

# CONNECTION

NEW ENGLAND'S JOURNAL

OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME XIV, NUMBER 1

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## THE STATE OF NEW ENGLAND

- Future of New England Survey Results
- Race for Governor of the State of New England
- Building the Regional Agenda

LIVE REGIONALLY OR DIE

NE 6R1

NEW ENGLAND



Cover art by Erin Terry.

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The **New England Board of Higher Education** is a nonprofit, congressionally authorized, interstate agency whose mission is to foster cooperation and the efficient use of resources among New England's approximately 260 colleges and universities. NEBHE was established by the New England Higher Education Compact, a 1955 agreement among the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

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How do New Englanders and their "opinion leaders" in government, education, business, the media and the civil sector view their region at the millennium? In an attempt to find out, the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) and the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts-Boston recently asked 1,000 New England movers and shakers and 1,000 New England households their opinions on pressing public policy issues, regional economic prospects and opportunities for interstate collaboration in America's smallest region.

NEBHE then invited six forward-looking New England political figures to review the survey findings and take part in a mock *Race for Governor of the State of New England*.

The "State" in this case, of course, is a bit of imagery employed to get people thinking about regional cooperation. And did it ever. Freed from the constraints of spin doctors and fundraisers, the six "candidates" engaged in a no-holds-barred, regional brainstorming session that yielded proposals ranging from a six-state pension fund to a "Buy New England" campaign to a pact ending *intraregional* competition for businesses and jobs.

Maine state Senate Majority Leader Chellie Pingree imagined New England becoming the first region to provide health care for all and, rather than fearing the cost implications for business, talking up universal care as a competitive advantage in attracting companies and skilled workers to the region. Former New Hampshire state Rep. Deborah "Arnie" Arnesen wondered whether a regional funding source could be created to keep schools open from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. when a lot of New England kids are on their own and at risk.

On the issue of improving K-12 education—New Englanders' No. 1 public policy priority, according to the NEBHE/McCormack survey—all six candidates moved thoughtfully beyond the test-bash-defund model that has passed for policy innovation in some places. Several spoke of New England's potential leadership in true *lifelong learning*, beginning with the practical application of recent brain development research in early childhood education and parenting.

A real governor on the panel was clearly moved by the proceedings. "When NEBHE asked me to come up here and talk about the State of New England, I thought it was a joke," said former Rhode Island Gov. Bruce Sundlun. "But I have listened to my fellow candidates talk—and it is a good idea. It really is a good idea."

Media interest in the survey and debate was extraordinary, and the promise of regional action seems to have resonated with many New Englanders whose problems and their solutions, noted Arnesen, have little to do with state boundaries created by "some king."

Actually, Colonial authorities did New England one favor that was not lost on the candidates pondering New England's fictitious statehood. Thanks to the compact size of the six states, 13 million New Englanders elect 12 U.S. senators, while 30 million Californians, for example, elect only two. The population-based House of Representatives is another story. New England once could claim roughly the same House representation as Texas, Florida and California combined. Now those three megastates together send about five times as many reps to Washington as slow-growing New England, which is expected to lose another seat soon.

Survey respondents and candidates alike fretted a great deal about New England's slow population growth—not so much as it affects the region's clout in Washington as it contributes to a nagging shortage of skilled labor. The region's unemployment rate has hovered around 3 percent since the beginning of the year, and many employers report difficulty in filling high-skill jobs, even as hundreds of thousands of New Englanders lack the skills needed for good jobs in the knowledge economy. Such paradoxes surely warrant further regional examination.

Several of the reporters who so ably covered the mock race for governor posed a predictable question: Who won? We're pleased to report New England won.

*John O. Harney is executive editor of CONNECTION.*

### State of Grace?

The relentless quest for grant support can make strange bedfellows of socially progressive universities and companies looking to rehabilitate tarnished images.

Witness the W.R. Grace Foundation's recent \$150,000 grant to Brandeis University in support of 25 environmental interns to be known from here forward as "W.R. Grace Environmental Fellows."

If that doesn't exactly roll off the tongue, it may be because the W.R. Grace Co. is one of the companies accused of fouling drinking water in Woburn, Mass. Ever since the book and movie *Civil Action* chronicled the illnesses caused by contamination of Woburn's wells, Grace has been on a public relations blitz.

What better way to speed the transformation from suspected polluter (implicated not only in Woburn, but at a South Acton, Mass., Superfund site as well) to guardian of the earth than by sponsoring environmental interns? The company also launched a new

Web site using the phrase "civil action" for company propaganda, which Brandeis duly advertised when announcing the grant.

### Thomas's Promises

Thomas College now sends forth graduates with a guarantee: land a job in your field within six months of graduation or Thomas will pay your federal student loan bills for up to a year.

The job placement guarantee, which Thomas claims is the most comprehensive in the nation, applies to students who earn bachelor's degrees with a minimum 2.75 grade point average and complete internships and cooperative work experiences. Only federally subsidized student loans are covered. Students who enroll in graduate school are not eligible.

Thomas graduates who have found jobs but don't think the position fits their field of study may take free undergraduate or master's-level courses at the Waterville, Maine, college.

Similar guarantees and lifelong learning deals have been taking hold across the region.

In 1997, Andover College of Portland, Maine, began offering graduates of its associate degree program the opportunity to audit Andover courses without paying tuition.

### Heavy Impact

New England's 260 or so college campuses spent nearly \$15 billion in 1996, up 23 percent over a five-year period, and employed about 175,000 people. If your local campus or system hasn't yet quantified its piece of the total—with multiplier effects, of course—just wait. The region's colleges and their associations have been churning out a steady stream of economic impact reports. (See "The Buck Stops Where?," CONNECTION, Spring 1998.)

Most recently, a new statewide impact report by the New Hampshire College & University Council and the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation suggested that Granite State higher education institutions spent more than \$1 billion in fiscal 1998, while students and their parents spent an additional \$111 million in the state.

New Hampshire campuses employed more than 14,000 faculty and staff, according to the report. Students, faculty and staff volunteered more than 800,000 hours of community service worth at least \$4 million. Using an economic multiplier of 2.0, higher education contributed more than \$2.2 billion to New Hampshire's economy in 1998.

Meanwhile, the College of the Atlantic spent \$7.8 million in operations in 1998 for an \$11 million impact on surrounding Hancock County, according to its recent impact report. In addition, College of the Atlantic faculty and staff spent \$4.6 million in Hancock County, while students spent \$3 million and visitors spent \$1.4 million.

### Sloganeering

Connecticut's economy has been riding high. Job growth is up; personal income is tops in the nation. And the gross state product per worker dwarfs the U.S. average—\$78,342 in 1996, compared with a national figure of \$63,833, according to *The Connecticut Economy*, the newsletter-style journal pub-

Nichols  
B&W  
p/u Facts 99  
p.107

lished by the University of Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis.

But one of the journal's editors, UConn scholar Edwin Caldwell, is worried about the state's image ("as a place of mindless drones, bores, snobs or angst-ridden rich people") and more particularly, its slogans.

"Although *The land of steady habits* may have some appeal in a turbulent world, it reinforces a hidebound stereotype," notes the former bank economist. "The current slogan, *The state that thinks like a business*, is better but makes it sound as if the state is run by actuaries."

Connecticut, according to Caldwell, should boast about two things: the well-educated and highly trained workforce turned out

by its top-flight schools and colleges, and the state's growing stature in leisure industries—whether symbolized by UConn's national basketball championship, the popular Foxwoods Resort Casino or the Yale School of Drama. Caldwell's proposed slogan: *In Connecticut, we work smarter and play harder.*

### Tuition Watch

Between academic years 1990-91 and 1998-99, New England's private four-year institutions raised tuition and fees by an average of \$7,800 or 69 percent, while the region's public four-year institutions hiked tuition and fees for state residents by \$1,800 or 67 percent, according to a recent NEBHE analysis.

Most are raising their prices again—by between 3 percent and 5 percent. As always, price differences among kindred institutions are subtle at best.

Total charges at Tufts University will rise to \$32,126 in academic year 1999-2000. Yale's total student charges grow to \$31,940, Wesleyan's to \$31,630, and Wellesley's to \$30,554.

Almost universally, private institutions cushioned the tuition news by emphasizing dramatic increases in their financial aid budgets. But among even the neediest students, financial aid covers only 60 percent of the cost of attending a four-year private institution on average, according to recent U.S. Education Department data.

Not all prices are headed up. Southern Vermont College announced it would freeze tuition and mandatory fees for full-time students at \$10,990 in academic year 1999-2000, after slightly reducing full-time tuition last year.

The University of Massachusetts cut undergraduate tuition at the flagship Amherst campus by 10 percent or \$190 to \$1,714 for state residents, but raised mandatory fees by \$173 to \$3,498. The \$5,212 total represents a decrease of \$17 from the current total. Meanwhile, UMass hiked both tuition and mandatory fees for out-of-state students, and room and board charges for all students.

Despite three years of tuition cuts for state residents at Massachusetts public colleges and a fourth planned, New England's public four-year institutions charged state residents \$4,635 in average tuition and mandatory fees in 1998-99, compared with a national figure of \$3,243, according to a NEBHE analysis of data from the College Board.

The high tuition rates at New England publics may be attributed largely to the region's historically low state funding of higher education. Indeed, University System of New Hampshire trustees recently adopted a plan to ratchet down tuition hikes to the rate of inflation from the double-digit levels of recent years. But the plan is predicated partly on steady increases in state support—a tall order. New Hampshire currently ranks 50th among the states in per-capita state appropriations for higher education—and state funding would have to rise by 28 percent just to overtake Vermont in the 49th spot nationally.



### The Science of Art

As the future summer home of the Boston Ballet, the Meadow Summer Stage is a key feature of the Boch Center for the Performing Arts, soon to be Cape Cod's first year-round arts facility. But the 2,000-person open-air theater under development in Mashpee, Mass., has had to overcome more than the normal acoustical challenges associated with outdoor concert venues, for the Meadow Summer Stage has a particularly noisy neighbor in Otis Air Force Base.

Last spring, Worcester Polytechnic Institute senior Peter De Bonte of Lexington, Mass., set out to tackle the problem as part of the major qualifying project required of all WPI undergraduates. A keyboardist, guitarist and computer whiz, De Bonte used special Computer-Aided Theater Technique software to construct a geometric model of the performance space and, in essence, listen to the facility's acoustics before a single shovel had hit the ground. De Bonte left the Boch Center organizers with a range of recommendations. Among them, add a central loudspeaker system to make up for the lack of walls, grade the meadow at a steep angle and replace grass with ground cover to improve the acoustics.

## Comings and Goings

North Shore Community College President **George Traicoff**, the longest-serving president in the Massachusetts public system, announced he would retire in the summer of 1999 after 25 years of service.

Colby College President **William R. Cotter** announced he would retire in the summer of 2000 after 20 years as president.

**Richard B. Flynn**, former interim president of Peru State College in Nebraska, became president of Springfield College, replacing **Randolph W. Bromery**, who retired.

**Annette Sørensen**, former associate professor of sociology at Boston University, became director of the Henry A. Murray Research Center, Radcliffe College's social science data archive for the study of lives over time.

**David A. Longanecker**, the U.S. assistant secretary of postsecondary education who spearheaded development of the Education Department's direct lending program, was named executive director of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, effective in July 1999, replacing **Richard W. Jonsen**, who is retiring.

**Shirley Ann Jackson**, the physicist who in 1973 became the first African-American woman to receive a doctorate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and then went on to chair the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, was named president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, effective in July 1999.

Baltimore Mayor **Kurt L. Schmoke** became the first African-American senior fellow of the Yale Corporation, the university's governing body. The senior fellow regularly consults with Yale's president, presides over the corporation in the president's absence and traditionally appoints presidential search committees.

**Blenda Wilson**, president of California State University, Northridge, was named the first president of the Nellie Mae Foundation, the charitable foundation created last year from the net assets of Nellie Mae, the Braintree, Mass.-based nonprofit student loan organization.

Tufts University President **John DiBiaggio** began a one-year term as chair of the Washington, D.C.-based American Council on Education, succeeding **Lois B. DeFleur**, president of the State University of New York at Binghamton.

**Anne M. Finucane**, senior vice president and director of corporate marketing and communications at Fleet Financial Group, began a

two-year term as chair of the New England Council, the region's oldest business group.

## L E T T E R S

### To the editor:

Jon Marcus is a thoroughly decent individual who cares deeply about higher education and its role in American society. Unfortunately, his recent article in CONNECTION, "On the Beat: A Former Higher Education Reporter Reflects on Coverage," also reveals a strong bias and an obvious cynicism that make clear he has lost his objectivity with respect to higher education. This is not a good thing for a journalist or his readers.

Much of Marcus's anger is aimed at the issue of college costs. Consider the lead example in his article. Last year, extensive survey research revealed that the public places a high value on higher education but badly overestimates how much it costs to attend, seriously underestimates the availability of student aid, and has no idea where to get information about paying for college. In response, the American Council on Education and many other organizations undertook a multifaceted effort to improve the availability of information about college prices and student aid.

When confronted by evidence that the public values its product but does not think they can afford it, any rational industry will try to improve understanding. This offends Marcus. While he does not criticize the information that we have made available, he calls our effort "an outrageously condescending tactic."

Marcus cites the "\$120,000 price tag" of a college education as if this is the amount that most students pay. In fact, one-third of the nation's college students pay less than \$5,000 a year for their education and more than 75 percent pay less than \$10,000 a year. Marcus knows these facts, but prefers to focus on the extreme. Indeed, in the last two years, several states have reduced tuition at public colleges. When Massachusetts cut

tuition two years ago, it affected roughly two and one-half times the number of students in the Ivy League. Similarly, California reduced tuition for 500,000 students this year. Neither action was widely reported in the press. Face it, affordable college prices don't make good copy.

Like other professionals, journalists bring biases to their work. Journalists have a special obligation, however, to look beyond their biases and to report the news fairly and even-handedly. This certainly doesn't mean accepting things on blind faith. Nor does it mean that criticism is unwarranted. I'd be the first to admit that there are plenty of areas where higher education can and should be criticized.

But just as excessively gentle coverage is a disservice, heavyhanded, slanted, biased journalism serves no useful purpose.

**Terry W. Hartle**  
Senior Vice President  
American Council on  
Education

**Marcus responds:** *For a journalist, it's important to be decent, but essential to be skeptical. I do not criticize ACE for its financial-planning-for-college campaign (I merely wrote that it could have been perceived as condescending). My point was that an education writer must probe further, challenging an annual rate of increase in tuition that continues to rise faster than average family income; explaining such trends as the growing dependence on loans instead of grants; and questioning what colleges and universities are doing to control these costs. I think, as readers, we expect this scrutiny of claims from any industry about a "product," which, I agree with Hartle, is what Americans today consider higher education to be.*

- Approximate number of jobs per 100 residents in Farmington, Conn: **124**
- Approximate number of jobs per 100 residents in Bridgeport, Conn: **35**
- Percentage of parents who think it is important to teach new immigrant students English as quickly as possible even if it means they fall behind in other subjects: **67%**
- Percentage of foreign-born parents who think so: **75%**
- Rank of the United States among all countries in total number of Spanish speakers: **2**
- Percentage of Massachusetts K-12 students who are language minorities: **7%**
- Percentage of Massachusetts charter school students who are: **20%**
- Donation required to have a penalty box named after you at the Middlebury College hockey rink: **\$50,000**
- Percentage of students at Maine Technical Colleges whose annual family incomes are under \$15,000: **77%**
- Average total SAT score among 1998 college-bound high school seniors with annual family incomes under \$10,000: **873**
- Average score among college-bound seniors with annual family incomes over \$100,000: **1131**
- Average score among Hispanic college-bound seniors: **927**
- Average score among Whites: **1054**
- Percentage of U.S. four-year colleges that admit some or all applicants without regard to SAT or ACT scores: **12%**
- Percentage of U.S. colleges that have formal policies for reviewing the credentials of homeschooled students: **41%**
- Approximate number of students who live in Boston University's Warren Towers dormitory: **1,700**
- Rank of Warren Towers among largest nonmilitary residences in the United States: **2**
- Percentage of Americans who say their No. 1 career concern is earning a competitive salary: **23%**
- Percentage of Americans who say their No. 1 career concern is being able to balance work and family: **26%**
- Average share of annual operating budgets at America's 27 veterinary colleges that is publicly subsidized: **47%**
- Share of budget at Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine subsidized by Commonwealth of Massachusetts: **14%**
- Number of Massachusetts state police dogs, prison dogs and patrol horses provided free veterinary care by Tufts: **86**
- National rank of Massachusetts in percentage of adults who attend arts events: **1**
- Value of new scholarship offered by Johnson & Wales University to a single parent interested in a culinary career in honor of "Joanie" on the network television show *Providence*: **\$31,680**
- Number of months in 1998 when average temperatures were above normal in Durham, N.H.: **11**

**Sources:** 1,2 University of Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis; 3,4 Public Agenda; 5 Harvard University (Mexico ranks first.); 6,7 Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research; 8 *New York Times*; 9 Maine Technical Colleges; 10,11,12,13 National Center for Fair & Open Testing; 14 NEBHE analysis of National Center for Fair & Open Testing data; 15 National Association of College Admission Counseling; 16,17 Boston University; 18,19 OfficeTeam; 20,21,22 Tufts University; 23 National Endowment for the Arts; 24 Johnson & Wales University; 25 University of New Hampshire

The New England Board of Higher Education's New England Public Policy Collaborative and the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts Boston present:

# THE FUTURE OF NEW ENGLAND

## *New Englanders and their "Opinion Leaders" Consider a Regional Agenda*

**T**he role of nation-states is changing all around the globe as political boundaries give way to powerful regional initiatives. Meanwhile, profound technological and demographic changes are transforming New England's workplaces, schools and homes.

Which issues are most important to New Englanders? Which industries are most promising? Which problems most troubling? What does the future hold for America's smallest region? How can New Englanders work together to brighten their prospects?

The New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) and the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts-Boston recently undertook the *Future of New England* survey in an effort to answer these questions.

During the fall of 1998 and early winter of 1999, NEBHE surveyed more than 1,000 New England "opinion leaders," including college presidents and academic vice presidents, state legislators, directors of public policy think tanks, foundation heads, school superintendents, mayors, newspaper editors, community leaders and business executives.

In January 1999, the McCormack Institute, in cooperation with NEBHE, developed a companion survey of 1,000 randomly selected New England households. This "public opinion" component of the *Future of New England* survey was conducted Jan. 19-23, 1999 as part of the quarterly UMass Poll.

NEBHE conducted a similar survey of business, higher education and government leaders approximately one decade earlier as New England was enjoying the economic boom known as the "New England Miracle."

### EDUCATION IS THE HOT ISSUE.

Fully 96 percent of New England opinion leaders said educational institutions helped somewhat or very much to define New England as a region, second only to history and traditions, and ahead of climate, geography and arts in contributing to the definition of the six-state region. Notably, 56 percent said New England was somewhat or very much defined by its sports teams, while 53 percent said the labor market helped somewhat or very much to define the region.

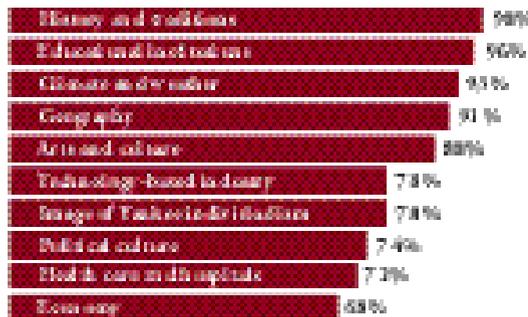
#### OPINION LEADERS SPEAK OUT:



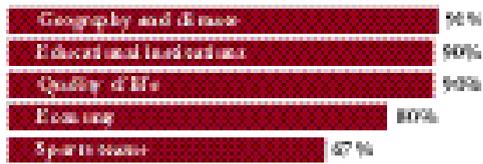
*Some opinion leaders find the six-state region less defined than do others. One Massachusetts think tank director wrote in: "New England is nothing more than a geographic designation."*

## WHAT DEFINES NEW ENGLAND AS A REGION?

### Opinion Leaders



### Households



### THE PUBLIC'S VIEW:



Ninety percent of households said educational institutions helped somewhat or very much to define New England as a region. But just as many said the region was defined by its geography and climate, as well as quality of life issues. Like opinion leaders, the public suggested a relatively minor role for sports teams in defining the region.

