PRESS RELEASE

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Employers and Graduate School Leaders Convene to Examine the Future of the Global Workforce

Washington, D.C. — On October 4, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) convened the inaugural meeting of the CGS Employer Roundtable, a group of senior leaders representing employers of graduate degree holders in various fields and other higher education stakeholders. The Employer Roundtable will advise CGS leadership on workforce issues and serve as the leading voice on graduate student workforce preparedness.

Graduate education plays a critical role in the success of the U.S. workforce and economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics employment projections indicate that occupations requiring at least a master’s degree for entry, including physician assistants, occupational therapists, mental health and substance abuse social workers, mathematicians, and computer and information research scientists, will grow at a much faster rate than occupations that call for less education.

“Strong connections between graduate schools and employers will help ensure that graduate schools continue to respond to rapidly changing workforce demands,” said CGS President Suzanne Ortega. “I’m thrilled that the industry leaders here today have joined CGS in this important national initiative.”

During the half-day meeting, the group’s discussion focused on four broad themes relevant to graduate education and the workforce:

• The present and future of work
• Industry-higher education collaboration
• Diversity and inclusion
• Advocating for graduate education

These themes guided a wide-ranging conversation that addressed how workforce trends are changing industries, how universities can support industry initiatives to recruit diverse talent, the key elements of successful industry-university collaborations, and how universities and employers can advocate for graduate education.

“Whether they’re in academia, the public sector or industry, graduate degree holders inspire innovation and solve complex problems. We all have a stake in developing robust talent pipelines with individuals who are prepared to address the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century,” said Ron Townsend, executive vice president, Global Laboratory Operations, Battelle Memorial Institute and Roundtable member.

The Roundtable will convene again in early 2020.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.