians—those who went to high school in the region and stayed for college—account for most of the region’s retained graduates, but there are also a decent number of non-native students—those who came to Philadelphia for college—who remained after graduating. Many of these Philadelphia converts are from smaller metro areas or nearby locales and have discovered Philadelphia offers the perfect mix of small-town character and big-city opportunity (see chart at right). Philadelphia’s strong graduate retention clearly confirms this region is attractive to Philadelphia natives and non-natives alike.

As for the 36 percent of 2003 graduates that did pack their bags after graduation, some of these graduates are homebound, returning to their place of origin. Whether it’s familial ties or the sluggish job market, the reasons these students are going home are largely out of the region’s control.

The others packing their bags are a different story. This population, representing 25 percent of all graduates, are leaving Philadelphia to go somewhere new. The majority of these graduates are “explorers,” non-natives who are packing their bags but are not going home. The rest are ex-Philadelphians, exploring the world outside their hometown for the first time. Together, they represent Philadelphia’s best shot at reversing brain drain.

Retaining Philadelphia’s College Graduates

Who Stays and Who Goes

Native Philadelphians (27,000)
- from the region and staying
Explorers (8,000)
- not from here; not returning home
New Philadelphians (6,000)
- came for college and staying
Ex-Philadelphians (5,000)
- from the region; left after college
Home Bound (5,000)
- not from here; returning home

64% of all graduates stay in the area

25% of students head somewhere new after graduating

Origins and Retention of Non-Natives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metro Area</th>
<th>Where non-Philadelphians are from</th>
<th>% who stay after graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York metro area</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania (non PHL or PIT)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey (non NYC or PHL)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore/Washington DC</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of US</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco - Oakland</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere in US</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Average non-Philadelphian retention rate is 27%
Hailing from Philadelphia, Jen Scaria found her hometown met all her college needs. She’s majoring in marketing and management at a local university and has already interned at Electronic Ink, one of the nation’s most respected E-design firms. This long-time Philadelphian, who believes she could succeed anywhere, sees no reason to leave after she earns her degree.


Comparisons show that Philadelphia does far better holding onto its homegrown talent than Boston, retaining 86 percent of its native student population versus Boston’s 76 percent. But this is small consolation for the fact that Boston retains significantly more of its non-native graduates than Philadelphia—42% vs 29%.

**A Tale of Two Cities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Graduates Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natives</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Natives</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natives</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Natives</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons show that Philadelphia does far better holding onto its homegrown talent than Boston, retaining 86 percent of its native student population versus Boston’s 76 percent. But this is small consolation for the fact that Boston retains significantly more of its non-native graduates than Philadelphia—42% vs 29%.

If Philadelphia, like Boston, were to retain four out of every ten non-native graduates, it would result in 2,400 more knowledge workers entering the local economy every year. The economic impact of this influx would be tremendous boon to the region. According to CEOs for Cities—a national alliance of regional civic leaders—every 2% growth in a region’s proportion of college graduates leads to a 1% improvement in regional income growth.*

Boston’s higher retention of “explorer” graduates might help explain how the region can have a lower overall retention rate than Philadelphia (50% vs. 64%) and still be widely regarded as a “hot spot” for college graduates. Its universal appeal as a go-to place for talented, college-educated people, regardless of where they studied, ensures that the region is continually rewarded with a ready-made stream of knowledge workers.

Explorers: Philadelphia’s Opportunity Zone

The “explorer” graduates from our sampling are both mobile and motivated with no particular connection to their newest region of residence. They no longer live where they grew up or near Philadelphia, where they recently attended college.

Instead, they’ve chosen to resettle for personal or professional reasons somewhere new. The majority head to other metropolitan areas, most along the East Coast. There is little that differentiates many of these destinations from the Philadelphia region.

Where the Explorers are Going

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Explorers going elsewhere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NYC 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore/DC 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside US 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA Other 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ Other 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsewhere 24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Far from trivial are these explorers, numbering more than 8,000 each year, representing the region’s—and the state’s—single best opportunity to bring in new talent.

Fortunately, these explorer graduates are not necessarily gone for good—71 percent say they would consider moving back to the region in the future. Their driving motive, in other words, is not to flee Philadelphia, but to seek out a better opportunity.

It would be great if many of these departing new professionals would eventually return; it would be even better if they didn’t leave in the first place.

Data collected from recent graduates reveals several opportunities to influence “explorers-in-waiting,” so that a greater number realize sooner than later—that everything they are searching for is already at their fingertips.

One such opportunity: internships. If a student who is not originally from the region interns locally during their college career he or she is twice as likely to remain in Philadelphia after graduation.