### NO ISSUE CONCERNS NEW ENGLAND OPINION LEADERS MORE THAN THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Asked which policy issues need the most urgent attention, opinion leaders indicated: 1) improvement of public K-12 education; 2) infrastructure improvement; 3) energy affordability; 4) health care access for the uninsured; and 5) improvement of higher education. Indeed, improvement of public K-12 education was considered the most pressing policy issue in every New England state!

### FLASHBACK:



New England's opinion leaders were concerned about the quality of K-12 education long before the recent spate of court challenges to school financing or the debate over student and teacher testing. Indeed, in 1987, New England business, higher education and government leaders surveyed by NEBHE ranked improving public schools No. 1 among 19 public policy priorities.

### THE PUBLIC'S VIEW:



Asked which regional policy areas New England political leaders should tackle first, households ranked K-12 education No. 1, followed by: 2) the economy and 3) the environment.

### OPINION LEADERS WANT COLLEGES TO HELP FIX PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Dramatically underscoring the emphasis on K-12 improvement, New England opinion leaders said the single most important thing *higher education* could do to contribute to New England's economic development would be to improve the quality of local schools. That was followed by enhancing the analytical skills of undergraduates and developing partnerships with area businesses.

### PARTNERSHIPS TOUTED; LITTLE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL VOUCHERS.

Asked to indicate their level of support for specific proposals to reform public K-12 education, 86 percent of New England opinion leaders supported partnerships with higher education. Beyond partnerships, opinion leaders cited measures to improve teacher quality among the most important strategies for improving public schools. Fully 83 percent of respondents support stricter teacher certification standards and 81 percent said they support merit-based teacher pay scales. Just 34 percent said they supported voucher programs and only 28 percent supported for-profit schooling ventures.

### OPINION LEADERS SPEAK OUT:



*The current obsession with teacher standards has a flipside. Asked to rate various proposals to reform K-12 education, one Massachusetts college president wrote in: "Stop bashing teachers."*

## OPINION LEADERS WANT TO ELIMINATE TENURE FOR COLLEGE PROFESSORS, INCREASE STUDENT AID.

Asked which strategies would do most to improve higher education, New England opinion leaders indicated: 1) eliminating the traditional tenure system; 2) improving credit transferability between institutions; 3) increasing need-based financial aid; 4) increasing federal financial aid; and 5) increasing merit-based financial aid.

### OPINION LEADERS SPEAK OUT:



*On the question of improving higher education, many respondents wrote in suggestions that higher education institutions lower their tuition. A few lambasted the survey sponsors for not explicitly including lowering tuition among possible strategies to improve higher education. One Connecticut business person suggested that campuses “eliminate the ‘party’ atmosphere and [improve] the ‘educational’ atmosphere.” A Massachusetts college administrator suggested the region “increase funding for research and dissemination [of research results] from laboratory to marketplace.”*

## PROSPECTS FOR NEW ENGLAND'S KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY.

New England opinion leaders are bullish about biotech and software. Asked about the potential for growth in various New England industries, fully 89 percent said they expected moderate or major growth in biotechnology, while 88 percent expected moderate or major growth in computer software. Those industries were followed by: telecommunications, tourism, environmental technology and computer hardware. At the other end of the list, opinion leaders said they expected moderate or major declines in textiles, agriculture, fishing and defense.

### FLASHBACK:

1987

*The economic potential of biotechnology has been recognized for at least a decade in New England. In 1987, biotech was one of only two industries in which New England opinion leaders surveyed by NEBHE said they expected major growth. The other was finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE).*

## ENSURING HIGH SKILLS

Asked specifically about social and demographic issues, New England opinion leaders rank expanding the skilled labor force first. Asked which workforce education and training issues need the most urgent attention in New England, opinion leaders indicated: 1) investing more in K-12 education; 2) ensuring the technical proficiency of the future workforce; 3) upgrading the basic skill level (reading, writing, math) of the present workforce; 4) providing professional and technical training for the present workforce; and 5) retraining displaced workers and providing job placement assistance.

### FLASHBACK:

1987

*The education of the workforce never fades from New England's policy consciousness. But the preoccupations change. In the late 1980s, much attention was focused on rising high school dropout rates. In 1987, New England opinion leaders considered the education and training of high school dropouts to be the most serious education and training problem facing the region.*

## NEW ENGLAND LEADERS WORRY ABOUT HIGH COSTS, FAMILY PRESSURES, DISTRESSED CITIES.

New England opinion leaders view high costs as the most serious obstacle to New England's future economic growth. A sig-

### HARDENED POSITIONS?

New England opinion leaders from government, education, business and community groups have strikingly similar views on most issues facing the region. But some variation is evident, particularly when business and education leaders consider ways to improve K-12 education. Following are selected school reform proposals where education and business leaders diverged:

*Percentage who are generally or strongly supportive*

	Education leaders	Business Leaders
Back-to-basics instruction	63%	83%
Standardized tests for grade promotion	45%	70%
Equity in per-pupil school funding	82%	57%
Increased Head Start funding	87%	56%
Increased teacher pay and benefits	77%	55%
Merit-based teacher pay scales	77%	93%

nificant 77 percent said they viewed energy costs as an obstacle or major obstacle to growth; 75 percent cited housing costs; 73 percent indicated cost of living; 70 percent indicated health insurance costs; and 67 percent indicated tax structure. Notably, opinion leaders ranked energy affordability third among the public policy issues in most urgent need of attention behind only K-12 improvement and infrastructure improvement.

#### FLASHBACK:

1987

*New England is haunted by old ghosts. In 1987, New England opinion leaders said the cost of housing and a shortage of skilled labor were the two most important obstacles to the region's economic growth.*

#### OPINION LEADERS SPEAK OUT:



*Some respondents took the opportunity to write in obstacles beyond those listed on the survey questionnaire. Among those cited: excessive regulation and corruption.*

#### THE PUBLIC'S VIEW:



*Among households surveyed by the McCormack Institute, cost of living, including the cost of utilities and health care, ranked as the No. 1 obstacle to regional economic growth, with 82 percent of respondents citing this as an obstacle or major obstacle, followed by housing costs (cited by 78 percent), cost of higher education (cited by 76 percent) and tax structure (cited by 76 percent).*

#### FAMILY PRESSURES DOMINATE SOCIAL CONCERNS AMONG OPINION LEADERS.

Opinion leaders ranked access to health and child care for the poor and middle class second, and the impact of working parents on children and family third, among the most important social and demographic issues facing New England. Only expanding the skilled labor force was cited more frequently.

#### THE ECONOMIC ABANDONMENT OF INNER CITIES IS ALSO ON THE MINDS OF OPINION LEADERS.

Opinion leaders ranked the economic abandonment of inner cities fourth among social and demographic issues; education and community leader subgroups ranked it third. Asked specifically which strategies would most help New England's distressed urban communities, New England opinion leaders indicated: 1) offering tax incentives or below-market financing to encourage businesses to locate in urban areas; 2) attracting basic service providers (banks, supermarkets, health care facilities, etc.); 3) investing in urban infrastructure; 4) offering low-rate mortgages to permit increased home ownership; and 5) providing day care for working single parents.

#### FORGING REGIONAL RESPONSES.

Asked which areas have the greatest potential for regional ventures by or within the New England states, opinion leaders selected: 1) enhancing the regional telecommunications network; 2) tourism; 3) workforce training programs; 4) health care access; and 5) rail transportation. Notably, business leaders ranked utility deregulation and regional tax policies among the top five areas for regional action, but were less keen on rail transportation despite its potential to broaden access to workers and customers. On a separate question about who should be primarily responsible for addressing specific policy issues, opinion leaders saw a regional role in: 1) environmental issues; 2) tourism attraction; 3) energy affordability; 4) infrastructure improvement; and 5) natural and agricultural resource conservation.

#### OPINION LEADERS SPEAK OUT:



*Given the opportunity to make suggestions about regionalism, one Rhode Island business person went so far as to suggest that New England should "operate as a single, strong state." But hurdles to regionalism remain. One Maine news reporter wrote: "Impress Massachusetts [residents] with the knowledge that Maine is not their state park to be managed by them." A Maine legislator warned that regional efforts should be aimed at: "Keeping New England competitive as a region without Boston becoming an economic oasis in a wasteland."*

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*The **Future of New England** report was written by CONNECTION Executive Editor John O. Harney. The opinion leader component of the survey was created, administered and analyzed by Tad Heuer and Laura Ghirardini of NEBHE's New England Public Policy Collaborative staff under the guidance of NEBHE Senior Fellow Nate Bowditch, who directs the Collaborative. Cara Christensen, Sue Klemer, Susan Martin and the NEBHE support staff also provided valuable contributions to the survey project. The public opinion component of the survey was conducted by Lou DiNatale, Senior Fellow at the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts-Boston. The Future of New England survey project was undertaken with the financial support of the AT&T Foundation.*

## CONSIDERING REGIONALISM

Among New England households surveyed, 90 percent say regional solutions are somewhat or very important to the economic well-being of the six states, and 67 percent believe the region should work actively toward specific goals. Moreover, New Englanders think responsibility for regional cooperation lies primarily with political leaders and education leaders. At the same time, 65 percent of respondents cited the inability of New England elected officials to work together as an obstacle or major obstacle to economic growth.

	Political	Education	Business	Community
Percentage who say New England should work as a region toward regional goals:	88%	94%	85%	88%
Percentage who say they have collaborated with governments or organizations in other states or countries:	37%	42%	29%	35%

## INTEREST IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES TURNS UP AGAIN AND AGAIN IN THE SURVEY.

But when New Englanders talk about the Information Revolution, they note problems as well as opportunities. Does distance learning promise expanded knowledge or a new way to trim faculty payrolls? Educators appear unsure. Outside academe, cellular communications towers mar the region's beloved landscape just as surely as they symbolize liberation from time and space constraints. In New Hampshire, an explosion in Internet use is bogging down phone lines, in some cases reportedly disrupting 911 calls. In Massachusetts, the proliferation in telephone numbers creates the need for ever more area codes. Privacy issues go unresolved.

## REGIONAL APPROACHES TO TRADE SUPPORTED.

Asked which international economic strategies would contribute most to the New England economy, opinion leaders indicated: 1) developing telecommunications infrastructure to create regional trade access to global markets; 2) attracting foreign firms to New England via interstate cooperation; 3) providing export assistance to New England firms via interstate cooperation; 4) integrating understanding of the global economy in New England classrooms; and 5) promoting international tourism in New England via interstate cooperation.

## OPINION LEADERS SPEAK OUT:



*Invited to offer suggestions for regional action, several respondents suggested that the six states might standardize certification of various professions, including teaching; some called for uniform tax policies and a regional minimum wage. Maine opinion leaders were particularly interested in transportation issues. One Maine college president wrote in: "Make New England the commercial hub of a combined New England-Ontario-Quebec-Maritimes regional economy by: a) expanding Searsport to a major deep-water port, b) building an East-West highway across northern New England; and c) upgrading heavy rail to handle more intermodal traffic."*

## SIX STATES WORKING AS ONE?

Eighty-eight percent of New England opinion leaders think the region should work collaboratively toward regional goals, but just 36 percent of opinion leaders say they have worked on projects with government entities and or organizations from other states or countries.

Among opinion leader groups, educators were the most likely to support regional action in areas ranging from workforce retraining to addressing racial and ethnic discrimination.

## THE PUBLIC'S VIEW:

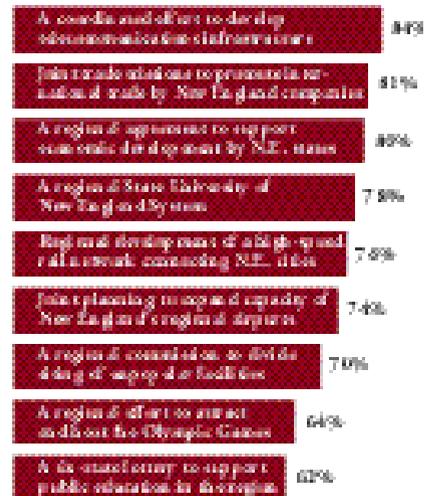


Households were asked how effective regional strategies among the six New England states might be in addressing important issues. Fully 84 percent said a coordinated effort to develop telecommunications infrastructure to improve access to workforce training and education courses would be effective or very effective. That was followed by 2) joint trade missions to promote international trade by New England companies (cited by 81 percent); 3) a regional agreement to support economic development efforts by neighboring New England states (cited by 80 percent); 4) the notion of a regional State University of New England System to share academic resources and reduce administrative costs (cited by 78 percent); and 5) regional development of a high-speed rail network connecting New England's cities (cited by 76 percent).

They are, of course, hypothetical regional strategies. As pollster Lou DiNatale noted regarding the would-be State University of New England System: "That's an idea that wouldn't get four feet off the ground in any legislative building in New England."

## HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU THINK THESE INTERSTATE STRATEGIES WOULD BE IN NEW ENGLAND?

### Household responses



## SIX STATES, ONE REGION...

Improvement of public schools tops the list of urgent policy issues in every New England state, while expanding the skilled labor force ranks first among social and demographic issues in half the states. Despite a few state-specific variations, however, New England opinion leaders appear to be in general agreement about the most urgent issues facing their states.

### Policy Issues

### Social/Demographic Issues



#### CONNECTICUT

- 1) Improvement of public K-12 education
- 2) Infrastructure improvement
- 3) Affordable housing
- 4) Drug abuse
- 5) Workforce retraining

- 1) Economic abandonment of inner cities
- 2) Access to health and child care for the poor and middle class
- 3) Expanding the skilled labor force
- 4) Helping welfare recipients become self-sufficient
- 5) Impact of working parents on children and family



#### MAINE

- 1) Improvement of public K-12 education
- 2) Infrastructure improvement
- 3) Maintaining R&D funding
- 4) Improvement of higher education
- 5) Health care access for the uninsured

- 1) Access to health and child care for the poor and middle class
- 2) Expanding the skilled labor force
- 3) Economic differences between northern and southern New England
- 4) Impact of working parents on children and family
- 5) Economic abandonment of rural areas



#### MASSACHUSETTS

- 1) Improvement of public K-12 education
- 2) Infrastructure improvement
- 3) Affordable housing
- 4) Improvement of higher education
- 5) Workforce retraining

- 1) Access to health and child care for the poor and middle class
- 2) Expanding the skilled labor force
- 3) Impact of working parents on children and family
- 4) Economic abandonment of inner cities
- 5) Helping welfare recipients become self-sufficient



#### NEW HAMPSHIRE

- 1) Improvement of public K-12 education
- 2) Energy affordability
- 3) Infrastructure improvement
- 4) Health care access for the uninsured
- 5) Affordable child care

- 1) Expanding the skilled labor force
- 2) Access to health and child care for the poor and middle class
- 3) Impact of working parents on children and family
- 4) Helping welfare recipients become self-sufficient
- 5) Economic abandonment of inner cities



#### RHODE ISLAND

- 1) Improvement of public K-12 education
- 2) Infrastructure improvement
- 3) Energy affordability
- 4) Workforce retraining
- 5) Maintaining R&D funding

- 1) Expanding the skilled labor force
- 2) Economic abandonment of inner cities
- 3) Impact of working parents on children and family
- 4) Access to health and child care for the poor and middle class
- 5) Helping welfare recipients become self-sufficient



#### VERMONT

- 1) Improvement of public K-12 education
- 2) Energy affordability
- 3) Environmental issues
- 4) Infrastructure improvement
- 5) Health care access for the uninsured

- 1) Expanding the skilled labor force
- 2) Access to health and child care for the poor and middle class
- 3) Impact of working parents on children and family
- 4) Helping welfare recipients become self-sufficient
- 5) The wage gap between workers with different education levels

# Flashback

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## ABOUT THE 1987 SURVEY

Twelve years ago, the New England Board of Higher Education similarly peered into New England's future as part of a joint research project with the New England Center for Continuing Education at the University of New Hampshire. The project was funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The 1987 *Future of New England* survey was mailed to four "leadership" groups: 1) business leaders; 2) higher education leaders; 3) government leaders; and 4) members of higher education governing boards and policymaking bodies. The 1987 survey yielded the following key findings:

- Asked to evaluate 19 public policy priorities that were of greatest concern in securing New England's future, members of all four groups overwhelmingly chose improving the public schools and maintaining a strong economy as the first and second most important issues facing the region. Members of the four leadership groups selected the following top 10 issues:

1. Improving the public schools
2. Maintaining a strong economy
3. Eliminating drug abuse
4. Improving higher education
5. Upgrading the skills of today's workforce
6. Upgrading area infrastructure
7. Providing affordable health care
8. Conserving agricultural lands and natural environments
9. Educating youth for civic involvement/participation in the democratic process
10. Child care for working parents.

- Though several sectors of the economy were expected to see growth, only two were expected to see major growth by a substantial number of leaders in all four groups. They were the finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE) and biotechnology manufacturing industries.
- All four leadership groups suggested that the most important obstacles to future economic growth were 1) the cost of housing and 2) the shortage of skilled labor.
- Educating more scientists and engineers was seen as a way to meet the challenge of global economic competition by more members of three of the four leadership groups than was any other single issue. Among business leaders, expansion of exports was considered more pressing, but only by 1 percent more of this group's members.
- Members of all four leadership groups believed that the two most important ways that New England colleges and universities could prepare the workforce for a global economy were to 1) design an undergraduate curriculum that ensures understanding of a global economy and 2) expand the supply of scientifically and technically educated men and women.
- Education and training of high school dropouts was seen as the most serious education and training problem facing New England by all four leadership groups. Enhancing the problem-solving and analytical skills of the workforce was seen as the second most serious education and training problem.
- The leadership groups agreed that the major environmental problems facing New England were toxic or hazardous waste disposal and solid waste disposal. They viewed scientific research designed to address environmental problems and consulting with government and industry as the two major ways colleges and universities should help address the region's environmental problems.
- All leadership groups indicated more communication was needed between the higher education community and the business and government communities. They further suggested that this communication could be facilitated by the creation of business, government and higher education partnerships.

