



Sent: March 31, 2009

Subject: The Achievement Gap and Our Conference

As our nation's leaders search for ways to foster renewal of the American economy, we should be considering what we, as individuals, can do. One idea is to play a more significant role in reducing the *widening* education achievement gap. Right now, about 50% of all high school graduates go to college. (These numbers are far worse when we factor in high school drop-out rates and disparities in education achievement between racial and ethnic groups.) We also know that a college education makes a difference. The average income of Americans with four-year degrees is \$43,000, compared to \$27,000 for those with just a high school diploma. Middle class jobs and about 75% of the "jobs for the future" require some form of postsecondary education. We'll be talking about this challenge, and more, in the **Close the Gap!** session at the [No Better Time](#) conference this summer.

For those of you who don't want to wait until July to make progress in your community, you can convene community dialogues and explore new ways to address this challenge. Here are two terrific discussion guides for you to consider, both available through Everyday Democracy's [Issue Guide Exchange](#): [Working Together to Remove Racial and Ethnic Barriers to Student Achievement: A Facilitator's Guide](#) and [Too Many Children Left Behind: How Can We Close the Achievement Gap?](#)

[Register now](#) and please join us this July at the conference so we can hear how you are doing! The early bird discount ends April 30.