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Thomas Brock Named Next Director of the Community College Research Center at Teachers College

*Brock, the Commissioner of NCER, Brings Extensive Experience in
Higher Education Research to the Leadership of CCRC*

New York, June 13, 2018 — Thomas Brock, a nationally recognized higher education researcher who has been leading the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, will become the next director of the [Community College Research Center](#) (CCRC).

Brock will succeed Thomas Bailey, the founding director of CCRC, who has been named the [next president of Teachers College, Columbia University](#). Bailey assumes the presidency of the college on July 1 and will continue to lead CCRC until Brock begins as its new director in September.

Brock, who has more than 25 years of experience in applied research in education and social welfare, is the commissioner of the [National Center for Education Research](#) (NCER) at the U.S. Department of Education and was delegated the duties of the director of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) for more than a year. As head of NCER, Brock increased the center's focus on postsecondary education and pushed researchers to investigate practical problems facing colleges and students in partnership with postsecondary institutions and college systems. He will step down on June 29.

"I wanted to join CCRC first and foremost because I am drawn to its mission," Brock said. "Community colleges are a uniquely American institution—offering virtually unfettered access to higher education to millions of students—but are often beset by inadequate funding, low completion rates, and other challenges. CCRC provides an objective analysis of community colleges' performance, examines the factors that impede their success, and generates ideas and evidence for how they can improve."

Bailey—who has led CCRC since its founding in 1996, building it into an organization of more than 50 staff members focused on research that can be used by community colleges and policymakers to help more students succeed—believes that CCRC will thrive under Brock’s leadership.

“We are delighted that Tom will join CCRC as its new director. His background and interests are ideal for this role. Tom’s deep experience in research and research management have afforded him the technical and executive skills to lead the organization. He is widely respected among researchers and research organizations across the nation. And he has many years of involvement working specifically with community colleges, so he is well known in the community college world. We could not think of a more qualified candidate for leading the center and for guiding the future direction of its agenda.”

Brock joined NCER in January 2013. He established several national research and development centers and networks on K-12 and higher education; expanded the center’s researcher–practitioner partnership program to help states and school districts conduct relevant research; and started a new program for low-cost, short-term education evaluations. He conceived of a research and development center on developmental education that became the [Center for the Analysis of Postsecondary Readiness](#), which is led by CCRC and the social policy research organization [MDRC](#). As acting director of IES, Brock oversaw centers on statistics, evaluation, education research, and special education research. Before joining IES, Brock was the postsecondary policy area director at MDRC.

Brock holds a BA from Pitzer College in Claremont, California; an MPA from Columbia University; and a PhD in social welfare from UCLA.

The Community College Research Center (CCRC), Teachers College, Columbia University, has been a leader in the field of community college research and reform for over 20 years. Our work provides a foundation for innovations in policy and practice that help give every community college student the best chance of success.