# THE FUTURE OF NEW ENGLAND PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

(McCormack Institute Poll of New England Households)

## WHAT DEFINES NEW ENGLAND AS A REGION?

	CONN.	PERCENTAGE WHO ANSWERED "SOMEWHAT" OR "VERY MUCH"					
		MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Geography, climate mountains and coastline	93%	95%	91%	93%	85%	91%	<b>91%</b>
Educational institutions, colleges and universities	91%	87%	92%	91%	86%	86%	<b>90%</b>
The quality of life, small towns, recreation and culture	94%	92%	87%	93%	86%	97%	<b>90%</b>
Economy, businesses/corporations/financial institutions	88%	74%	81%	80%	72%	69%	<b>80%</b>
Sports teams	59%	63%	74%	70%	62%	60%	<b>67%</b>

## SHOULD NEW ENGLAND AS A REGION WORK ACTIVELY TOWARD SPECIFIC REGIONAL GOALS?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Percentage who think 'yes'	67%	71%	67%	62%	74%	71%	<b>67%</b>
Percentage who think 'no'	28%	16%	20%	26%	16%	16%	<b>22%</b>

## ARE LEVELS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION IN NEW ENGLAND HIGH OR LOW?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Percentage who think levels are 'high' or 'very high'	48%	44%	52%	48%	43%	42%	<b>49%</b>
Percentage who think levels are 'not very high' or 'low'	31%	29%	23%	24%	24%	35%	<b>25%</b>

## WHICH REGIONAL PUBLIC POLICY AREAS SHOULD NEW ENGLAND POLITICAL LEADERS TACKLE FIRST?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
K-12 education	26%	30%	33%	33%	37%	34%	<b>31%</b>
The economy	35%	37%	26%	26%	16%	32%	<b>29%</b>
The environment	22%	14%	15%	18%	22%	9%	<b>17%</b>
Higher education	9%	12%	13%	8%	17%	14%	<b>11%</b>
High-speed passenger rail	3%	1%	6%	5%	5%	7%	<b>4%</b>
Campaign finance reform	2%	3%	4%	7%	4%	5%	<b>4%</b>
Telecommunication systems	3%	2%	1%	1%	4%	0%	<b>2%</b>

## HOW IMPORTANT ARE REGIONAL SOLUTIONS TO THE LONG-TERM ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE SIX STATES THAT MAKE UP NEW ENGLAND?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Very important	49%	51%	51%	58%	55%	51%	<b>52%</b>
Somewhat important	41%	41%	37%	33%	36%	38%	<b>38%</b>
Not very important	6%	3%	5%	3%	3%	4%	<b>5%</b>
Not at all important	1%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	<b>3%</b>
Don't Know	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	<b>3%</b>

## GIVEN THE LOCAL POLITICS OF THE SIX STATES IN NEW ENGLAND, HOW LIKELY ARE ELECTED OFFICIALS TO COOPERATE ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Very likely	15%	21%	19%	14%	12%	23%	<b>17%</b>
Somewhat likely	61%	45%	50%	56%	49%	57%	<b>53%</b>
Not very likely	18%	25%	18%	16%	26%	16%	<b>19%</b>
Not at all likely	3%	4%	5%	7%	7%	2%	<b>5%</b>
Don't Know	3%	5%	7%	8%	7%	3%	<b>6%</b>

WHICH GROUP HAS THE MOST RESPONSIBILITY FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Political leaders	29%	17%	25%	14%	23%	9%	23%
Business leaders	14%	16%	12%	11%	16%	7%	13%
Educational leaders	8%	5%	6%	9%	7%	9%	7%
Environmentalists	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Regional organizations	1%	5%	4%	0%	4%	7%	3%
Mix	24%	30%	27%	34%	27%	39%	28%
All	20%	21%	20%	25%	18%	26%	20%

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE OBSTACLES OR MAJOR OBSTACLES TO ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NEW ENGLAND?

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
Cost of living, including utilities and healthcare	81%	80%	83%	83%	83%	89%	82%
Cost of housing	76%	67%	81%	81%	79%	76%	78%
Cost of higher education	67%	78%	78%	79%	79%	85%	76%
Tax structure	80%	76%	72%	73%	77%	83%	76%
Quality of public education	71%	59%	72%	70%	80%	64%	71%
Environmental pollution	73%	59%	63%	65%	73%	62%	65%
Inability of elected officials to work together	60%	56%	67%	72%	72%	62%	65%
Labor costs	61%	64%	61%	59%	66%	61%	61%
Shortage of highly skilled labor	61%	48%	58%	50%	57%	64%	57%
Aging of the workforce	49%	49%	46%	41%	48%	40%	46%

HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU THINK THESE INTERSTATE STRATEGIES WOULD BE FOR NEW ENGLAND?

PERCENTAGE INDICATING STRATEGY WOULD BE SOMEWHAT OR VERY EFFECTIVE

	CONN.	MAINE	MASS.	N.H.	R.I.	VT.	NE
A coordinated effort to develop telecommunications infrastructure to improve access to workforce training and education courses	82%	83%	86%	80%	79%	86%	84%
Joint trade missions to promote international trade by New England companies	81%	78%	83%	79%	80%	79%	81%
A regional agreement to support economic development efforts by neighboring New England states	79%	75%	82%	82%	81%	77%	80%
A regional State University of New England System to share academic resources and reduce administrative costs	80%	75%	79%	77%	79%	78%	78%
Regional development of a high-speed rail network connecting New England's cities	78%	70%	78%	75%	83%	54%	76%
Joint planning to expand capacity of New England's regional airports	75%	76%	75%	71%	70%	76%	74%
A regional commission to divide fairly among the states the siting of unpopular facilities such as prisons and toxic waste dumps	71%	61%	73%	69%	69%	71%	70%
A regional effort to attract and host the Olympic games	56%	58%	67%	60%	53%	65%	64%
A six-state lottery to support public education in the region	64%	69%	63%	45%	58%	76%	62%

# METHODOLOGY

## OPINION LEADER SURVEY

NEBHE mailed the *Future of New England* survey to 5,995 opinion leaders between August 1998 and December 1998. At NEBHE's request, the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts-Boston conducted a companion telephone survey of 1,000 randomly selected New England households in January 1999.

The "opinion leader" component targeted four main groups: political leaders, education leaders, business leaders and community leaders. Each group was comprised of a number of recipient categories. The *political* category encompassed chairs of local boards of selectmen, state and federal elected officials and heads of public executive agencies. The *education* category encompassed college and university presidents, college and university provosts and local school superintendents. The *business* category encompassed CEOs and owners of small, medium and large businesses located in New England. Finally, the *community* category encompassed newspaper editors, TV station general managers, think tank directors, foundation directors and a selection of civic group leaders.

NEBHE sought to include as many members of the targeted groups as possible, sending surveys to *every* New England state legislator and member of Congress, directors of every state executive department, every college and university president and provost, directors of every think tank identified by NEBHE's New England Public Policy Collaborative and every newspaper editor and TV station general manager in New England.

In several categories, it was necessary to compromise on the number of recipients due to the limitations of available resources. In these categories, NEBHE employed a method allowing for a base number of recipients in each state, plus an additional allotment based on the state's population as a percentage of New England's total population.

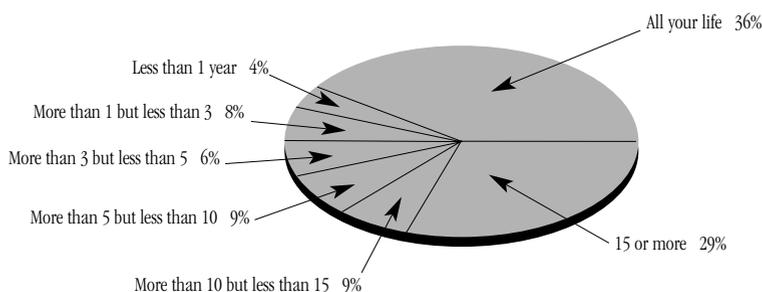
## PUBLIC OPINION (HOUSEHOLD) SURVEY

The public opinion survey data reflect findings from a telephone survey conducted from Jan. 19-23, 1999, as part of the quarterly UMass Poll. Interviews were conducted by professionally trained interviewers under the supervision of a university-quality professional field service. A random digit dial sample was drawn using the Waksberg method. Quotas were met for sampling location and gender. A random respondent selection was used. Respondent cooperation, response rate and call completion were satisfactory. The sample performed within expectations for a random digit dial sample.

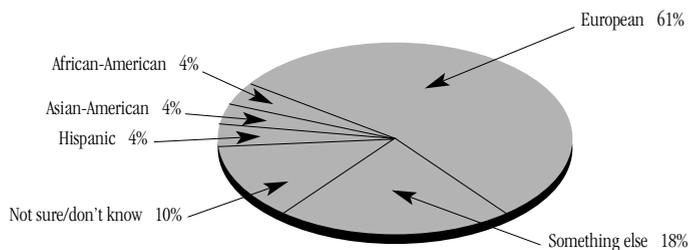
**New England Sample:** 1,000 General Population +/-3%; 827 Voters +/- 4%

**State Samples:** Massachusetts 400 +/- 5%; Connecticut 200 +/-7%; New Hampshire 100 +/-10%; Vermont 100 +/-10%; Maine 100 +/-10%; Rhode Island 100 +/-10%

### HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU LIVED IN THIS STATE?



### WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBES MOST OF YOUR ANCESTORS?





# A SHARED REGIONAL AGENDA?

## What the *Future of New England* Survey Tells Us about Regional Priorities and Perceptions

*Ross Gittell*

The New England Board of Higher Education’s *Future of New England* survey of residents and “opinion leaders” highlights both the value and limitations of using opinion surveys to inform and guide policy initiatives.

The survey supports the view that the six New England states share many core priorities and needs. For example, the findings reveal particularly strong consensus across the six states on the need to address issues related to education, infrastructure development and the environment. There was also near consensus on what it is that defines the New England region: the quality of life (rating highest in New Hampshire among the states and lowest in Rhode Island), education (highest in Massachusetts and lowest in Maine) and the economy (highest in Massachusetts and Connecticut, lowest in Maine and Vermont).

The tendency towards consensus on regional priorities is not surprising. The New England states after all share important characteristics. The main shared economic characteristics over the past 20 years have been high gains in both productivity and income. Indeed, all six states rank among the top third in the nation in terms of increase in gross state product per-capita, and in the top quintile in percentage change in median family income.

Notably, New England’s strong performance on productivity and income reflects the region’s high levels of educational attainment, as well as the high quality of life that helps attract and retain highly educated and skilled workers. These

assets have to be sustained to ensure superior performance on productivity and income growth in the future, which at least partly explains the significant concern among residents and policymakers about education, infrastructure and the environment (the latter two being instrumental to regional quality of life).

On the downside, New England might also be defined by slow population and workforce growth, with the average state rank in population growth in the 1990s in the bottom third of all states. Three New England states—Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine—are among the four slowest-growing in the nation. Slow growth should concern New England residents and policymakers. Yet, this issue was not high on the list of concerns articulated by residents or opinion leaders in any state except Massachusetts.

By contrast, the survey reveals misplaced consensus on future growth industries in New England. Opinion leaders across the six states agreed almost universally on which industries in New England would see the greatest future growth: biotechnology, computer software and telecommunications. Yet, economic projections suggest that not all New England states will have significant biotechnology, computer software and telecommunications industry employment growth.

One reason opinion diverges from reality on this item is that opinion leaders and residents too often equate the New England economy with the economy of Greater Boston. The regional economy is much more complex. In research I conducted with Bentley College Graduate Dean Patricia Flynn for the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, we identified “leading industries” in New England using a composite

indexed ranking that takes into account an industry's contribution to gross state product, share of state employment and average wage level. Using these measures, only health services is among the top industries in every one of the New England states. Other industries with a strong presence regionwide are: business services (ranking in the top 10 in five of the six states) and educational services, insurance and electronics (ranking in the top 10 in four of the six states). Biotechnology and telecommunications industries, however, are concentrated in Massachusetts and have relatively little presence in a majority of New England states.

In reality, New England is composed of several economic regions. For example:

- The area encompassing Route 128 outside Boston and the southern tier of New Hampshire features one of the highest concentrations of high-technology employment in the nation and significant biotechnology, software and telecommunications employment.
- The Connecticut River Valley, including parts of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Vermont, features concentrations of traditional manufacturers including machine shops.
- Rural New England, including parts of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, features concentrations of natural resource-related industries including tourism.
- Southern Connecticut is marked by concentrations of financial services industries linked to New York City.
- Rhode Island and Connecticut share a significant industrial manufacturing belt.

Each of these regions has different needs and concerns. Greater Boston and the southern tier of New Hampshire may be more concerned with advanced education and training and preserving quality of life to attract and retain high-tech professionals, while rural New England might focus more on preserving its environmental character, promoting tourism and providing better-paying and more promising career opportunities for residents. Unfortunately, analyzing survey responses even by state limits the ability to distinguish the true economic concerns of distinct regions within the region.

## BARRIERS TO COOPERATION

The *Future of New England* survey also suggests potential areas for New England regional cooperation. Yet in many of these policy areas, particularly those cited by residents, regional cooperation will be hard to achieve because of administrative barriers including long-established and difficult-to-change institutional and legislative structures, bureaucracies and state and local operating procedures. Strong resistance to giving up local and state control and the

long histories of competitive tendencies among the six New England states are additional obstacles to cooperation.

Furthermore, public support for regional cooperation is often motivated by the self-interest of residents of individual states, rather than the broader interest of the region. Among New England residents, for example, workforce training and education received the strongest support as a “very effective strategy” for the region to pursue. Residents of all six states shared this view. Notably, however, the highest support for regional action was registered in the two states—Vermont and New Hampshire—with the lowest levels of state support for higher education and the highest levels of in-migration from other New England states of highly educated and skilled workers. Would Vermont and New Hampshire increase their spending and commitment to workforce development and training if undertaken as a regional initiative? Would the states in the region with net outflow of highly educated people have anything new to gain by addressing workforce development from a regional perspective?

The notion of regional workforce development is further complicated by the relatively poor track record of states and the federal government working together on this issue. Will it be any easier or any more effective to collaborate regionally? One of the main criticisms of current workforce development systems is the proliferation of agencies and programs. Would the establishment of new regional organizations and protocols occur on top of the local, state and national ones that currently exist?

Another area identified in the survey for regional cooperation is K-12 education. This is a highly important and problematic policy area. But it is also one where there has been great difficulty changing policies and practices even *within* individual states. New Hampshire and Vermont are both now struggling with separate court orders to change the funding of local schools while retaining local control and the integrity of local and state tax structures. These two states—and every other—are also finding it very difficult to change school bureaucracies and professional practices and overcome local politics to improve schools. What could we reasonably expect to accomplish on a regional level in this area? There could be the sharing of best practices, lessons, experiences and some teacher training and certification. But there may be little, if any, advantage in sharing best practices regionally versus nationally or even internationally.

Support for a regional State University of New England System was also strong among survey respondents, particularly in New Hampshire. A cynical explanation might suggest that such a regional university system would provide New Hampshire and its residents with a way to continue their historically low investment in higher education and benefit from the investment of other New England states—a *free*

*ride*, as it were. In any case, decisions about the appropriate levels of investment in higher education can be more appropriately resolved in individual states (which would tend to capture the most benefit from their own investment in education) or the nation (where the free rider effects would be less burdensome on any individual state and redistribution is more feasible).

Residents of the six New England states also gave strong support to the need to address the cost of higher education as an area for regional cooperation. There is no question that there could be gains from regional cooperation to improve quality and access to college. Policymakers must be careful, however, that this does not become mainly a cost-cutting exercise. Retaining diversity and healthy competition among higher education institutions in the region is important if higher education is to remain a leading New England industry and a net exporter nationally and internationally.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

While most regional strategies in education would encounter significant problems, another policy area where there is

strong support for regional efforts, both among residents and opinion leaders, has more promise: regional transportation infrastructure.

All the New England states could benefit from better planned and coordinated airport infrastructure, including enhanced capacity to handle international tourists who tend to stay for long periods of time and visit several states. A well-planned rail network could improve the current links between central cities and suburban and ex-urban areas in the region. Improved rail service could also make central cities more attractive for business development and tourism, while helping to arrest urban sprawl and fostering economic development in more rural and remote areas.

One policy area that did not receive much support from survey respondents—but in which regional cooperation might be beneficial and feasible—is the enhancement of research and development infrastructure. A strong R&D infrastructure has been a key factor in the region's high concentration of high-technology employment (with four states in the region among the top third of all states in the percent-

## WILL R&D GO THE WAY OF MANUFACTURING?

*Only in Maine and Rhode Island did "opinion leaders" surveyed by NEBHE rank "maintaining research & development funding" among the five policy issues in need of the most urgent attention. But regional organizations have long regarded R&D as a vital New England interest.*

New England's colleges and universities conducted nearly \$2 billion in academic research and development in 1997, according to the most recent data from the National Science Foundation. By many measures such as per-capita R&D expenditures, New England remains the nation's most research-intensive region. Indeed, the region's universities in 1997 invested in R&D to the tune of \$148 per New England resident, compared with \$89 nationally.

But while total R&D expenditures at New England universities have more than doubled since 1983, the region's *share* of all U.S. university has been shrinking. As competition for research funds has escalated, New England's take has slid from 10.1 percent of the U.S. total in 1983 to 8.3 percent in 1997.

So what's a few percentage points between regions?

Big bucks. More than \$1 billion in additional R&D funds would have flowed into the six-state region in the past three years alone had New England captured the share of total U.S. university R&D it claimed during the early 1980s. More ominously, the ongoing redistribution of American research wealth away from New England and toward the South and West threatens to damage the region's preeminent scientific enterprise and compromise its fabled capacity to turn laboratory ideas into businesses, if not entire industries.

New England colleges and universities regularly capture well over 10 percent of the patents awarded to all U.S. higher education institutions. Even the most esoteric university space and defense research has the promise of creating New England jobs and improving life (to say nothing of expanding knowledge). Consider the collimator assembly designed by University of New Hampshire researchers as part of an effort to measure solar flares. It turns out the technology can also be used to improve mammography imaging, which is critical in the fight against breast cancer. The high-tech collimator consists of precisely aligned beryllium copper plates manufactured in New England by Thermo Electron/Tecomet of Woburn, Mass.

age of total employment in high-tech industries) and high growth in gross state product per-capita and family income.

National and global competition for high-tech prominence is increasing. Silicon Valley, not Boston, is now the center for U.S. high technology. For the region to retain a relatively high-productivity and high-income economy will require continuous enhancement of the R&D infrastructure. This could be achieved by linking together research and product development efforts across universities in New England, focusing on the enhancement of R&D ties specific to the different economic subregions of New England, and encouraging the state congressional delegations to work together in Washington to secure federal R&D funds for the region.

Both regional transportation and R&D are important issues for the New England states to address cooperatively. But regional efforts in these areas will require long-term focus and significant levels of funding and cooperation across the states—all very much unprecedented.

Regionalists might make shorter-term, tangible progress with some less ambitious, but still important, efforts. For example, successful regional cooperation already occurs in the area of New England forestry preservation. Future areas for cooperation could include historical, cultural and environmental preservation, joint marketing of New England as an international tourist destination and regionalization of professional licensing to allow professionals to practice in all states across the region.

Further progress in regional cooperation on these more narrowly focused issues could help build support for and a spirit of regional cooperation that could be extended to some of the other, more ambitious possibilities identified in the *Future of New England* survey.

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**Ross Gittel** is associate professor of strategic management at the University of New Hampshire's Whittemore School of Business and Economics.

And though Harvard, MIT and Yale conduct the lion's share of New England research, scientific brainpower is a regionwide asset. The Philadelphia-based Institute for Scientific Information, which measures scientific prowess in terms of how often research papers by a single institution's scientists are cited by other scientists, ranks UNH third nationally in geosciences citations between 1993 and 1997, behind the University of California, Irvine, and the Georgia Institute of Technology, but, as UNH officials emphasize, ahead of Harvard and Columbia. The University of Rhode Island's international prominence in turf grass research (URI faculty were the first to identify some of today's commonly known grass diseases) recently convinced the world's largest turf grass seed company to open a molecular biology lab in West Kingston. All over New England, university scientists are pushing the bounds of knowledge.

