



**[Ken Ruggiero](#) | Chairman & CEO of Ascent Funding**

Ken is a veteran and innovator in higher education finance with more than 25 years spent managing start-up through Fortune 1000 companies, helping them create meaningful change and improvement in their delivery of financial services. Throughout his career Ken has worked tirelessly to improve access to higher education and he continues to be a passionate advocate for expanded financial literacy and transparency in the space. During his tenure at Goal Financial, from 2003-2007, the company originated more than \$8 billion in student loans and became a top 10 student-loan provider. After the company's exit from the lending space in 2008, Ken spearheaded the reinvention of Goal Financial into Goal Solutions, a leading provider of asset management in the education finance industry. Under his leadership, Goal Solutions has significantly grown their service and product offerings, eventually re-entering the origination space in 2017 with the creation of Ascent Funding.