Now, imagine the impact that 5,000 additional internships could have on Philadelphia’s quest to retain its best and brightest graduates.
Philadelphia produces highly-qualified, ambitious graduates, ready to take on the world and make a name for themselves.

What makes some of them think they can do that from a Center City apartment while others decide it’s best to pack their bags and head to a new zip code?

KIP’s survey of recent graduates provides key insight into why some choose to stay while others opt to leave. It is much more than a happy coincidence that 86 percent of all Philadelphia college graduates originally from the region stay after graduation.

One might think that after spending most, if not all, of their lives in Philadelphia, many of these students would be ready for a change of scenery—but something about Philadelphia makes them choose otherwise. More than any other college student population, these students are well aware of what Philadelphia has to offer—and they obviously like what they see.

The task facing regional stakeholders is clear: we must ensure that non-native college students become intimately versed in all Philadelphia has to offer, professionally, academically, socially and culturally.

While every graduate has his or her own reason for deciding where to launch a career, KIP’s Survey of Recent College Graduates identified four key areas that impact whether college graduates decide to stay or to go:

1. Internships
2. Academic Focus
3. Personal Connection
4. Practical Matters

These four areas are analyzed in more detail on the next four pages.

By focusing attention and resources on these four factors, Philadelphia decision-makers can increase the likelihood that local students, native and non-native alike, will feel at home in Philadelphia—and will make the region their permanent home after graduation.

KIP’s Survey of Recent College Graduates demonstrates that internships create lasting connections between Philadelphia students and the region.

- Well over half of all students (64%) who interned locally chose to stay in the region after graduating.
- Specific to the all-important non-native segment—those who interned (42%) were twice as likely to remain after college as those who did not (20%).
- Also with respect to non-native students, those IT, Health and Related Sciences, or Business majors who interned are at least twice as likely to remain as those who didn’t intern.

Far from just providing work experience, internships expose students to academic, cultural and social opportunities they never knew existed beyond the campus gates. Likewise, local internships encourage Philadelphia employers to give preference to area graduates, providing these students with even more incentive to stay.

The conclusion is obvious: not only make sure that all Philadelphia students have access to internships, but also make sure the internships are top notch.

By working with local companies to ensure they provide abundant and dynamic internships to local students, decision-makers will ensure that local internships benefit interns, employers, and the region alike.

In any discussion regarding workforce development, the question is always asked, Do we have the right jobs to keep college students here?

For the moment, the best answer, regardless of the current job market, is that jobs are only one of the factors driving the decision to stay or leave.

It’s true that Philadelphia has not been a high-growth employment center for decades, nor do we have the scores of corporate headquarters that define a regional image. Rather, the local economy can be described more as a big forest with small trees, which makes hunting down hot job opportunities all the more challenging.

For this reason, KIP remains supportive of all efforts to lower taxes and market the region as a premier business location.

In today’s new economy, it’s not always the workers following the jobs. Instead, knowledge workers are migrating to those areas offering a high quality of life and, in turn, the best job opportunities are now following knowledge workers.

By marketing the region as both a great place to go to college and build a career, Philadelphia stakeholders can hope to attract and retain more knowledge workers, as well as lure companies looking for a thick labor pool of recently minted college graduates.
2. Academic Focus

One less obvious influence on the non-native students’ decision to stay or go “explore” is their choice of major. Certain fields of study are far more likely to attract out-of-region students who, down the road, will choose to start their career in Philadelphia.

Fortunately the academic focus for those non-native students most likely to stay is well-aligned with the Philadelphia region’s core strengths: Information technology, health sciences and visual and performing arts.

By looking specifically at who becomes a “new Philadelphian” or “explorer” (see chart at right) we can see that:

- Two-thirds of non-native Computer & IT majors stayed.
- Half of those studying Health and Related Sciences stayed.
- Almost half of those pursuing Visual and Performing Arts stayed.
- Slightly more than half of those majoring in Engineering stayed.

By focusing its efforts on these areas of study, Philadelphia can successfully attract more of the college students who are most likely to stay in the region after graduating.

It is also interesting to note that only 1 of every 4 non-native Business majors (28%), the region’s most popular area of study, remain here after they graduate.

An effective argument can be made that, by confronting Philadelphia’s shortcomings (such as retention of Business majors), as well as embracing its many strengths, the region will be in a much healthier position to support those key industries around which Philadelphia must stake its future.