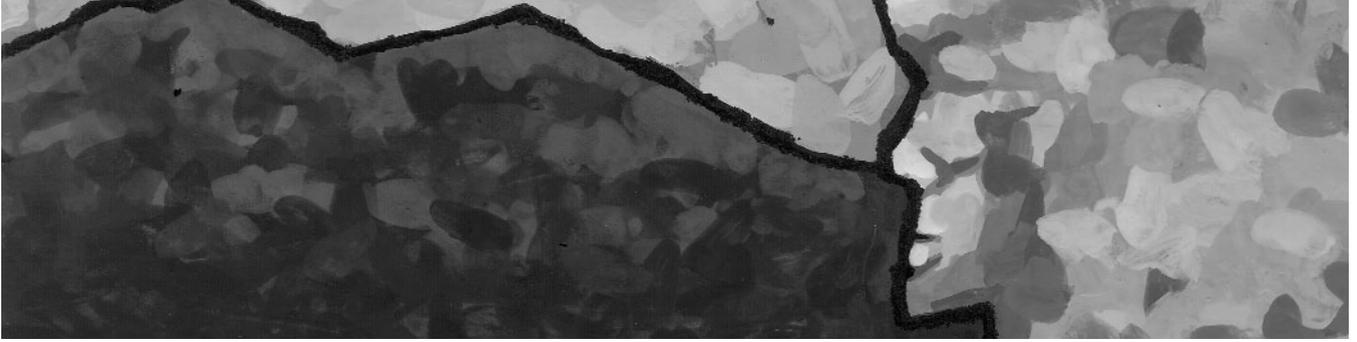
Still, the region's research enterprise has problems. For example, NEBHE has warned that New England relies too heavily on the federal government for support of R&D. Federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, NASA and the departments of Defense, Energy and Agriculture are responsible for the majority of university R&D expenditures nationally, with the balance of funds provided by industry, state and local governments and the universities themselves. Despite tight federal budgets for science and the region's loss of political power, New England universities still depend on Washington for 69 cents of every \$1 spent on research, compared with 60 cents nationally.

Yet, the focus of federal R&D investment has gradually shifted away from New England. During the past 10 years, federal support for university R&D grew by 95 percent nationally, but by just 67 percent in New England.

State and local investment in R&D remains low in New England. Nationally, state and local governments provided nearly 8 percent of R&D funds at their universities, but New England state capitals and municipalities supplied under 3 percent.

As the scramble for funds gets tougher, New England universities are adapting. Harvard recently created a Research Policy Committee and the new position of associate vice president of sponsored programs and technology transfer to deal with intellectual property rights and other new research concerns. Boston University, meanwhile, created the position of associate provost for research and graduate education to help the university compete for research grants. BU also established the Provost's Innovation Fund to help faculty conduct research that could lead to patentable ideas. Once again, America's R&D region is trying to reinvent itself.

—**John O. Harney**



# SUBURBAN SPRAWL OR URBAN WITHDRAWAL?

*Rethinking New England's Urban Assets*

*Keith W. Stokes*

There was a time when we all openly identified with our urban heritage. Except for Native Americans, we all have ancestors who landed on America's shores with the dream of freedom, prosperity and opportunity. For many of us, the long road to prosperity began in a tenement with close proximity to work, place of worship and family.

We defined ourselves by our urban community. All across New England, we boasted of growing up and having solid family roots in the North End or South Side of a given city. There was something noble and humble about these urban origins. Having ancestral roots that were directly related to turn-of-the-century Boston or industrial-era Fall River was a source of pride.

Today, the urban neighborhoods that once were points of entry for immigrants from Europe house new immigrants from Southeast Asia, Africa and Central America, many of whom live in the same tenements in the same neighborhoods, but without the same opportunities to advance. The new immigrants do not have the urban manufacturing base and "mom and pop" small businesses that the Italian, Irish, Jewish and Portuguese immigrants were able to build upon and benefit from during the first half of this century. At the end of the 20th century, there are actually *fewer* opportunities than there were at the beginning. With the loss of urban manufacturers and Main Street retailers, today's new urban-dwellers struggle to maintain an existence. Sadly, the noble image of urban living in the 19th century has been largely forgotten, replaced by the squalor of ghettos of the 20th century.

Ironically, what we today call suburban sprawl should more accurately be categorized as urban withdrawal.

The rush to leave urban communities behind after World War II was compounded by federal, state and local policies that directly rewarded massive suburban growth and investment. Indeed, despite the good intentions of the Great Society programs and the federal highway and housing initiatives of the past 50 years, we have been too quick to build new in the suburbs rather than invest in what we already had in our traditional urban neighborhoods.

As New England suburbanites recoil with horror over the loss of open space that has been systematically converted into strip malls and housing subdivisions, our cities are fighting for their economic lives. While several states including Rhode Island have introduced "smart growth" initiatives to combat suburban sprawl, few have developed any comprehensive policies to deal with the decline in economic opportunities and population stability in the cities.

Meanwhile, a vicious circle becomes apparent. Businesses fled urban centers to escape the high cost of doing business, principally property taxes. Now, suburbs wrestling with unbri-dled growth face increased demand for basic public services such as police, fire and schools, which puts pressure on their traditionally lower property tax rates.

As you listen to the countless state and regional discussions designed to chart a new economic course for New England, you will detect a lack of historical memory. America's Industrial Revolution was firmly grounded in strategic urban enclaves where machinery and an available workforce were concentrated. Yet, as we argue with conviction that the next economic revolution will be anchored by advancements in communications and production technologies, and we acknowledge that the essential

element of job creation in this new economy will be a highly skilled and educated workforce, we are overlooking our cities.

We have also predicted that technology enhancements in the manufacturing of goods will enable a smaller number of workers to produce more products, while advanced telecommunications enable us to work and communicate in a global market. The clear reality of this new economic course is that higher skilled workers will be the highest compensated.

In what industries will these technology-driven jobs be created? Most economists and business development officials in New England agree that as we enter the next century, the region's leading industries will include software development and computing, financial services, biotechnology, electronics, health care, hospitality and tourism and marine technology, to name a few. To compete for the high-skill, high-wage jobs in these industries, New England must use its business resources to prepare well-trained workers from our communities, particularly the region's larger cities.

## URBAN PLANNING?

New England can prepare for competitive economic growth by recognizing some basics of sound economic development.

First, quality companies locate and prosper in quality communities. Business decision-makers have consistently required several essential assets to grow a successful business, including: good schools, good transportation infrastructure, an equitable tax structure, good recreational opportunities, low crime rates, safe neighborhoods and an available skilled workforce. These elements must be in place to build a strong economic future for both the business and the host community.

If we were to create a prototype community that encompasses all these essential elements for competitive business development, which New England communities would best fit the profile? The answer is our urban communities. They are best-positioned to offer the most competitive economic growth because they contain the chief concentrations of the region's most important resources, most notably: the largest share of employers; the most extensive utilities, including water, sewer, electricity and gas; the greatest concentrations of available workers; and the most extensive transportation and parking infrastructure.

In short, New England's economic salvation may lay in the strategic economic reinvestment in our urban communities as engines for 21st century prosperity.

Each New England state has already witnessed investments in its urban centers under the rubric of federal and state Enterprise Zones, the newer Empowerment Zones and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street initiatives. While these somewhat isolated efforts have yielded success, what is ultimately

required is a *regionwide* collaboration based on the recognition that what is good for Providence, R.I., and Portland, Maine, is just as good for New Bedford, Mass., and New Haven, Conn.

How might we ensure that New England's cities are prepared for their role as engines of regional economic growth? For starters, New England should:

- Create a New England Urban Community Planning Council comprised of business people, community planners, elected officials and ordinary citizens from the six states to act as both a clearinghouse and advocate for policies that best promote and enhance the economic competitiveness of urban communities.
- Support legislation and business incentive policies such as downtown investment tax credits and brownfields restoration programs that promote growth and investment in urban communities.
- Support access to capital and business development services, including minority- and women-owned investment funds and urban business incubators, targeted to small businesses located within urban centers.
- Moderate or prevent corporate raiding between suburban and urban communities with an emphasis on reducing the cost disparities, particularly property tax disparities, between cities and suburbs.
- Support projects that target federal transportation funds for investments in urban centers.
- Make sure public education funding is the top priority in urban communities where the largest percentage of New England's workforce resides.
- Make available special job training and skill enhancement funds to foster innovative, regional collaborations.
- Awaken the sleeping urban giants by advocating for voter registration and community participation by urban-dwellers.

Plainly speaking, New England thrived during the 19th and early 20th century because it had the essential ingredients of a successful economy, specifically, an available workforce in the urban communities and an infrastructure, including factories, ports and rail centers, to build and move products swiftly to market. The economic future of New England rests with business leaders and public policy officials joining together with ordinary citizens to reinvest in the economic assets that once made the region's cities so economically potent—a *Back to the Future* strategy, so to speak. If we are diligent, we might hear New Englanders speak once again of urban communities as the best places to work, live and play.

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**Keith W. Stokes** is executive director of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce in Rhode Island.



# WHO'S NOT AT THE POLICY TABLE?

*Change May Begin with a Solo, but Thrives with Many Voices*

*Kaileigh Tara*

When I became mayor of Maine's second largest city a year ago, I had an aversion to politics and a poor opinion of government and the political process. In the past year, however, I have become a born-again patriot with a new reverence for American democracy. Where else but in the United States of America could a twice-divorced, former welfare mother with absolutely no prior political experience and a license plate that read WLDWOMN be elected mayor of a traditionally conservative community like Lewiston?

Still, far too often, many voices are not heard—in fact, are not sought out—when policies are established, thereby ensuring policy failure or at least ineffectiveness. Amazing ideas sit in a processing, analytical limbo, never moving into the action phase, because policymakers don't involve others in the process.

Take the case of Project Pioneer, a federally funded welfare-to-work project based in the Lewiston-Auburn area. The idea was to provide skilled labor for Pioneer Plastics Inc., a large employer in the area. A customized training program was developed to offer a variety of support services and deliver a marketable set of skills to welfare recipients. It all sounded wonderful to policymakers and Pioneer. But at no time in the planning process was the welfare population consulted. Had they been, they would have told organizers to market the program in ways that would reach welfare recipients, rather than via the local newspaper, which proved ineffective.

Though the program had projected enrollment at 150, recruitment was difficult and the actual number of participants barely topped 100. Only near the end of the project were participants asked to help with recruitment ideas.

Whether we are in the medical or legal profession, the education system, the economic development arena or politics, we often get too comfortable—and perhaps unintentionally exclusive—in our circles. No doubt, it's simpler to keep our circles closed than to risk the discomfort of inviting others in, especially those who might pose a threat to our base of power. Outcomes are more predictable when we all think alike or come from the same circle. To include others who are very different might change the color and texture of the process, perhaps even change the product. We have our own acronyms, our own language and rituals. In our own comfort zone, we see ourselves as different—perhaps better—than them. And our circles do not overlap.

This has profound implications for interstate cooperation in New England.

## COMMUNITY CHANGE

Real community change occurs at the local, grassroots level. Certainly, leadership plays a role. But the really tangible changes take place at town meetings and community action forums where average citizens are heard.

The political experts in the community were shocked by my election not only because I was an unknown, but because I won by going directly to the people. I refused to use political strategies. Instead, I went to community events and Bingo halls and I invited people to be a part of the solution. During the campaign, people would ask me: "What is your vision for

Lewiston?” I’d say: “It doesn’t matter what my vision is for Lewiston. What matters is your vision and how you intend to be involved in making it happen.” I continue to go to the people as mayor and it works. In fact, the entire community has been energized and we have seen a renewal of community pride and civic involvement that is truly inspiring.

I have learned that there is no constituency for change. Although everyone wants—in fact, demands—change when they elect you, they mean *other people* will have to change, not them. For example, residents of Lewiston and other communities demand relief from high property taxes and say they support economic growth as a strategy for property tax stabilization. But when the infrastructure required for expanded economic development is planned, there is huge resistance. “Sure, a new overpass might be needed,” residents agree, “but not in my neighborhood.”

## REGIONAL VOICES

How does all this relate to interstate cooperation in New England?

The New England Board of Higher Education’s recent *Future of New England* survey shows that New Englanders support regional cooperation, but the depth of their interest in collaboration is unclear. I suspect the support ends at the point where individuals are asked to act decisively in behalf of regional cooperation—say, to share revenue or redistribute public spending. That would be new and, for a lot of people, uncomfortable. But this resistance is not insurmountable as long as it’s anticipated. And being proactive about resistance should be part of a strategic grassroots marketing and education campaign that is marked by inclusiveness.

It is critical that we stop and notice who is *not* at the table. Policymakers should start by making a list of all those people whom instinct tells them should be involved in a decision. Then, they should put that list aside and start over. Get outrageous. List people who oppose the idea. List people who might not even understand it, people or groups who are often discussed but not present at the table, and even include people who drive you nuts. Also make it a point to include young people in the policy decision-making process. Policy is all about creating a better place for our children, so ask them what that better place should look like.

Collaboration works. The synergy that is created can be transforming for all involved. But it’s also messy, uncomfortable and downright frustrating; and on a regionwide basis, it will be particularly difficult.

Even within Maine, we refer to the *Two Maines* because of the cultural and economic differences in regions within the state. Maine’s State Planning Office predicts that by the year 2005, the

average per-capita income in Aroostook County will be only half that of Cumberland County. This tension within one state does not bode well for six-state cooperation. But I believe in New England regionalism, particularly on matters such as environmental protection, education and law enforcement.

**Policymakers should start by making a list of all those people whom instinct tells them should be involved in a decision. Then, they should put that list aside and start over.**

Henry Bourgeois of the Maine Development Foundation has suggested establishing a “regional council” that would propose strategies with clear goals and objectives. If we are to institutionalize regionalism throughout New England, the process must be all-inclusive, drawing on people from cities, towns and villages and giving them input in the implementation of new policies. But policymakers should not merely include shareholders in the process; they must *listen* to them.

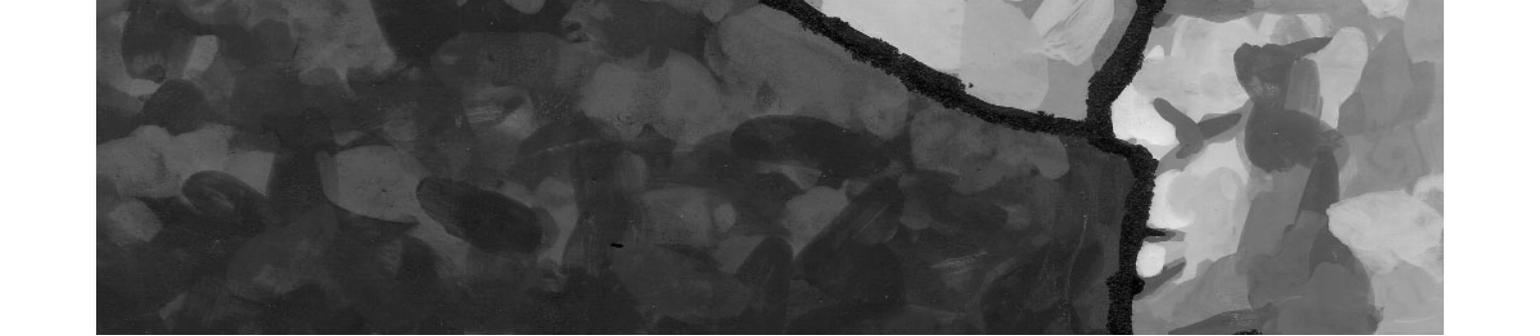
The city of Lewiston recently embarked on an Empowerment Zone application process that included 65 steering committee members and more than 2,000 residents in the design of the application. Residents called for increased investment in the library as a community cultural center. But when the application plan was presented to the city council, councilors attempted to overrule the people’s decision and follow a capital spending plan that city officials had developed years earlier. It took some insistence to ensure that residents—who pay the taxes after all—would determine the priorities for public investment.

We need to ask how the single mother with two children in rural Maine benefits from New England regionalism. How does the elderly couple on a very limited retirement budget benefit from regionalism? How does the small business owner in Maine benefit from regionalism? How does the social service provider in inner-city Boston benefit from regionalism? When these individuals and others are invited to the table, their perspective is refreshing and challenging. And when these folks decide change is necessary, the groundswell is all but impossible to ignore.

I hope regionalism moves beyond rhetorical limbo into a dynamic process for change. That is one journey I would like to go on. I have begun to imagine the possibilities and they are grand. We just have to remember to buckle our seatbelts—it could be a wild ride.

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***Kaileigh Tara*** is the mayor of Lewiston, Maine.



# TEACHERS NEEDED

*The Search Is on for Quality Educators.  
Could Ph.D.s Answer the Call?*

*Eleanor M. McMahon*

*Improving the quality of public schools is New England's most pressing priority, according to the Future of New England survey. The region's opinion leaders even suggest that improving the quality of local schools is the single most important thing higher education could do to contribute to New England's economic development. Precisely how is unclear. But certainly, higher education's most critical tool in helping fix schools is teacher training.*

Education is one area where the jobs are. Or as *Education Week* put it: “New Teachers are Hot Commodities.” U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley has suggested that schools will need 2.2 million new teachers over the next decade.

The teacher shortage is already so great that some districts are offering signing bonuses for new teachers. Detroit recently offered new teachers \$3,000; Dallas offered \$1,500. Baltimore raised starting salaries for new teachers by \$3,000 to \$27,300 and began offering the new hires \$5,000 toward closing costs on a home plus \$1,200 in moving expenses.

Many states are addressing issues of teacher *quality* as well as quantity. Mississippi began offering \$6,000 raises to teachers who become certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards—prompting more than 600 teachers to work toward board certification. Massachusetts recently created a program to offer \$20,000 signing bonuses to about 100 highly qualified teachers each year. By April, state officials had received 5,000 inquiries and expected to process 600 completed applications.

We are now in the third year of increased demand for elementary and secondary teachers. In the past year alone, U.S. K-12 school enrollment rose by half a million to 52.7 million, fueled by the so-called “baby boom echo” as well as increased immigration. This growth is expected to continue for at least eight more years, pushing school districts to build more schools and hire more teachers. The greatest growth during the next five to 10 years will occur in grades 9-12, followed by grades 6-8. Enrollment in preschool and lower elementary grades, meanwhile, is expected to level off as U.S. birth rates stabilize.

Rising enrollment is not the only factor creating teacher shortages. The aging of the current teaching force—and a turnover rate estimated as high as 40 percent among new teachers—are additional problems. Riley has suggested that a whopping 2 million of the nation's current 2.7 million teachers will retire or change careers within the next 10 years.

The severity of the looming teacher shortages varies from state to state and by subject.

Shortages appear to be particularly acute in special education, technical education, math, science, English-as-a-Second-Language and foreign languages, including Spanish. New York City recently hired 25 Austrians via teleconference to fill vacancies in math and science and seven Spaniards to fill middle-school Spanish language vacancies.

## DEMOGRAPHIC FORCES

Geographically, the largest public school enrollment increases during the next decade are projected for the West and South where total enrollment is expected to rise by 16 percent and 7 percent, respectively, according to federal projections.

In contrast, enrollment is projected to grow by just 1 percent in the Northeast, while declining by 2 percent in the Midwest.

Total enrollment is projected to rise by 4 percent in Massachusetts and 3 percent in Rhode Island. In the other four New England states, enrollment is projected to decrease—by 9 percent in Maine, 4 percent in Connecticut, 2 percent in Vermont and less than 1 percent in New Hampshire.

Despite New England's slow overall enrollment growth, certain classes will post significant increases. For example, Rhode Island's high school graduating class will grow by about 15 percent by the year 2012, and the job market for teachers—especially secondary school math, science and special education teachers—will expand accordingly. Massachusetts will also see high demand for teachers in math and science fields, including physics and chemistry.

Notably, studies conducted in 1997 showed that about 30 percent of those teaching math and science in grades 7-12 in Massachusetts and Rhode Island did not major in their fields. In urban schools serving largely low-income students, upwards of 60 percent of those teaching math and science were unprepared or even uncertified in those subjects. As if the problem weren't bad enough, relatively few students are graduating from education programs with majors or concentrations in math and science.

