



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Student Success is Up and Textbook Costs are Down: Lumen Learning Guides Institutions in Using Open Educational Resources Effectively**

#### *Open education evangelist David Wiley founds company to scale student success with OER*

PORTLAND, Oregon (March 11, 2013) - Open educational resources (OER) have huge potential to both reduce costs and improve student success, according to [Lumen Learning](#) founders Dr. David Wiley, a longtime open education advocate and Shuttleworth Fellow, and education technology strategist Kim Thanos. Their new company provides guidance and [sustained support services](#) for educational institutions and educators to help them use OER effectively and measure their impact on student success.

“Research tells a compelling story about the relationship between textbook costs and student success,” said Dr. Wiley. “OER represent huge untapped value for both higher education and secondary education to eliminate textbook costs and the hurdle they represent to students, while at the same time improving learning, pedagogy and student success.”

Wiley and Thanos have created and led several grant-funded projects, developing proven models for using OER to improve student success. In 2012 the team designed and continues to lead the [Kaleidoscope Open Course Initiative](#), which developed OER-based general education courses impacting over 10,000 students at ten institutions. When those projects reduced textbook costs to zero and led to double-digit improvements in student success, they decided to scale their efforts up by founding Lumen.

Initial funding to support Lumen’s scaling activities comes from two major sources. The Next Generation Learning Challenges program is providing funding to more than double the number of institutions participating in the Kaleidoscope Open Course Initiative. The Shuttleworth Foundation is providing funding for ImprovOER, a learning analytics offering focused on the continuous improvement of OER.

The company aims to provide a sustainable, community-driven model for funding OER investment and improvement. Today Lumen works with higher education institutions and K-12 districts to develop OER-based alternatives for general education courses. It provides advisory and support services for institutions as they incorporate OER into their academic strategy, culture, and curriculum. Their novel learning analytics offering places OER in a continuous

improvement loop, creating a path to sustained, measureable improvements in student learning.

“With institutional partners, we’ve developed an evidence-based approach to using OER effectively,” said Thanos, Lumen’s CEO. “It works. Now our mission is to scale this success and help thousands more institutions bring the promise of OER to their students.”

The Lumen team’s well-documented successes are fueling appetites for more. “Our pilot project goals were to reduce textbook costs by 50%, to achieve measurable improvement in student success, and to promote faculty collaboration across a set of courses,” said Dr. Charles Snare, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Chadron State College. “What we achieved far exceeded our expectations. Lumen has been a vital partner for the College and for our faculty, and the results have been important for student engagement and retention.”

Leaders across the open education community recognize the benefit that Lumen will provide. “After a decade of success in creating high-quality, openly licensed educational resources and open policies that support their use, the focus turns to adoption and impact,” said Cable Green, Director of Global Learning at Creative Commons. “Higher education will benefit from ‘Red Hat-like’ commercial entities that can support OER adoption and implementation. David and Kim have a deep understanding of open education and the practices that will provide the greatest impact to student success.”

### **About Lumen Learning**

Lumen Learning provides an evidence-based approach for using open educational resources (OER) to eliminate textbook costs and improve student success. Founded by open education innovator Dr. David Wiley and education technology strategist Kim Thanos, the Lumen team has played an integral role in several of the most influential OER initiatives to date in secondary and higher education. Lumen services guide educators in integrating OER into academic strategy, training and supporting faculty, measuring success, and improving the quality of OER-based courses over time. Learn more at [www.lumenlearning.com](http://www.lumenlearning.com).

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