As current city planning experts are discovering, the economic vitality of 21st century cities is dependent as much on the city’s “coolness” factor as it is on big development projects. By comparing Philadelphia with Baltimore (see sidebar), we can see that Philadelphia’s student-friendly reputation is already a valuable commodity. KIP’s survey asked recent graduates to rate Philadelphia as a college destination on a scale of one to ten. From those results:

- 60 percent of students from elsewhere who stayed after graduation rated the region an 8 or higher.
- Only 4 percent of students from elsewhere who rated Philadelphia a 4 or lower stayed in the area.
- 78 percent of non-native students who rated Philadelphia an 8 or higher considered staying. By contrast, of those who rated Philly 4 or less, only 18 percent considered staying.

According to the graduates from elsewhere who stayed, here are the region’s strongest attributes:

- Museums, historical sights, and other attractions
- Arts and culture
- Access to other cities
- Tourism and nightlife
- Chance to interact with a strong minority community
- Overall, a city/region that provides diversity
- Good opportunities for minority groups
- A city/region where minority groups feel comfortable
- A diverse set of role models in visible positions
- A good place for young people

Philadelphia needs to ensure that its student population knows about all the great amenities the region already offers. By spreading the word about these positive attributes to non-native college students, Philadelphia decision-makers can hope to improve this population’s overall perception of the region. After that, it will be much harder for these students to say goodbye to a city they have come to know and love.

### Average Retention Rates for Out-of-Region Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Study</th>
<th>Percent Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological and Life Sciences</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture and Engineering</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Professions and Related Sciences</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Legal Studies</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Communications</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences and History</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Administrative</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts and Humanities</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Field of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Work</th>
<th>Percent Retained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architectural and Engineering Services</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing or Construction</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and Marketing</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Legal Services</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Production</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking, Accounting, Finance</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic, Gov’t or Non-Profit</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Philadelphia vs. Baltimore

The Impact of Perception

Recently the city of Baltimore, Maryland, surveyed 1,589 enrolled students about their perceptions of the region. KIP conducted an almost identical survey. The results were markedly different.

These perceptions appear to have a major impact on a student’s decision to stay or not to stay in the region. Over half of the Philadelphia students surveyed said they were likely to stay in the region after graduation (51%), while only two in five of the Baltimore students anticipated remaining in the area (20%).
Gina Montana went to college in Philadelphia and found everything she ever wanted right in her own home state. She’s just a short drive away from her native countryside, but she’s also found the high-profile job of her dreams at SEI Investments.

4. Practical Matters

Philadelphia’s low cost of living and sizeable housing stock provides young professionals with a unique combination of affordability and opportunity. While not all graduates place a high value on a region’s affordability and housing availability—some are more interested in places they can make money, not save money—those who do care about such matters find Philadelphia to be just what they’re looking for:

- Sixty percent of students who rank “Affordability” as important stayed in the region. In comparison, only seventeen percent of those for whom “Affordability” is not a major factor stayed in the region.
- Fifty-four percent of those who rank “Housing (availability & value)” as important stayed, compared to only 20 percent of those for whom “Housing” is not a major factor.

- The biggest difference in opinion between those who stayed and those who left concerned the importance of affordability and housing. While those who stayed found cost of living and available housing very important, those who didn’t stay were largely indifferent to these two factors.

Differential in Key Factors in Choosing Where to Live—Average of Rating 1 to 5

The Price is Right

Philadelphia’s strong housing value is more than just a perception. The region offers some of the most affordable housing of any metropolitan area in the country. By emphasizing this as an advantage, Philadelphia can hope to retain more graduating knowledge workers for whom cost-of-living and value-for-dollar are both major considerations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metro Area</th>
<th>Average Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$3,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington DC</td>
<td>$2,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>$1,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>$1,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>$1,428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>$1,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>$1,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>$933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average rent prices courtesy of ACCRA Cost of Living Index 4th Quarter 2003 Report
Attract

Increase and strengthen the talent pool enrolling and graduating from the region’s colleges and universities.

Continue One Big Campus positioning and promotion efforts
- Raise the capture rate for in and out-of-region prospects by communicating what makes Philadelphia a unique college experience. Develop clear and consistent messaging that can be used by all Knowledge Industry Partners to foster stronger collaborative efforts with corporate, civic, and university leaders in and around the region.

Target prospects interested in high retention fields of study
- Focus out-of-state and international recruitment efforts on students interested in majors associated with high retention rates: Computer Science and IT, Health Sciences, Visual and Performing Arts, and Engineering. Aligning regional strengths with those students whose major makes them more likely to stay will replenish Philadelphia’s key industries.

Showcase Philadelphia’s Internship Opportunities
- Enhance the visibility of Philadelphia’s internship and career opportunities as a means to attract more students to the region. Let students know that, before they even arrive on campus, there will be career opportunities waiting for them.