## SEARCH FOR QUALITY

Approximately 30 states have adopted or are considering adopting performance standards for beginning teachers. The standards, developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, would be applied at various levels: in teacher education programs, in induction programs for novice teachers and in the evaluation of teachers for tenure. The standards focus on a range of skills and knowledge, including the capacity to engage in effective plan-

ning, to monitor and expand learning by students and to use technology. (Indeed, Rhode Island College and partner institutions throughout New England are part of a consortium that recently received a five-year, \$9.9 million federal grant to infuse technology into teacher preparation and K-12 education.)

In addition, 32 states now require secondary school teachers to complete an academic major in a subject such as English, math or a particular science.

New York state, meanwhile, is considering an unusually comprehensive approach to teacher education reform. Specifically, the proposal would require all new teachers to earn a master's degree within their first two years of classroom teaching. In addition, all new teachers would be required to complete 175 hours of continuing education every five years. Every school district would be required to set up stringent teacher evaluation processes and to plan professional development activities. New York would also raise the bar significantly for the accreditation of college-level schools of education, requiring that at least 80 percent of education program graduates pass three different teacher certification exams.

In Rhode Island, the Legislature has approved stipends for mentoring programs pairing veteran teachers with novices.

By far, the most contentious effort to ensure teacher quality in New England has been the highly controversial test administered to prospective teachers in Massachusetts and failed by roughly half of them.

## FEDERAL PRODDING

Teacher quality is also a hot issue in Washington, D.C. In 1997, U.S. Sen. Jack Reed of Rhode Island introduced legislation calling for \$300 million to improve teacher training and quality, including incentives for prospective teachers to major in the subject they intend to teach and for school districts to ensure

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The Massachusetts Teacher Test has been assailed for its murky questions and troubling administration, as well as general skepticism about whether test scores bear a relationship to teacher competency. As with many standardized tests, the pass rate among minority teachers was particularly low. The episode has divided Massachusetts politicians, teachers and residents over whether current teachers should also be tested and how passage rates should affect the fate of individual schools of education. *What most influences student learning? The quality of teachers, says a recent poll by Recruiting New Teachers, a Belmont, Mass.-based nonprofit group. According to the poll released in the fall of 1998, 55 percent of American adults say good teaching has the greatest influence on student learning, while 30 percent cite a system of academic standards and 14 percent point to requiring achievement tests in core academic subjects.* In April, Simmons College and Teacher21, a national nonprofit group, launched the Beginning Teacher Center to increase the skills and confidence of new teachers and reduce their attrition rates. The center provides school districts with courses, workshops and research on the needs of beginning teachers, trains principals to improve the climate for new teachers, and trains experienced teachers to serve as mentors to new teachers. *Saint Michael's College Professor Anne Judson received a \$10,000 Eisenhower Grant as well as local funds to help elementary school teachers in Winooski, Vt., integrate technology into their classrooms.* A Pennsylvania company helps find and fill teaching positions over the Internet: TeacherLink USA provides public and private schools with resumes, references and other employment information on certified teachers who pay a fee to become members.

that more teachers teach only the subjects they have studied. Reed's measure also called for grants to establish formal relations between teacher colleges and individual public schools akin to the relationships between medical schools and teaching hospitals. Many of Reed's proposals were subsequently included in Title II of the 1998 reauthorization of the federal Higher Education Act. That legislation created new grant programs to improve teacher quality, encourage partnerships between colleges and high schools and recruit more teachers to work in low-income school districts. During the winter, the Washington-based American Council on Education convened college presidents, deans, school system representatives and others to explore ways to improve teacher education programs. And the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education drafted its first guidelines to hold teacher training programs responsible for the quality of their teacher-graduates.

President Clinton's education agenda, meanwhile, encourages states to conduct performance assessments for new teachers, continues the effort begun this year to hire 100,000 new teachers over seven years and boosts funds to recruit teachers for schools in inner cities, isolated rural areas and Native American communities.

In addition, Riley has urged states to consider adopting a common framework for teacher licensing. The education secretary suggested that states issue three levels of licensure. An *initial* license would require passage of a written exam on content and teacher knowledge as well as assessment of teaching performance. Within three years, the initial license would need to be replaced by a *professional* license based on assessment of classroom performance by a panel of the teacher's peers. The professional license would be reviewed periodically. Finally, a *voluntary* license modeled on the existing certificate of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards would be available to more advanced teachers. Riley further noted that teachers, if they are to be held to higher professional standards, should be rewarded with higher pay.

### A MATCH?

Interestingly, the K-12 teacher shortage comes as distance learning and cost containment in *higher education* have resulted in fewer tenure-track faculty positions on New England campuses.

Nationally, the share of full-time professors on the tenure track fell from 29 percent to 20 percent between 1975 and 1995, while the share with contract positions grew from 19 percent to 28 percent.

As a result, a lot of Ph.D.s have had to rethink careers in academe. Just 25 percent of doctoral recipients in science, math and engineering worked outside four-year colleges and universities in the mid-1970s; now more than half do. A recent survey turned up a Ph.D. mathematician working on Wall Street and an English Ph.D. writing software manuals.

Might we address the shortage of K-12 teachers by attracting Ph.D.s to a profession enhanced with higher status and salaries too? Our oversupply of Ph.D.s and our shortage of teachers just might make a good match.

**Eleanor M. McMabon** is distinguished professor at the Taubman Center for Public Policy and American Institutions at Brown University and former chair of the New England Board of Higher Education.

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# GOVERNOR OF NEW ENGLAND?

*Issues Revealed, Tongues in Cheek, the “Campaign” Begins*

In February, the New England Board of Higher Education kicked off a mock *Race for Governor of the State of New England* meant to focus attention on the promises and perils of regionalism in the six states.

NEBHE invited six New England political leaders to debate their campaign “platforms” based partly on the results of the *Future of New England* survey project, in which NEBHE and the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts-Boston asked 1,000 New England “opinion leaders” and 1,000 New England households about their views on pressing public policy issues, regional economic prospects and opportunities for interstate cooperation in New England.

Approximately 150 New England elected officials, business leaders, educators and policy experts attended the debate held at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston as part of the second annual *New England Agenda* conference sponsored by NEBHE’s New England Public Policy Collaborative (NEPPC) and cosponsored by the New England Council, the New England Governors’ Conference and the McCormack Institute.

The “candidates” included: former New Hampshire state representative and congressional and gubernatorial candidate Deborah “Arnie” Arnesen; Vermont state Treasurer James Douglas; former Massachusetts state senator and gubernatorial candidate Patricia McGovern; Maine state Senate Majority Leader Chellie Pingree; Connecticut state Senate President Kevin Sullivan; and former Rhode Island Gov. Bruce Sundlun.

The *New England Agenda* conference is held annually as part of the NEPPC’s efforts to encourage policy innovation at the regional level and develop a framework for sharing and building upon the region’s public policy research capacity. The collaborative creates policy networks and enhances public access to timely policy research via the Internet and the annual policy conference on New England’s agenda.

The debate was moderated by Renée Loth, the *Boston Globe’s* deputy editorial page editor and former associate editor of *New England Monthly*, the award-winning magazine that, Loth notes, “published for six years and then collapsed in part because it was difficult for us to sell the idea of a ‘United States of New England.’”

## OPENING STATEMENTS

**Deborah “Arnie” Arnesen:** This election for the first governor of the State of New England is about taking risks together as six states and recognizing that uncertainty is a very difficult thing for populations and for politicians. But out of uncertainty and risk-taking come better futures.

From my perspective, there are five main issues for this campaign:

The first one is transporting of product, people and ideas—a very important thing for us to address as a region.

The second issue that is clearly important for us as a region is the environment. We know that polluted water and polluted air don't understand when they reach the Massachusetts boundary or the Connecticut boundary. For some reason, they go where they want. Now the question is, how do we respond more effectively?

The third issue is education. The *Future of New England* survey found two issues that the population, not the politicians, were focusing on. The issues are economic security and education. Those are the two things people thought were most important. Why? Because most people in the region understand that while they may have a job, it is no longer about employment security, it is about *employability* security. One thing ensures employability security—and that's education.

The fourth point is that tourism provides a wonderful opportunity to invite people into New England. We understand that as the oldest part of the country with historic assets that we preserve and protect—as well as our mountains and our streams—New England is a tourist Mecca.

And the last issue is health. We see health care as the No. 1 industry in this region. But access to health care is a problem.

I want to repeat those words: Transportation, Environment, Education, Tourism and Health. What is the acronym? TEETH. Every time you see some choppers, remember that we finally have a public policy agenda that New England can sink its teeth into.

Nationally, a new federalism has brought with it dysfunction. If we recognize the efficiency of working together as a region and take risks wisely, not only can we do well for our region, but we can also provide a model for the nation.

**James Douglas:** Think about this Great State of New England and think of which state was probably the last to sign on. I bet it was Vermont. Our spirit of independence is legendary. We were the state that declared independence from New York and New Hampshire, from Massachusetts, from Connecticut, from Great Britain and from the United States, having been an independent republic for 14 years before, as we say, we stuck our neck in the yoke of union.

We are the state that has dedicated itself historically to resisting change, to protecting our sovereign identity and our

rural character. We probably would be the last to accept amalgamation into this new State of New England and would even consider secession instead.

Vermont and other northern New England states grew more slowly than the rest of New England, and we are the most rural state in the nation. But as we have caught up, we have encountered the same problems that other states have. We've got sprawl and malls—the mega-development that concerns everybody. We have a lot of traffic. We have concerns about good paying jobs. We even have street gangs in some of our cities now. Because we are confronting these problems later than some of the other states, I would argue that we have been fortunate enough to learn from the experiences of others and therefore we are in a better position to provide the kind of leadership that the new State of New England requires.

We've got the best environmental laws in the nation. We have naturally conservative fiscal policies that have given us a strong economy and a government that is still close to the people. You see a lot of T-shirts around our state that say: *Vermont is what America used to be*. That's the difference you feel when you cross the border from any direction into the Green Mountains and see how small town life goes on in Vermont.

I think a Vermonter as governor of New England could cause the region to rediscover itself. A Vermonter could teach the elementary principles of virtue and thrift, the most essential lesson of learning to live within your means, while still being socially liberal. A Vermonter could speak plainly about the hopes and fears that families share across our great region, about putting education and schools higher on the agenda, about the value of a strong vision of how to improve the lives of every resident of our new state by looking first at what matters most: a healthy environment, good schools, good jobs, strong communities and responsive government.

What more could you want? What a wonderful dream—New England led by a Vermonter, someone who understands how to put together a state out of diverse interests, one who was taught tolerance and equity as a way of life and who lives democracy every day of the year. So, I suggest, my fellow citizens, that you strip away the fancy rhetoric, the wasteful ways and return to a simpler and quieter world. As one of the great leaders of the Union army said at Gettysburg: *Put the Vermonter up front*.

**Patricia McGovern:** I am honored to be a candidate for governor of what I call the *confederation*, rather than the state, of New England, because I want to make sure we keep our 12 U.S. senators. But I believe we can be something unique and special whether we call ourselves a state or a commonwealth or a confederation. We can enter the next century in a very exciting and challenging way.

We come from a region with a great history and a great tradition. Most of us travel throughout the region all the

time. We spend a summer weekend in Rhode Island or ski in Vermont or stop by a lake in New Hampshire, do business in Boston or go Down East to look out over one of the most beautiful coastlines in the world.

We are the region that cradled the American Revolution. We are the region that started the Industrial Revolution. We are the region that is making the Information Revolution.

We have taught the world to change the way it thinks. Now we have to change the way *we* think about the future, building upon our history and tradition, our values and our character and carving out something very *New England*.

Imagine a New England where we coped with the environment together as six cooperating states. Imagine a New England where governors pooled resources, perhaps consolidating the six New England state pension funds into one gigantic pension fund. Imagine the rate of return on that larger fund compared with the return on the six individual funds. Why not pool the Medicaid accounts of all six states to purchase health care for all our people? That's exciting, different, profound, forward-looking—and we can do it while we maintain our states' sovereignty and individualism.

If I were governor, I would ask the “substates” of New England to come together and advertise what we do best in terms of economic development: higher education. It doesn't matter which of our substates we are talking about, we have some of the best public and private higher education not just in the nation, but in the world. We should be advertising everywhere: *Come to New England for your education*.

We provide the best health care not just in the country, but in the world. We should say: *Come to New England for your health care*.

Our appeal to tourists is unique. We should preserve our traditions through that wonderful New England way of looking at our heritage, our natural resources and open space. We can do that not by taking from the individual states but by pooling those resources that make us special and advertising who we are to the rest of the country and the world.

Still, the most interesting issue for all our states—and for the world—is education. But the issue is no longer K-12 or even K-16. New England should be the leader in *lifelong learning*. We should have the best early childhood education, the best public schools and higher education and the capacity to retrain our workers for the work of the future. This will make people want to stay in New England instead of migrat-

ing out and attract more business here, too. We have been the national leader before. It's time for this confederation known as New England to be the national leader again.

**Chellie Pingree:** I want to say first that geography does matter in this contest, and size certainly does too. We can fit all of the rest of your states in the state of Maine. And ever since 1820, when we sent Massachusetts packing, Maine has been a leader. As Maine goes, so goes the nation.

This is a good time for this conversation. As we saw in the *Future of New England* survey, we all share much including economies in transition. Many of our manufacturing jobs are being replaced with service sector jobs, and we are seeing the results: a loss of personal income for many of our citizens and a growing gap between rich and poor.

While Maine is not as urban as many states, our rural poor experience some of the same issues as do urban poor.

What happens to our workforce as jobs require more skills and education? How do we help our citizens to transition from welfare and prepare for this different world?

All this happens at a time when politics and culture are changing. We have talked about how our population is shifting south—people are heading down there to golf and moving their businesses there, too. Maine no longer has Sens. George Mitchell and William Cohen. We've already lost much of our political clout, and we may lose another congressional seat. When we compete for a shipbuilding contract or even look for federal relief from an icestorm, we know it's not the same for us in Washington anymore.

Moreover, we have been a region known for our political wisdom—a region of liberal Democrats and moderate Republicans. (I am leaving New Hampshire out of the conversation right now.) But the national political tone has changed.

It is time for a new vision. As we lose our political clout on the outside, it is time to think about the internal strength of our region. How will we cooperate and work together as six states, harnessing the tremendous capital that we do have, the creativity that we are known for and the New England work ethic that is topped by none?

New England should be a place where people want to work, where they want to retire, bring their businesses, come to visit, where research and development dollars flow in.

Let me list a few things we should focus on. A great education, as we have said many times, is central. This is what our





region is known for. And whether it is biotechnology or publishing, value-added farming or sustainable fisheries, New England can be the place with the very best ideas and the people with the skills to get the job done. That means we have to focus on education and skills from birth to the end of life.

We have to meet the needs of our workers and businesses in finding affordable child care and health care. Health care is our citizens' biggest worry and our businesses' biggest cost.

We should be the first region to solve the universal health care problem. We have the brains to do it; we have the workforce to do it. New England will then be the place where workers want to raise their families. We should not be afraid of the cost implications for business. In fact, universal affordable health care should be New England's No. 1 business attraction strategy.

While we are at it, we should sign a pact to make sure we no longer use our precious tax dollars to compete among ourselves for businesses whether they be rug manufacturers or insurance firms. Never should we see a business like the New England Patriots moving from one state to another with taxpayer money.

Export of jobs is one of our biggest concerns. We're losing jobs to the southern United States and to the Third World. I think we should start our own form of mini-protectionism, and see to it that people are "Buying New England," starting in the grocery store. We should be embarrassed to walk out of the grocery store with a bag of Idaho potatoes when there are Maine potatoes sitting there next to them, or with Wisconsin cheese, when there is Vermont cheese right next to it. And there should be incentives throughout the region to reward buying locally: purchases, services and contracts should stay within the six states. At the same time, we should seek out emerging markets and do more business, as a region, with Canada.

But how do we create this model of regionalism? As we look for the best ways for the states to work together, we also have to strengthen what New England means to us. We can't look to the western states for models. We have to think about what is in our culture that makes us want to be part of it—our own model of small towns, local control, small schools, town meetings and engaged voters as well as our architecture, our history, our traditional industries, including manufacturing, fishing and farming, and our mill towns.

Who better than a leader from Maine—a state of 1 million people and 435 towns—to do this for us? Maine knows what small town America is like. I live in a town of 350 people, where my son's public high school graduating class this year will be four students.

We have the largest Canadian border. We border on New Brunswick, Quebec and Nova Scotia. We have the largest coastline and the greatest unspoiled forest. And we have a culture (even more so than Vermont's) that preserves the history of New England. (We could benchmark this by noting that Vermont probably has more stores where the *New York Times* is available on Sunday mornings than Maine does. I think that makes us a more culturally pure state.)

In closing, I want to say that we in Maine have figured out how to deal with the stickiest problem of regionalism—what we call *The New Hampshire Problem*.

My colleagues who deal with public policy issues know how hard it is to live next to a state that has no sales tax, no income tax and no public kindergarten. New Hampshire may be in court to fix its educational system, but every time we propose public policy in the state of Maine, someone says: "Well, New Hampshire doesn't do it that way."

As we watch our cars flock to New Hampshire liquor stores and see tax-free New Hampshire goods come into our state, we think, "Could New Hampshire be a state that cooperates regionally when it has *Live Free or Die* on its license plates?" Here is our solution: Hampton Beach can go to Massachusetts. Maine will take the White Mountains. The rest goes to Vermont. *The New Hampshire Problem* is solved.

**Kevin Sullivan:** Let me say that as governor of this New England experiment, I am not particularly interested in taking risks. I am interested in finding a way that we can work together and get results for our own areas and for the region as a whole.

We agree that the new federalism demands a dynamic new regionalism in New England.

We also agree on many of the areas where we have an opportunity—indeed an obligation—to work together. All our states should collaborate on a common core curriculum and best practices and accountability in education. This would hone our leadership in areas from school readiness to high school graduation standards, and ensure that education and an educated workforce remain hallmarks of New England. We need to do that together.

We must focus on more regional financial aid and cooperation so that our children will remain in New England for their higher education and the rest of their lives.

We need a broader vision of which economic clusters link us together not in particular industries, but as a region. Our competition is with the nation and the world, not with one another. We should focus on regional grids, whether those grids are for

transportation or technology or, as we move into the world of deregulated energy, for electricity. We need to build connectivity among each and every jurisdiction that makes up this New England. If we don't, we continue to suffer the burden of high costs that make us less competitive as we go forward.

Whether we are from Maine or Connecticut, the renewal of our cities and the people who live in those cities must be on our agenda. Because it is as important Down East as it is in Hartford that those cities be renewed. If they do not, they will take all of New England with them.

But apart from the issues, I think we also have to be honest and recognize our diversity in New England, particularly the diversity between north and south.

So my message—and it is a strange one for someone here running for governor of New England—is that New England statehood is the wrong answer to the right question. We can only work together as true partners, not lesser parts in an area which will inevitably become a Greater Massachusetts considering where the region's population and financial centers are concentrated.

We can only work together as equals. Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont must be more than playgrounds for Boston. Hartford and Providence have no less right than Boston to set the tone and shape the leadership of this region simply because they are not the largest population centers.

We will pay a heavy price for this idea of statehood. States have two senators, so statehood costs us 10 representatives in Washington where our voice had already become less and less heard.

I would reject the rigidity of statehood and embrace something more creative and more in tradition with our ingenuity and indeed more in our long tradition of home rule.

As the first executive officer of New England, I would be reminded and cautioned by the great leadership style set by the first president of this country. George Washington understood that the best way to gain power is to give power back. So the first thing I would suggest is that we give power back to the states that make up our region by doing away with the statehood that some would embrace and instead come up with something that is a true collaboration, a *Confederation of New England*.

A confederation in which we are each joined as equals, dominated by none, with participation from all. It would be my job as governor to lead that region, but I would also suggest moving quickly to create a confederal council composed of our state governors and the bipartisan leaders of our several general assemblies.

We need to think about a budget that is not driven by some new regional tax in a region that already suffers from the burdens of big taxation, but rather reflects our individual state commitments to pool resources and commit funds to do together what we can and must do together.

We also must come up every four years with a quadrennial agenda that makes sense for New England. This agenda should ensure true collaboration by giving each and every state—Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts—an equal right to create at least one priority, even if that priority is not shared by every other state.

I appreciate that this is an agenda more about “how to” rather than “what to do.” I submit again that this is very important as we determine whether we will succeed or not going forward as a region.

As a region, we work together. As a region, we collaborate together. As a single state, we lose that diversity. But as a confederation, we have all those strengths.

If we can do this, and this is what I hope and intend to do, then I believe that we will realize a great experiment in New England, one that combines the virtues of where we have been historically with the needs of where we must be for the future.

In closing let me also say, as a reminder to my friend, Mr. Douglas, that we share his concern about the challenges of life in the cities, but Ben & Jerry's still does not count as a street gang!

**Bruce Sundlun:** Thank you. You know when NEBHE asked me to come up here and talk about this State of New England, I thought it was a joke. But I have listened to my fellow candidates talk—and it is a good idea.

As we listen to the speakers here, certain facts become self-evident. New England is the region most famous for education. Nobody can argue with that. New England also has natural attractions—12 months a year for tourism, skiing in the winter, the beaches and the lakes and islands in the summer. We should capitalize on that as a region.

We ought to focus on health care. Our hospitals are probably the best in the country. And Rhode Island already has universal health care. When the Clinton health insurance plan was proposed (and it was proposed by a Rhode Islander), we didn't think it would fly, so we started a program called RItecare. I asked, what's our worst health care





problem? I expected to hear the elderly. What I heard instead was pregnant women and babies, ages 0 to 6. If you have a baby with a birth defect, you have a \$250,000 bill. You find a baby that's born malnourished, underweight—a crack baby—that's hundreds of thousands of dollars, maybe for four to six months, and the baby probably won't live. We put that RIticare program into effect, it works. Infant mortality has gone down and birthweights have gone up. My successor as governor has got enough surplus money out of the system that he has now extended it up to age 18.

As to the confederation, we had that kind of system before there was a federal constitution. It didn't work. It didn't work because there was too much power in the states. The state legislatures elected U.S. senators and elected congressmen. They could recall their representatives; they also paid them, so they had them locked up—and there was no national policy. So we switched from confederation to the national government we have today.

I don't think we can work as a confederation today. And I don't think we can work as one state because the federal government is not going to let us. And it won't give us 12 senators, so we would be at a disadvantage.

So it seems to me we have to start another Civil War. We've got to secede!

And you know what? We are probably not strong enough to secede. But we've got an ally right next door who also wants to secede. I say we make a deal to get Quebec into New England—then we've got a viable entity. (If the deal is to make it French-speaking, that's OK, I already speak French. I don't know about the rest of you.) But if we can get Quebec, then together we'd pose a problem the U.S. government would have trouble dealing with. They don't want to fight with Canada and they don't want to fight with Quebec; they might let us slip away.

We have natural economic bases, we have education, we have a culture that is real. Of course, we have some problems as well. For example, we've got to have a regional airport for tourism. There isn't one. I have been flying airplanes for 50 years, and Logan will never be a regional airport, it is just too small. And Logan is so damn difficult to get to these days that half the cars at the new Rhode Island Airport have Massachusetts plates. (And we in Rhode Island are very grateful for that.) We need a regional airport. We need high-speed rail transportation. And we need infrastructure. Our cities are declining. And ladies and gentlemen, you know and I know that only one thing builds infrastructure, and that's government.

I don't know of any infrastructure in my state that was built with private funds, and I doubt there is any in your states. Infrastructure is a responsibility of government and we in New England have allowed infrastructure to decline, and we've got to do something about it. And as to who should be the governor, look, there is only one choice, it is me. Why me? A) I have been governor. B) I'm the oldest, so I won't be governor of New England for very long.

## AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

**Question:** *One growth industry that we now have in our region is incarceration. Would you comment on the relationship between this growth industry and the economy of the region and offer any suggestions you might have for dealing with it in the future?*

**Arnesen:** Well, obviously if you look at most budgets around the country, you will see the fastest growing line item is criminal justice. It is kind of like a PacMan eating up vital resources.

A friend of mine who was the majority leader in Indiana tells this frightening story about how Indiana officials go into second-grade classrooms every year and count the number of children who come from families at-risk and, based on that number, they plan future prison beds. They are counting 7-year-olds to determine future prison beds!

We know that crime is about a lack of investment—a lack of investment in families, a lack of investment in education.

Meanwhile, our educational system has more in common with growing corn than growing kids. It is based on an agricultural mode; it doesn't reflect the dynamics of today's families. Someone has proposed that we teach parenting. When am I home to parent? Part of the issue of crime is really an economic issue—an issue of the workplace and education.

I would love to see state and local government be required to keep schools open the normal day from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Then I would love the *region* to step in and with its dollars have schools open from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Why? Because that's when families need a safe environment. You know the story of teenage pregnancy, you know the story of drugs. It usually begins with experimentation between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. The first sexual act for most teenagers doesn't happen in the back seat, it doesn't happen on the weekends. It happens at home. The problem is nobody else is at home.

When you look at those dynamics, you see the impact on crime, because it costs \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year to warehouse someone. But more importantly, you see an opportunity to benefit by addressing child care and day care needs, thinking outside the box about how to improve education and reflecting on the real needs of families.

**Sullivan:** We are talking about collaborating as a region among several states. The agenda that Arnie has just talked about is almost impossible to achieve even among institutions and facilities in single communities. And I think this entire panel challenges the thinking about how difficult it is, how profoundly difficult it is as a political culture, as a society, to work across any line you can think of.

School to community, community to community, state to state. I spend much of my day in my real life as a college vice president working in a community. And I have discovered in the last year that even with resources, it is very hard to get people to collaborate.

So maybe the first thing we should do as candidates is determine to go forth and engage in a process of consciousness-raising. Our first challenge is to persuade a society built on rugged individualism that we have to collaborate together now or we will share the costs later.

**Arnesen:** It's true that one community cannot pursue this agenda in isolation. The whole fabric has to make the commitment together, because we need the synergy, we need the efficiency and we frankly need the political protection that comes with collaborating.

And one of the reasons it's hard for us to imagine education as something other than local is New England's dependence on property taxes, which is dependence on revenues from little tiny fiefdoms. All six states rank in the top 10 nationally in per-capita property taxes. That means that we are built on a system that eyeballs what happens at that incredibly local level—and that's your source of dollars. Why share those dollars? Why give them up? This dependence on local taxes has made us unwilling to embrace a state approach, let alone a regional approach.

**Question:** *What is the capital of this region going to be? Or more specifically, how much does Boston wag this region?*

**McGovern:** Of course, I would love to see Boston be the capital. But at the end of the day it doesn't really matter where the capital

or capitals are. I come from Essex County in Massachusetts, where 300 years ago settlers fought over where the county seat should be. Somebody worked out a compromise, and 300 years later, we still have three county seats. The point is, they compromised.

On a serious note, I actually *believe* in regional action. I really do. I thank NEBHE and the New England Public Policy Collaborative for sponsoring this debate and giving us the challenge of encouraging others to think differently.

When I talk about these issues, I think about things we can do together to really make a difference. I would love to see some kind of overarching structure where we really could do some creative things together.

Funding schools is individual; it's local. But I see us as states thinking about how we fund education for the region, asking: "Are there creative ways to think about taxation policy for the region where we could fund public education in a different way?" That's exciting.

I do think there are ways we can pool our pension funds. Imagine pooling these billions of dollars, imagine the rate of return we would get and how we could invest those gains in creative programs that really do help the entire region. Imagine if we took all our bonded indebtedness and said to somebody, "What kind of a deal are you going to give us on this money? How much money will we save as a region if we do it together?" Imagine if we take the Medicaid dollars and pooled them and really found creative ways of providing health care for all our people. Very exciting.

We can't do it alone, not even my wonderful Boston, Mass., can do it alone. But we can do it as a region and we can challenge one another.

I really believe we can build an overarching regional structure to do things to benefit all the people of the region. We are six little, kind of funky, kind of funny, independent, very individualistic New England states. If the European union can get past individualism, different cultures, different nationalities, different history, different languages, different monetary systems and the two bloodiest wars in the history of the world in this century, we can.

I am quite sincere about it. If we are willing to take some challenges, we might be able to get some things going that really will be very different.

**Sundlun:** Well, I think that's a great idea and let's try and put this to some practical use. We do have the president of the Senate from Connecticut. We do have this president of the Senate from Maine. And we just heard a wonderful idea about pensions.





What is the chance of getting Massachusetts to put its pension into a regional pension group? What is the chance in Maine?

**McGovern:** Ten years ago, no chance. Today, absolutely. Years ago, this guy in Europe came up with an idea that I bet everyone in this room thought was crazy. It could never happen. Now, they have started printing something called the *euro*.

It is extraordinary what leadership will bring, what a willingness to cooperate can make happen. We can preserve our individual identities, while we do some exciting things together. And we should start that discussion.

The reason it has never happened is that it has been rarely, if ever, discussed. If you provide leadership, you can get the six New England states to do not everything, but a few creative things. Particularly if these things help the states' bottom lines, I think you can get them to bite.

**Sundlun:** Let me just say that if I went back tonight and got hold of the Rhode Island leadership and said, "Listen, the president of the Senate from Maine and the president of the Senate from Connecticut were there, they took this thing seriously, and we may be able to get everybody to put their pension plans in place, in a joint pension plan," I have no doubt that the leadership in Rhode Island would agree to put Rhode Island's pension in there. Now, can the rest of you say that?

**McGovern:** We could have a deal right here today. Of course I am out of office, I can't promise anything.

**Douglas:** Management fees are certainly lower if the corpus is bigger. But we are still trying to get the three different pension systems in Vermont to consolidate. So we can't underestimate parochial interests and the problems of giving up turf. Arnie was talking about the property tax, which, of course, is regressive in many New England states and the basis for public education I guess everywhere. But we have 250 towns (Maine has 435) and the Legislature offered an incentive a couple of years ago to provide more school construction aid for towns that would consolidate their schools and build a joint school. They pulled back because nobody wanted to do it. So before we talk about expansion and collaboration in the federation beyond the borders, we should realize it is pretty tough to cooperate even internally sometimes.

This is the only region where towns were chartered by royal governors and the town is an entity of local govern-

ment, a political establishment that's much more historically significant than it is elsewhere around the country, and I think it is very hard to give that up.

Speaking of towns, obviously the best choice for capital would be the smallest capital in the United States and the only one without a McDonald's: Montpelier.

**Arnesen:** I think we are a bunch of old political hacks who have been around so long that we already know all the no's, but can't figure out what the yes's are.

More and more of the population understands that borders are porous. My tiny town of Orford, New Hampshire, right on the Connecticut River, is going to create the first K through 12 school system to include a number of communities in Vermont. So communist Vermont and conservative New Hampshire can cross the Connecticut River, come together and form the first K-12 system in the United States involving communities from more than one state.

People are looking for solutions. As Bella Abzug said, "You have to lose, lose, lose to win." Well, that's really what this is about—going back and figuring out what you did wrong, going back and recognizing that people are looking for a solution. And the solution has very little to do with state boundaries; it has everything to do with responding to their needs. That's the opportunity of regionalism.

**Pingree:** We should never assume under the umbrella of regionalism that every regional idea is a good one. I think the reason I emphasize that Maine is a small-town state is that small-town ways are at the core of our values. No matter how hard people try to regionalize our fire departments, for example, there is something sacred to us about having a fire truck in every town, spending a lot of money on it, going to the station on Saturday nights, polishing it up and checking to make sure it is OK. That's just the way we maintain our sense of community, and nobody is going to take that away from us until we are ready.

I live on an island of 350 people and next to me is Vinalhaven, an island of 1,100 people. They have 150 kids in their school, we have 80 kids in our school K through 12. We are both about to build new schools, we are separated by about 100 yards of water and there is no way we will come together to build common schools. That's just an important part of our community identity, and nobody is going to take that away from us. And if they started to, life would change for us. We wouldn't be able to volunteer at school as much. We wouldn't

do the things that we do now. It is important to us.

In Maine, we talk about combining school superintendents but never about combining the school districts. Maybe there is some way we could share a school business function but the schools still stay separate, because schools are integral to our communities and that's the way we want it.

Yet I don't think we should just use examples of all the things that didn't work because then things will never work. Organizing a pension fund together is very different than moving two small towns' schools together.

Lastly, in terms of the pension fund idea, never underestimate the power of a great idea. And often a great idea with a good leader to push it will happen even though we have lists of reasons why we thought it could never happen and arguments about why it wouldn't work. But don't ever kill a good idea.

**Sundlun:** I think it is a great idea. Rhode Island's pension fund is about \$6 billion. There are six states, so six times six is 36 and then double it for Massachusetts and Connecticut which are big rich states, and you are looking at about \$72 billion, and we may not be far off at that. Mr. Treasurer, you can get a much better rate and a much better return and you will have a hell of a lot more money for education and for health care and for all the things we are taking about.

This is a simple plan that really could work and could produce something with real cash benefits. The question is: have we got the political will to get it done?

**Sullivan:** At the risk of returning to the question briefly, Arnie and I have collaborated a bit already. At the outset, we decided that the capital of New England should be [www.ne.gov](http://www.ne.gov). And that is not in jest. I think it suggests that we have a context in which to think differently—a technological and symbolic context in which to think differently about what it means to be a region.

If regionalism means a larger, consolidated entity, forget it. Half the world is discovering the virtues of what Chellie Pingree was talking about in terms of locality, community, closeness and accessibility.

It is one of the reasons I reject the notion of a State of New England out of hand. I don't want a megastate. I don't think mega- anything works well.

So if we can embrace the idea of cooperation without losing those virtues of community and closeness, then we've got something. But if we are coming together to talk about how to kick

decisions upstairs to some new level of government, I don't think we are going to serve our region or its parts particularly well.

**Arnesen:** What might be exciting about a regional concept is to recognize the porousness and let the creativity of residents and communities be on top so they work together without the artificial boundaries. Regionalism is not about bigger. It's about better and more responsive. It's about looking at natural regions.

The reason those states were created had to do with some king. Well, I don't know that king. The way the demographics and the communities have changed allows them to respond in a way that actually fits them—that's the opportunity that the State of New England can provide because it is not about big. It is about nimble and flexible, similar to what we are seeing in the business sector.

**Question:** *Would it make sense to establish a regional incentive fund supported perhaps by foundations, the private sector and possibly the public sector to fund proposals for collaboration and cooperation along the lines of what has been discussed?*

**Sullivan:** There is a need for collaboration among the collaborationists. The New England Board of Higher Education is a longstanding, if somewhat quiet, success in terms of cooperation. One of the missing ingredients perhaps is to bring together the people who are already doing regional things with one another, because we have lots of subsets of this regionalism to date, which have absolutely no relationship to one another.

So maybe a necessary first step is to discover the commonality of what we are already doing regionally, connect those things up even if we do it *on-line* and begin to share among the various experiments already underway.

We may not need to invent a damn thing. We may simply need to make sense out of what we are already doing.

**Question:** *Is it better for New England to try to deal with the economic crunch that average citizens are feeling by lowering costs or by raising income?*

**Sullivan:** In partial response or at least using the question to segue, which is one of the things we are good at, there is one area that interestingly none of us really mentioned nor did any of the questions. It fundamentally raises the very question that you have put forward. Over the next 20 years,





New England faces a wholly unanticipated demographic shift of age that we are utterly and totally unprepared for in any area of public or private policy.

If there is ever a crunch that will test whether we raise standards of living or lower cost burdens, it will come when all our enthusiasm and pressure for investment in early childhood collides with a population that is disconnected from problems people encounter below the age of 65.

The Y2K problem is a piece of cake compared with the implications of the failure to begin a conversation regionally now about what it will mean for policymaking when our population is overwhelmingly dominated by the issues and culture of aging.

**Arnesen:** The Canadians did not figure out universal health care as a nation. They went one province at a time. It did not get switched on all at once in Canada. They actually did the experiments.

So part of what we have to recognize is that universal health care is possible. You may be afraid of it unless you're the family that can't afford it. Then it is no longer just about political fear, it is about recognizing you can't keep your family together because the costs are so exorbitant. In 1900, the average female took care of kids for 18 years and took care of older parents for about four to five years. By 1990, the average female took care of kids for about 18 to 20 years and of parents for about 18 years.

## CLOSING STATEMENTS

**Sundlun:** I told you in my opening statement that I thought this was all sort of a joke. But it hasn't been a joke. Some very good ideas have come up. And I, at least, am walking away with one practical idea and tomorrow morning I am going to talk to the newly elected treasurer of Rhode Island and put him in touch with Jim Douglas and with Sen. Sullivan to see who we talk to in Connecticut, because this one is simple: all you've got to do is get authority. The rest of it is easy, there are plenty of pension funds that are administered by good organizations that are much larger than the aggregate of all our pensions. We can get the benefit from the larger sum and the lower rates and the lower fees. There is no doubt about it. The only thing we need is the political mechanism to do it.

Tourism, we all agree, is a major industry, but we suffer because we don't have a regional airport. You can't get to New England without going someplace else first, particularly if you

are outside the United States. You've got to go to New York or Chicago or Los Angeles. We ought to have a regional airport in New England. I don't care where it is. There are some good abandoned military bases that could be easily transformed, or we could build anew in some central area. But it would benefit all of us and I think we all ought to contribute to it.

**Sullivan:** If I were to finish with any thought it would simply be that this isn't about structuring the debate or structuring the solution. It is about finding commonality. I would suggest voting for all of us, not any one of us, because that's the only way this is going to go forward.

There is not going to be any governor of New England; there is not going to be any one person who dictates from on high what New England is going to be about. We are going to rely on a combination of old community spirit and new technology to try to find a way of connecting and working together. The question about connecting regional initiatives to one another is about discovering what works and what doesn't work on a case by case, issue by issue, problem by problem, basis.

It may be the pension issue, it may not be. (Of course, I would rather have the region take my unfunded liability than my pension funds.) The solution really is in our ingenuity, and in the last analysis I suppose that's what we're supposed to be about as New Englanders. So we need to go back to our core values, our core skills, and stop trying to find the perfect need, the perfect forum, the perfect issue. Let's just do it. Then, we will discover a regionalism that's practical, pragmatic and, we hope, successful without the politics.

**Pingree:** I'm very glad that I live in a fishing community and that my kids got to grow up with kids who knew how to run outboards, start a wood stove, plow a driveway as well as kids who were ready to go on to some of the best educational institutions in the country, many of whom were both at the same time. And I think each of us, whether we are from the city of Boston or the city of Hartford or the mountains of New Hampshire, have our favorite stories of why we want to live here.

A lot of what we've been talking about today is exactly this: how do we preserve this wonderful region with special qualities, with great diversity from the north to the south *and* work on regionalism?

I think we've come up with some good ideas today, and we're thinking of how the technologies of tomorrow will allow us to continue wonderful lives in rural communities or

in inner cities. I think about how wonderful access to the Internet and great telephone service have brought a whole new kind of industry to Maine and allowed people to live in our small communities but be connected to big cities, to educational institutions and to the stock market.

Good infrastructure and roads connect us. Tourism connects us. All kinds of things allow us to participate with each other and preserve what we've got. And, in fact, ideas like regionalizing health care may allow people to live in communities where the wages aren't as high—whether it's the inner city or rural areas—but still make ends meet.