Welcome Back the Graduates
- Develop a reclamation strategy aimed at all Philadelphia graduates who go somewhere else, including both even the Home-Bound and Explorer graduates. Many of these students are more than likely to return given the right encouragement. Philadelphia is one campus you’ll never outgrow…and getting graduates to return will prove it.

Engage

Increase the quality and number of connections each college student has with the region.

Immerse students in the region through cultural and social opportunities
- Continue to expand and promote programs that provide regional exposure to enrolled students early on in their college careers. Campus Philly, including its website (www.campusphilly.org), the annual Campus Philly Kick-Off (formerly The Philadelphia College Festival), and the Philadelphia Arts Student Sampler (PASS), are already established programs, but they need additional support to make a lasting impact on Philadelphia’s college population.

Remove barriers that impede students from venturing off-campus
- Bridge the “information gap” by improving communications on college campuses regarding non-academic, off-campus opportunities and inter-campus activities via alternative media source and grassroots promotion. Continue to confront the transportation issues of cost and convenience that have traditionally hampered students in the past. Further develop student discount programs to allow students a greater opportunity to be consumers off-campus.

Make community involvement a top priority
- Shift a greater focus for enrolled students onto service oriented activities. By involving college students as real community partners who devote time, energy, and resources to Philadelphia’s neighborhoods, the enrolled student population will become a model for citizenship, and establish connections that will last well beyond graduation.

Expose summer interns to Philadelphia’s “real” real world
- Provide summer interns with a true Philadelphia resident experience, including residential, social, and cultural offerings. Coordinate housing resources, encourage group intern exploration outings, and organize speakers, dinners, and other social opportunities that allow interns to “test drive” Philadelphia as a post-college destination.
Retain

Make internships a core element of the Philadelphia college experience.

Offer internship opportunities to every Philadelphia’s college students

- Provide all 300,000 students in the Philadelphia region with local internship, mini-internship, externship, and co-op opportunities.

- Provide direct access between the region’s future graduate pool and Philadelphia’s employer base by allowing students to gain valuable professional experience, showcase their skills, build their resumes, network, and connect with the region.

Redefine the Philadelphia internship

- Work with employers to produce cutting edge internship programs through progressive projects like accreditation programs, academic field-specific internships and social engagement elements. Incorporate Career Philly’s Internship-in-a-Box program to educate the region’s business leaders on the meaning of a fulfilling Philadelphia internship for both the intern and the employer.

Match internships with key areas of study

- Cultivate internships that focus on the region’s high retention areas of study: computer science and IT, health sciences, visual and performing arts, and engineering. Raise awareness with both students and business leaders that these are industries where jobs are available, and new graduates are the key to replenishing and growing these industries.

Launch summer internship program

- Develop a summer internship program that connects each intern personally with the region. Includes professional development seminars, housing assistance, and academic application. Each element should be tailored to provide the intern with additional meaningful contacts in the city.

It’s never been so important for Philadelphia to retain more college graduates. This is already the training ground for tens of thousands of future engineers, artists, scientists and CEOs who will some day drive the nation’s future economy.

Philadelphia has the means within its grasp to convince this invaluable resource to stay. By forging personal connections with all students before they even arrive on campus we can more easily convince them that this is where they’ll want to be after graduation. To do so, Philadelphia needs to:

Attract. Raise Philadelphia students’ expectations of the region before they even arrive.

Engage. Expose Philadelphia college students to the “campus off campus” throughout their college career.

Retain. Give 100 percent of Philadelphia students the opportunity to participate in at least one internship.

The Knowledge Industry Partnership has laid the foundation. Now Philadelphia’s leaders should build upon this framework. The entire region needs to play a vital role in all aspects of its students’ development—intellectual, personal and professional.

Once the action items listed on the surrounding pages are in place, Philadelphia can aspire to match Boston’s success in retaining graduates from outside the region. Then, instead of three out of every ten out-of-region graduates staying after graduation, four out of ten will stay—a dividend of 2,400 knowledge workers.

And that’s just the beginning. By convincing more graduates to stay, Philadelphia will invigorate its workforce, improve its global reputation as a city of intellect, and attract even more students to the region. Then, when future Philadelphia grads ask themselves, “Should I stay or should I go?” the answer will be a no-brainer.
Greater Philadelphia's Knowledge Industry Partnership

KIP is a broad-based coalition of civic, business, government and higher education leaders working together to maximize the impact of the region’s “knowledge industry” of colleges and universities on Philadelphia’s competitive position. The goal of the One Big Campus initiative is to create positive first-hand experiences throughout the student life cycle (prospect>student>graduate), which in turn lead to a stronger emotional attachment with the Philadelphia region and ultimately a personal desire to remain after graduation.