I think we've come up with some wonderful ideas today and have a great opportunity to continue working together to keep both things—our great creativity and our regionalism—so that together we can do something wonderful.

**McGovern:** Thank you very much. Again, I agree with Kevin. If I were to vote, I would be happy to vote for any of my five colleagues.

We live in a special region of the country. For me, the issue is: how do we preserve that uniqueness, that individuality, that home rule spirit that we've had for 300 years, while finding ways to collaborate, ways that we can save money or solve problems. There are things we can do better together than alone. How do we find out which things those are?

It was suggested that perhaps an inventory be taken of groups such as NEBHE or the Dairy Compact. There are lots of things we already do as a region. Does there exist a list of those groups and those efforts? We need such a compendium.

So let's preserve what we are that's special and unique, our history and our tradition, and let's try to find ways to work together that will help all the people of this terrific region.

If we're going to survive and thrive—with an aging population, with a population that's outmigrating, with a high cost of living—we have to work together, find things we can do together, and most importantly, find ways to change the way we think.

**Douglas:** I got to thinking this is probably the purest election in history, with no phone banks, no massive fundraising efforts, just the ideas that we've been able to kick around today, which I think have been very interesting and helpful and I hope will lead us to an era of greater cooperation in the region whether we have a formal political amalgamation or not.

I talked in my opening statement about the rugged independence of Vermonters, but we also understand the importance of interconnectedness. Two centuries ago, Vermont

farmers walked all the way to Boston to bring turkeys to market. They took many days to bring them here. Later, we had water transportation and railroads. We now have an interstate highway (which I used today and paid the outrageous toll in New Hampshire on my way to Boston). Vermonters understand interconnectedness and the need and responsibility of working with our colleagues around the region to find solutions to the many problems that we've talked about. We have a lot to offer each other, and I hope we'll have opportunities through NEBHE or others to do exactly that.

**Arnesen:** We need to let the public know how successful we've been in our regional collaborations. Then we can begin to look at things like pooling our pension dollars.

I also suggest that we come up with a theme, and I think *Think Regionally or Die* is very appropriate. It's also appropriate that a liberal Democrat should end with a quote from the conservative CEO of Citicorp. Walter Wriston writes: "We seem to have raised a generation of elected officials to whom the word *risk* is an acceptable term only when used in connection with promoting a state lottery or legalized gambling. The worst thing that could happen to a society, as to an individual, as to a region, is to become terrified of uncertainty. Uncertainty is an invitation to innovate, to create, uncertainty is the blank page in the author's typewriter, the granite block before a sculptor, the capital in the hands of the investor or the problem challenging the inventive mind of a scientist; in short, uncertainty is the opportunity to make the world a better place."

Maybe we start dreaming today.

**Loth:** I think we've learned that there's more that unites us than divides us. And that, particularly with Washington doing less all the time to affect people's lives, either to help or thwart (depending on what you think of Washington) the prosperity and social security of this region, it's more and more important for there to be regional cooperation to make our six voices louder.

Moreover, as the government in Washington continues to devolve responsibilities to the states, we need to resist the beggar-thy-neighbor race to the bottom that other regions of this country are succumbing to.

We in New England will never be able to compete on price. We are an expensive region, a high-quality region. I think we need to continue to emphasize the quality that we represent and stop trying to be cheaper than Alabama. It's just not going to happen. And I think we're smarter than that. It's up to us to prove it.

# The State of New England

## A FACT SHEET

### THE LAND

- The six New England states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont cover 66,672 square miles or 2 percent of the total area of the United States.
- New England is about the size of one Midwestern state—and, it has been noted, probably would be one state had America been settled from west to east.
- The region boasts more than 6,000 miles of shoreline, roughly 200 ski areas and more than 800 campgrounds.

### THE PEOPLE

- New England is home to approximately 13 million people or about 5 percent of the U.S. population.
- Two states—Vermont and New Hampshire—accounted for more than 70 percent of the net increase in New England population during the first half of the 1990s.
- In most New England states, the number of high school graduates declined steadily during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The region is now in the midst of a modest demographic rebound. The number of New England public high school graduates is projected to grow steadily from 112,100 in 1996 to 135,710 in the year 2005, when the number will drop off.
- New England's racial and ethnic profile is changing rapidly. African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans represented more than 14 percent of the region's 18- to- 24-year-olds in 1990, up from 8 percent a decade earlier. And their share is growing fast.
- Of the more than 915,000 immigrants admitted to the United States in 1996, about 40,000 intended to settle in New England.
- Foreign-born scientific talent fueled New England's much-touted high-tech economy as surely as earlier waves of foreign immigrants powered the region's industrial growth and enriched its political life. Indeed, foreign-born workers accounted for 86 percent of New England labor force growth from 1986 to 1996, compared with 35 percent nationally. The workforces of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island would have *shrunk* over the past decade were it not for the influx of foreign workers.

### THE EDUCATION AND CULTURE

- New England is America's higher education heartland. The region's approximately 260 colleges and universities enroll 795,000 students and employ 28,000 full-time professors and associated faculty in virtually every area of human inquiry and scholarship. Fully 25 percent of the students enrolled on the region's campuses travel to New England from other parts of the United States to attend college.
- New England colleges attract approximately 9 percent of all foreign students in the United States—an infusion of about 40,000 foreign students a year.
- The region's universities conducted nearly \$2 billion in research and development in 1997, representing 8.3 percent of the U.S. total. And New England campuses consistently capture more than 10 percent of the patents awarded to U.S. higher education institutions.
- New England's historical edge in both college enrollment and academic R&D is eroding. Enrollment at New England colleges peaked at more than 827,000 in 1992, then declined steadily. In addition, New England's share of total U.S. college enrollment has decreased from 6.4 percent in the mid-1980s to 5.5 percent today. New England's share of R&D expenditures by all U.S. universities slid from 10.1 percent in 1983 to 8.3 percent in 1997, depriving the region's knowledge economy of billions of dollars over the period.
- Federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, NASA and the departments of Defense, Energy and Agriculture supplied 69 cents of every \$1 that New England universities spent on research in 1997, compared with 60 cents nationally. This dependence on Washington is hurting New England, as relatively scarce federal R&D dollars are shifted toward the politically ascendant regions of the South and West and their up-and-coming research universities. Indeed, during the past 10 years, federal support for university R&D has grown by 95 percent nationally, but by just 67 percent in New England.

- New England state capitals and municipalities supplied under 3 percent of R&D funds at the region's universities in 1997, compared with 8 percent nationally.
- New England is the birthplace of American public schools. But the myriad problems of K-12 education are much in evidence in the region. Most recently, courts in Vermont and New Hampshire have ruled that the wild local variations in school funding caused by over-reliance on local property taxes are unconstitutional.
- New England is home to more than 560 museums of all kinds—one for every 22,700 people.
- New England's museums, cultural organizations, educational institutions, scholars, and artists accounted for 13 percent of funds awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and 8 percent of funds awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts between 1992 and 1997.
- Perhaps because of the region's concentration of private colleges and universities, as well as a heavy presence of major private hospitals and Catholic schools, New Englanders are more likely than other Americans to work for nonprofit organizations. According to U.S. Census data, 4,411 per 100,000 New England residents worked for nonprofits in 1990, compared with 3,120 per 100,000 nationally.
- Research suggests that New Englanders give less of their relatively high incomes to charity than people in other parts of the country. In fact, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont and Maine rank among the bottom seven states in the country in per-capita charitable deductions as a percentage of per-capita income. Some of this lag has been attributed to higher levels of giving to evangelical religious groups in other parts of the country.

## THE ECONOMY

- Lacking significant natural resources, New England has built its various economic successes on a synergistic blend of world-class research institutions, entrepreneurial spirit and venture capital.
- The region's 19th century industrialization featured successful textile, machine tool and leather industries, as well as manufacturers of guns, furniture and steel. The wealth created by these manufacturing industries underwrote construction of New England's now-aging economic and cultural infrastructure, including reservoirs, sewer systems, museums, universities and subways.
- As some of the region's key 19th century industries moved to the South and overseas, replacement industries emerged, such as fabricated metals, then electronics, then computers.
- New England's vaunted academic-medical centers gave the region a crucial competitive advantage in the emerging biotechnology industry of the 1980s. Around the same time, nationally prominent environmental research helped create New England's environmental technology industry. New Englanders are constantly in search of the *next* engine of economic growth. Among today's candidates: aquaculture, photonics and a range of information-based industries.
- Services, including "business services" such as advertising, management consulting, software and insurance, and "consumer services" such as entertainment, education and health care, account for 46 percent of all New England jobs—a figure that has grown by 4 percent annually since the late 1970s. During the same period, manufacturing's share of New England's total employment sank from about 30 percent to less than 20 percent.
- New England provides a disproportionate share of total U.S. employment in certain industries such as: investments (31 percent); securities and commodities (19 percent); pension, health and welfare funds (16 percent); life insurance (15 percent); higher education (14 percent); savings institutions (14 percent); and libraries (13 percent).
- New England boasts the highest per-capita personal income of all U.S. regions. In 1997, per-capita personal income regionwide topped \$30,000, compared with a national figure of about \$25,000. But within New England, state figures vary significantly from Connecticut's nation-leading \$36,000-plus to Maine's below-average \$22,000.
- Thirteen of the 100 best U.S. companies for working mothers in terms of pay, advancement, child care, flexibility and family-friendly benefits are New England firms, according to *Working Mother* magazine.
- The end of the Cold War had a profound effect on New England. In 1989, more than 360,000 New England private-sector jobs were related to defense. By 1994, the figure had shrunk to 269,200. Despite much talk about peace dividends and diversification, just 16 percent of laid-off New England defense workers found new jobs that paid *more* than their old defense-related jobs.
- New England's electric utility customers pay approximately 50 percent more than the national average for electricity—reflecting a regional disadvantage that has hampered the region's businesses, nonprofits and homeowners for decades.
- New England ranks first or second among the nine regions of the country in key measures of manufacturing export intensity: exports as a share of all manufactured goods; exporting businesses as a share of all businesses; and export-related manufacturing jobs as a share of total manufacturing jobs.
- New England differs from the rest of the country in that raw materials constitute a relatively small proportion of the region's exports, while machinery, electronics and instrumentation make up a relatively large part.
- New England manufacturers and trade officials have focused their overseas marketing on Canada and Western

Europe, but have not penetrated the fast-growing markets of Asia, Latin America and Africa, which account for a growing piece of the overall U.S. export pie.

- Of the more than 3.5 million foreigners who visited the United States for business-related purposes in

1995, 150,000 spent time in New England, primarily Massachusetts. But in the past few years, foreign tourism in New England has grown at less than half the rate of foreign tourism nationally.

## THE POLITICS

- New England is broken up into 165 cities and 1,418 towns. The six states encompass 625 school districts and 23 congressional districts.
- The relentless population shift to the South and West and the more recent change in party control of Congress have unquestionably cost New England clout in Washington—a power personified by former House Speaker Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill of Massachusetts and former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell of Maine. In fact, the region has lost half a dozen congressional seats since the 1940s. But pockets of bipartisan power remain. For example, New Englanders make up one-third of the important Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee.
- The ratio of federal expenditures to federal taxes paid varies considerably among New England states, according to data from the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council. For every \$1 Maine residents paid in federal taxes in 1996, the federal government spent \$1.29 in Maine on defense procurement, Social Security, Medicare, grants to state and local governments and other items. The feds spent \$1.08 in Rhode Island for every \$1 paid by Rhode Island taxpayers and \$1.03 in Vermont. But New England states with high per-capita incomes—and therefore high federal tax payments—post a less favorable balance. Connecticut and New Hampshire received just 71 cents and 74 cents, respectively, for each \$1 paid in federal taxes, while Massachusetts received 94 cents.
- New England’s current governors include three Republicans, two Democrats and an Independent. Democrats control the state legislatures of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont as well as the New Hampshire Senate, while Republicans control the New Hampshire House—the nation’s largest state legislative chamber.
- Even in this, the land of Ella Grasso and Madeline Kunin, the 1996 election stood out for gains by New England women. New Hampshire elected its first woman governor in Jeanne Shaheen, and women secured one in every three of the region’s more than 1,100 state legislative seats, including the House speaker posts in New Hampshire and Maine. Women occupy 22 percent of state legislative seats nationally, but 32 percent in Vermont, 31 percent in New Hampshire, 29 percent in Connecticut, 26 percent in Maine and Rhode Island, and 23 percent in Massachusetts, according to data from the Rutgers University Eagleton Institute of Politics.

## THE POLICY INFRASTRUCTURE

- New England is home to at least 250 public policy research centers and institutes, the overwhelming majority of which are based on college campuses.
- New England’s infrastructure of regional organizations includes: the New England Council (formed in 1925 by business leaders and New England governors in response to a mass exodus of New England textile and shoe manufacturers to the South); the New England Governors’ Conference (formed during the Depression to promote regional economic development); and the New England Board of Higher Education (formed in 1955 to foster cooperation and the efficient use of resources among the region’s colleges and to expand educational opportunity).
- Several regional groups such as the New England Regional Commission and the New England River Basins Commission have disappeared, while others such as the Caucus of New England State Legislatures have been largely underfunded. The New England Congressional Caucus was created in the 1970s and focused primarily on the region’s chronic energy problems. This coalition of the region’s lawmakers was disbanded in the heady days of the mid-1980s, then reestablished in the 1990s.
- Eleven percent of the U.S. daily newspapers that have shut down since 1990 have been New England papers, according to the *American Journalism Review*. A handful of regionally oriented magazines vanished around the same time. More recently, however, New England-focused coverage has been boosted by the emergence of *The Wall Street Journal’s New England Journal* and the popularity of a small number of regional titles, including the New England Board of Higher Education’s *CONNECTION* magazine, the *New England Nonprofit Quarterly* and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s *Regional Review*.
- The New England states spent the recession of the early 1990s awash in red ink. While state government employment grew by 1.37 percent nationally between 1991-1996, it actually decreased in three New England states, dropping by 0.61 percent in Massachusetts, 1.02 percent in Maine and 2.27 percent in Rhode Island.



# THE STATE OF NEW ENGLAND

## *Editorializing*

*NEBHE's Future of New England survey and second annual New England Agenda conference captured widespread media coverage all over New England, including the following editorials, reprinted with permission from the respective papers.*

### AN AGENDA FOR NEW ENGLAND

Is New England a powerful region-state or just a state of mind? It is difficult to imagine a common agenda or identity linking communities as diverse as Greenwich, Conn., and Greenville, Maine. But some forward-looking New Englanders are giving it a try.

Last fall, the New England Board of Higher Education surveyed 1,000 opinion leaders from the six states—elected officials, college presidents, CEOs of companies large and small, think tanks, foundation directors and media moguls. For a needed reality check, it commissioned a poll of 1,000 “ordinary” New Englanders. The results show remarkable uniformity across the states.

Education continues to be the No. 1 issue for average citizens and opinion leaders alike, both as a way New Englanders identify with their region and as a road map for continued prosperity. Improving public education in the lower grades was the most urgent item in every state. Respondents wanted better teacher training, merit pay for teachers and partnerships with the region’s premier colleges.

Expanding the skilled labor force was the next important issue. Respondents wanted more on-the-job skills development as well as retraining for laid-off workers. Welfare-to-work initiatives were highlighted as an opportunity to develop a more qualified labor force.

The big obstacle to continued growth in New England? The cost of living. From housing to energy to health insurance, living in New England simply costs too much. “Ordinary” respondents were slightly more likely than the opinion leaders to add two other high-cost items: taxes and college.

If these themes sound familiar, they are. Today’s discussion, sponsored by the New England Board of Higher Education with the New England Council and the New England Governors’ Conference [and the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts-Boston] will surely pluck chords that have been sounded before.

This is actually good news. As Washington continues to do less to affect the economy or social stability, the role for regional cooperation becomes more apparent. Fortunately, these survey results suggest that rather than a babble of competing voices, New England is increasingly speaking with a single tongue.

—*Boston Globe, Feb. 3, 1999*

### THE SENSE OF NEW ENGLAND

New Englanders are thinking more as, well, New Englanders lately. That is, they realize more and more that they have interests in common. This developing attitude may lead to political decisions to collaborate more, and cannibalize and duplicate less, in economic, environmental, education and other matters. It might eventually even mean such things as a regional sales tax, combining state pension funds and a “Buy New England” campaign for the region’s consumers—e.g., buy Maine potatoes, not Idaho spuds. Two manifestations of this heightened regionalism appeared this week.

First, there is a survey conducted by the New England Board of Higher Education of 1,000 opinion leaders and 1,000 ordinary folk. The results displayed a strong desire for a regional approach. For instance, 88 percent of the leaders and 67 percent of the others said that the six states should

work more collaboratively to achieve regional goals. There was broad support for such joint efforts as bringing more foreign trade to New England, a regional pact to boost economic development, developing a regional university system and a high-speed rail network to connect the region's cities.

Of course, working collaboratively means that some political leaders must trim their own sails. And indeed many respondents saw the inability of New England's politicians to work collaboratively as a barrier to economic growth. Common tax, employment, transit, environmental and education policies are necessary if the region is to better compete with other regions, but this would mean state politicians giving up some authority. So be it.

The survey also clearly showed improving public education and expanding the skilled labor force as the most important priorities, and the high cost of living the biggest barrier to regional economic growth.

Then there was Tuesday's conference in Boston to promote "smart growth" in New England. The meeting, which drew around 1,000, reflected the fear that many parts of the region are losing their special New England character, and that something must be done about it. That certainly implies that to protect this regional identity the six states will have to cooperate, not compete, considerably more than they have.

—*Providence Journal*, Feb. 5, 1999

## OUR TURN PLEASE SAY YOU WERE KIDDING

**W**e know that the New England Board of Higher Education was just running one of those egghead exercises in Boston last week when it held a mock forum on the possible benefits of combining the region's six states into one. Still, it makes us a little nervous, even when we know the board could not be really serious about this. Could it?

We hope not. Sure, the State of New England would be an economic powerhouse with a little more political clout in national elections, but you can figure out that Massachusetts almost certainly would be the most likely to think this is a great idea.

And that's all you need to know to understand that there would be some scary tradeoffs. Perhaps it wouldn't be so bad if we had to reduce the number of senators from 12 to two. We can always do with a few less politicians in Washington. Except, when you think about it, there wouldn't be as many to carry our water. And what if we put Olympia [Snowe] and Susan [Collins] out of work? Maybe this is all a male chauvinist plot to reduce the rising number of women in the Senate.

We probably could handle the logistics of replacing all the 50-star American flags with 45-star versions. Changing them and all the various 50-state formulas upon which such items as aid

programs and taxes are based would likely be no more difficult than fixing the Y2K problem in all the world's computers. The work involved in those areas alone would do wonders for the profits of flag manufacturers and computer programmers, who are already overworked, but enjoying the windfall from Y2K.

On the upside, the plan would end the Two-Maine dispute right quick. And we just might get rid of the quadrennial hoopla over New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation presidential primary election. But we'd have to live in the same state with all those political cranks in New Hampshire. Between sharing a state with them and Boston's drivers, it might not be too long before we all decided to move to a safer and saner place. Say Minnesota, which just elected the former wrestler Jesse (The Body) Ventura as governor.

Please, New England Board of Higher Education, tell us you were just kidding. Up here it seems like only yesterday that we got our independence from Massachusetts. Now you want us to give it back?

—*Lincoln News*, Feb. 11, 1999 (Note: *Lincoln, Maine, is located approximately 50 miles north of Bangor. The editorial was written by Doug Kneeland.*)

## ONE MERE GOVERNOR IS NOT ENOUGH FOR ALL NEW ENGLAND

**I**t has been 179 years since Maine freed itself of the ignominy of being a territory of Massachusetts. Since then, this state has produced many fine leaders: Govs: Joshua Chamberlain and Edmund Muskie, to name just two.

We left Massachusetts for a reason.

Now, the group of scalawags known as the New England Board of Higher Education has floated the idea of electing one Governor of New England to encourage regional cooperation. The board didn't really mean it—members just wanted to get people thinking how New England should move into the next millennium.

Still, whom could we elect?

Robert Frost, one of the few people who actually could speak for all New Englanders, is dead. With the exception of Ted Kennedy, all the region's professional wrestlers are busy wrestling. This madness must end.

If it does not, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana might form a powerful confederation based on geography and assonance, leaving the renegade Idaho alone in its I-ness and angrier than ever.

Texas—already enormous—might unite. Anyone who could be elected governor of such a giant could easily go from there to the White House.

No, New England does not need a supergovernor. The next step might be a superlegislature. Think of how much trouble *that* would be.

—*Portland Press-Herald*, Feb. 19, 1999



# PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## *The Growing Divide*

*Erika Kates*

When the New England Board of Higher Education convened educators, business leaders and others in Boston last fall to discuss workforce development, a worsening skilled labor shortage hung over the proceedings. Speaker after speaker described how economic prosperity and low unemployment were making it increasingly difficult to find good employees. A Connecticut economist asked: “What do you do if you’re running out of people?” He then rattled off a set of possibilities: Hire college students. Hire less skilled, unemployed workers (enabling those already in the labor force to move up a rung). Import trained workers from other states and abroad.

One source of potential employees that was not mentioned was the large number of adults (95 percent of them women) who received public assistance for their families and who, because of recent welfare reform legislation, were entering the workforce in large numbers. Making this link would be timely and relevant for both employers and low-income mothers. Yet the very same welfare reform policies severely restrict access to education and training. There is a *disconnect* between a) economic trends that indicate education and training levels of workers should be raised and b) public assistance policies that have greatly reduced access to education and training for hundreds of thousands of women who are entering the workforce.

This disconnect is likely to have serious negative consequences for low-income families, local communities and

states. Such consequences are already evident in New England. Although the number of families receiving cash benefits has declined dramatically in all six New England states, the figures do not indicate success. Many of these families are off public assistance not because they found jobs, but because they are no longer eligible for benefits under welfare reform. Moreover, for those who *do* find work, job retention is problematic, and the majority of families who leave public assistance continue to live in poverty.

Most disturbingly, anecdotal evidence suggests that even as New England wrestles with a skilled labor shortage, women who are willing to invest in their future are being steered away from education. One woman was cut off the rolls six weeks before completing a nurse’s training program and denied an extension of benefits. A Latina woman who cannot read at the eighth-grade level was told by a caseworker to take a job as a housekeeper at minimum wage instead of taking English-as-a-Second-Language and GED classes.

The new welfare policies and attendant rules affecting access to education and training vary considerably among the six New England states. How might these policies be improved? How might they be brought into synchronicity?

### EXPLORING THE DIVIDE

The primary explanation for the divide between public assistance policies and workforce development ideals is the change in federal law embodied in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, which transformed public assistance in important ways.

First, PRWORA eliminated the “safety net” of cash assistance for needy families by imposing a five-year lifetime limit on cash benefits. This shift is reflected in the name

**TABLE I. DECLINE IN NUMBERS OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS**

	NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS			% DECLINE
	1993	1996	1997	1993-97
Connecticut	160,000	159,000	152,000	-8%
Maine	68,000	54,000	44,000	-39%
Massachusetts	332,000	220,000	194,000	-44%
New Hampshire	29,000	23,000	17,000	-47%
Rhode Island	61,000	56,000	54,000	-11%
Vermont	28,961	24,270	21,817	-8%

Source: Children's Defense Fund.

change from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) to *Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)*.

Second, PRWORA changed the landscape of “welfare-to-work” whereby adult recipients are required to work in either a job or community service in order to receive cash benefits for their families. Work requirements began at 20 hours a week, increased to 25 hours in 1999 and will increase to 30 hours in 2000. The last time a welfare-to-work effort was introduced—the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) initiative of 1988—it was universally accepted that access to education should be part of the work requirement. But the newer policy, driven by a “Work First” philosophy, strictly limits such access. The new mantra of public assistance administrators is that “any job is a good job.” As a result, the idea of investing in human capital through education and training has been abandoned.

The policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, which is responsible for allocating most welfare-to-work funds, further compound the problem. These funds (\$3 billion over three years) are designated for recipients who are identified as “hard to employ.” But the Labor Department specifically disallows funding for the education and training of participants *prior* to entering the workforce. The focus is on short-term training (28 days or less) and immediate job placement. Furthermore, new employees are expected to continue programs in English language proficiency, literacy and basic education *while* employed.

Backers of PRWORA implied that modifications to administrative and oversight structures (such as employment services and regional employment boards) would result in a seamless transition to a new model. Notably, the new policies presuppose effective cooperation between numerous education and training programs and employers despite a generally poor record of such collaboration historically. The policies also depend on effective collaboration with practitioners and institutions in other policy areas such as child care and transportation, since new workers must be able to get to

where the jobs are and to feel comfortable that their children are in a safe environment while they are working.

These trends in combination have had a ripple effect on state policies. Though states were encouraged to try innovative approaches and to apply to the Department of Health and Human Services for waivers to federal policy, most state waivers were crafted to accommodate the Work First mentality behind PRWORA. About 40 states, including five New England states, were granted waivers. Rhode Island’s application was denied, so it will revert to federal policy by default.

### TIME LIMITS AND WORK REQUIREMENTS

Three New England states—Maine, New Hampshire and, by default, Rhode Island—adopted cash benefit time limits of 60 months over a lifetime. Connecticut adopted a limit of 21 months within a 60-month period; Massachusetts settled on 24 months within a 60-month period. Vermont has not imposed time limits.

The date at which the time limits begin—that is, when the “countdown” starts—is usually determined by the age of the youngest child. In Connecticut and Maine, this occurs when the youngest child of record reaches one year of age. In Massachusetts, the countdown starts when the youngest child of record reaches two. Children of record are those for whom the AFDC/TANF benefits were originally intended; children born later are excluded.

Long-term exemptions are granted to families where the head of household or a family member is disabled. Temporary exemptions are granted in most states to homeless families and those who have experienced domestic violence. Most states follow the federal guideline of limiting exemptions to time limits and work requirements to 20 percent of the overall caseload.

All states allow extensions of benefits, but the grounds for extension and number granted varies. Connecticut grants unlimited extensions. Massachusetts allows limited extensions if job searches are fruitless or if new jobs pay less than the

**TABLE 2** STATE POLICIES ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

		Extensions
Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and training reserved for those who fail to find jobs after structured job search.</li> </ul>	Yes
Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completing basic education is a priority.</li> <li>• Parents as Scholars stipends (state funds) for all low-income adults.</li> <li>• 20 hours of school includes study time.</li> <li>• After two years, students must combine education with 20 hours of community service or job.</li> <li>• Parents must be allowed to participate if it is unlikely they can achieve a job paying 85 percent of state’s median income without more education.</li> </ul>	Yes
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Grandfathered” adult recipients before January 1995.</li> <li>• When children are over age 6 in conjunction with 20 hour work requirement.</li> </ul>	No
New Hampshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All participants must be assessed within 72 hours of eligibility.</li> <li>• Self-initiated in education programs have a six-month “grace period” before engaging in job search.</li> </ul>	Yes
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and training for 24 months regardless of children’s ages.</li> </ul>	N/A
Vermont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No work requirements for 30 months; participation in education and training; study time is included.</li> </ul>	N/A

Source: State administrators and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

TANF rate plus \$90. New Hampshire allows temporary exemptions for a wide range of conditions that impede employability such as depression, illness and housing problems.

Again, families with very young children also are exempted temporarily from work requirements. But once they lose an exemption, they are required to find jobs or community service placements almost immediately, for example, within 60 days.

New Hampshire and Vermont, however, have established different guidelines. In New Hampshire, mothers are required to participate in 26 weeks of job search (which need not be consecutive) followed by 26 weeks of employment. Vermont provides single parents with 30 months before time limits begin to count (15 months for two-parent households) regardless of the age of the youngest child.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

States formulate specific education and training policies to fit their time limits and work requirements. State policies toward education and training vary considerably. Perhaps the most serious obstacle to participation in education and training is the fact that such activities no longer count toward the work requirements. Generally speaking, parents who enroll in substantive courses must do 20 additional hours of work activi-

ties. Mothers with temporary exemptions (because of the age of their youngest child) are among the rare exceptions to the rule. Although the secretary of Health and Human Services has indicated that these additional work activities may include work-study, independent projects and internships, this opportunity is often neither recognized nor implemented.

A second major obstacle is that Massachusetts, Connecticut and, to a lesser extent, New Hampshire, take pride in the Work First philosophy and make concerted efforts to limit access to education and training. Connecticut permits education and training primarily when the search for work has failed. Massachusetts law permits mothers who are temporarily exempt to participate in education and training. But caseworkers often discourage eligible women from enrolling in substantive courses, citing the relatively short time before their benefits are cut off and suggesting that mothers “save” their benefits by finding work immediately.

Obstacles to education and training may not take the form of blanket denials. For example, families are permitted child care and other resources to help them participate in education programs only if mothers have fulfilled their work requirements, which means combining classes with 20 to 25 hours of work, not counting time spent parenting. Apart from time pressures,

the logistics of scarce child care and inadequate transportation frequently make this combination of activities virtually impossible without the help of a second adult in the home.

The effects of relatively short time limits in Connecticut and Massachusetts are compounded by resource shortages. In some urban areas of Massachusetts, literacy programs have waiting lists up to two years, making it nearly impossible for recipients to complete these programs before their two-year time limits are up. Yet these are critical programs for the estimated 40 percent of adult recipients of public assistance who need classes in English-as-a-Second-Language or preparation for the GED, to say nothing of the other 60 percent who are prepared to pursue more advanced education and training. In addition, Massachusetts regulations prohibit granting child care vouchers for children whose mothers attend four-year colleges.

The impact of welfare reform on community-based training programs and educational institutions is profound. The 15 community colleges of Massachusetts saw enrollment of mothers receiving family benefits drop by 50 percent on average between 1994 and 1997.

Another serious obstacle in some states is the lack of early assessment of family circumstances and mothers' education and employment experience. In New Hampshire, detailed

assessments are required within 72 hours of becoming eligible for benefits. But in Connecticut, assessments occur only when the search for work has failed.

## BRIGHT SPOTS

To be sure, some states—particularly, Maine, Rhode Island and Vermont—have made serious efforts to mitigate some barriers to education and training.

Maine has made it a priority for adult recipients to receive a basic level of education before entering the workforce and has granted extensions to allow this to happen. Moreover, students who enroll in an education program by their own choice, rather than under orders from a caseworker, are allowed a six-month grace period before having to comply with work requirements.

In addition, the federal government provides the states with maintenance-of-effort funds based on the size of their former AFDC caseloads; the decline in caseloads means states can accumulate the funds and spend them on related purposes. The Maine Legislature passed a provision allowing these maintenance-of-effort funds to support stipends for low-income people (not only welfare recipients) to participate in substantive education and training, including postsecondary education, for up to two years. After two years, education may be continued in con-

junction with community service and employment. Maine's "Parents as Scholars" program has attracted nationwide interest.

Though a Work First state, Vermont has retained aspects of education-friendly policies. Indeed, personnel from several state agencies meet regularly to ensure smooth transitions between public and private, basic and postsecondary education programs. Result: "People are staying in school," says Nancy Bolt, a counselor who is paid through public assistance funding to help low-income women attending postsecondary programs. Vermont provides incentives for those who remain off public assistance for 12 months by "crediting" them with six months worth of added benefits should they need them. The key concern in the rural state

**Good Timing?** Economists have observed that welfare-to-work horror stories might be more prevalent had the controversial welfare reform legislation's timing not been so fortuitous.

As it happens, the New England economy was riding high, producing lots of work. Even so, a recent study by the Heller Graduate School at Brandeis University found that one-sixth of the Massachusetts residents pushed off the welfare rolls said they or someone they lived with had gone without food for a day or more during the previous months, and one-fifth reported their health care was worse than it was when they were receiving public assistance.

A 1998 study by the John W. McCormack Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston found that about 40 percent of former welfare recipients in Massachusetts were moved off the welfare rolls not because they found good jobs, but because of administrative sanctions for such offenses as missed appointments.

**Perverse Incentives.** The welfare reform law discouraged welfare recipients from pursuing a postsecondary education. The U.S. Senate this year is expected to reconsider legislation it rejected last year to allow welfare recipients to spend two full years in college or training without having to work at the same time. Maine is already one of the nation's most progressive states on this count. About 1,000 Maine residents moving from welfare to work enrolled in the UMaine System last year under a state program that allows recipients to attend college without sacrificing benefits.

**Work Training?** New England community colleges are involved in a variety of federally funded welfare-to-work initiatives. The Community College of Rhode Island, Southern Maine Technical College and Capitol, Manchester and Tunxis Community-Technical colleges in Connecticut are participating in a \$5 million U.S. Department of Labor program that places welfare recipients in jobs and issues them a "Career Transcript" documenting their skills. Under another Labor Department initiative, Gateway Community-Technical College in Connecticut and nine others nationally aim to train welfare recipients for "high-demand" jobs such as home care worker and building maintenance. Some observers worry, however, that the transcript programs are no match for certificate or degree programs in boosting earnings capability.

is transportation; efforts are underway to establish special car loan programs and to locate cars that can be repaired by volunteers.

Because Rhode Island came under federal guidelines by default relatively late in the process (1997), the state still has a large number of recipients attending educational programs under the old JOBS guidelines, which recognized the importance of education and training in welfare-to-work. Now in Rhode Island, education and training are permissible for 24 months, regardless of children's ages.

## PLANNING AND COLLABORATION

Despite—or maybe because of—the complexity and confusion that arise from major policy shifts in several public policy domains from labor to child care to public assistance, there is some good news. Administrators from several states, particularly Maine, Rhode Island and Vermont, report an extraordinary amount of discussion and collaboration among these domains and a sense of urgency regarding comprehensive planning.

Rhode Island has taken notable steps to foster interagency collaboration in welfare reform. A statewide implementation task force meets every two weeks, and subcommittees meet every week to discuss specific issues of transition as they arise and to make recommendations accordingly. Participants include representatives of human services, health care, child welfare and public assistance agencies, as well as advocacy groups, academics and recipients themselves. "We are bringing all players to the table in ways not done for a long time," noted one Rhode Island official. The government in Providence has also set up regional boards to oversee the transition.

With a long tradition of cooperation among state agencies, Vermont established a welfare reform advisory group that includes housing agencies, low-income people and advocates. Together, they have worked out a system to address specific concerns without violating the confidentiality of the low-income families involved.

A key to bridging the divide between public assistance and workforce development is to bring employers into these discussions so they too may understand and prepare for the sea change in the workplace. Studies show that many employers are reluctant to accept public funds to provide employment and training, and that even with funding, they are not usually willing to provide *basic education* to their employees. Most are completely unprepared to deal with the specific concerns of single parents who, unlike other workers, are restricted in their ability to stay behind after normal work hours or on weekends for education and training, because they have no one else to pick up children from child care, attend school meetings, prepare meals and supervise home-

work. In addition, their ability to keep a job may depend on whether an employer is flexible enough to let them take a few minutes to see a child safely onto a school bus.

## LESSONS

A few steps would help make sure that current welfare policies permit the education and training that is vital to meaningful and productive jobs. States should:

- Ensure that employment plans include adequate assessment of skills, experience, employment background and family needs.
- Encourage women to take advantage of the time allotted under the policies to accumulate education and training experience and credits.
- Set minimum educational standards for entering the workplace, thereby alleviating stress on employers, educational institutions and families.
- Use maintenance-of-effort and education funds to funnel resources to *all* low-income adults who wish to improve their education.

- Make concerted efforts to improve access to child care and transportation.
- Discuss expectations of work performance and how to handle sick days, personal days and educational leave with mothers and employers.
- Change current state laws that inhibit education/training access and promulgate laws and regulations that count education and training as work.
- Address the lack of organized and consistent data on participants in education and training programs, including retention rates, performance and results.

If we wish to encourage access to education and training, we can choose from several strategies. First, we can work within the constraints of current laws by ensuring that regulations and practices do not undermine access that is theoretically available; clearly, for example, caseworkers should allow women to choose education and training programs if they are eligible. Second, we can develop plans to maximize the use of existing resources such as community colleges. Third, we can modify and change the laws. Fourth, we can foster active col-

laboration between sectors and bring new players to the table.

Unfortunately, these conversations are not taking place to the extent they should on the local or state levels and certainly not on the regional level. Such discussion could result in a more effective New England labor force and a more family-friendly workforce—not just for the very poor, but for all workers.

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# BOOKS

## The Life of an MIT President

David C. Knapp

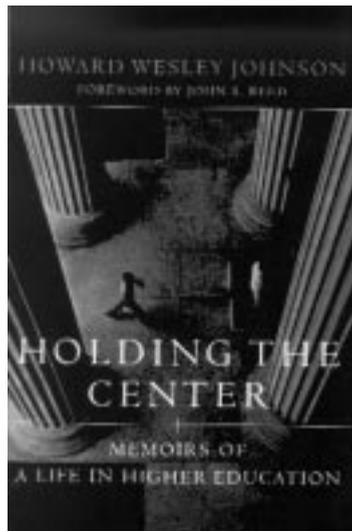
*Holding the Center: Memoirs of a Life in Higher Education, Howard Wesley Johnson, The MIT Press, 1999, \$34.95*

It's hard to say who will enjoy Howard Wesley Johnson's memoirs more, old hands in higher education who are interested in the good and not-so-good times that the 12th president of MIT lived through, or aspiring academic leaders for whom his four-page coda, "A Note for Students of Leadership," should be mandatory reading.

*Holding the Center* is the engaging tale of a man, an academic institution and leadership in both practice and theory. It is also a 20th century classic: the story of a talented young man growing up in a South Chicago steelworkers neighborhood, working his way through the former Central College (now Roosevelt University) in the late 1930s and 40s, going to war, taking advantage of the GI Bill at war's end, embarking on an academic path from the University of Chicago to MIT, then rising to positions of leadership at one of the nation's elite universities, as well as the presidency of that most Brahmin of Boston institutions, the Museum of Fine Arts.

Johnson arrived at MIT from the University of Chicago in 1955 to head the executive development program at the newly established School of Industrial Management, later to gain fame as the Sloan School of Management. Johnson soon received tenure, became associate dean, and then dean from 1959 to 1966.

As dean, Johnson contributed mightily to what former MIT dean Vannevar Bush had described as the university's "habit of success."



In tune with the broader transformation then underway at MIT, he led a process of phenomenal change—in curriculum, faculty hiring policies, international education, facility building and fundraising. By 1965, the Sloan School, with its emphasis on operations research and organizational behavior, had catapulted to the forefront of American business schools.

So too had the reputation of MIT faculties in the humanities and the social, physical and biological sciences. By the time Johnson assumed the presidency in 1966, MIT was leapfrogging over many older, elite universities into the very front ranks of the nation's major research institutions.

Johnson's life in higher education came with a hair's breadth of being something else. In the summer of 1965, with the selection process for a new MIT president underway (the front-runner being an individual with whom Johnson had not been entirely congenial), Johnson concluded that the time was ripe for moving from advising business executives to being one himself. He accepted

an offer to become executive vice president of Federated Department Stores in Cincinnati, effective Dec. 31, 1965.

Throughout the fall of 1965, the Johnsons prepared to move. Old New England residences were sold; a new Ohio one purchased. Farewell events were scheduled. In Cambridge, however, two meetings of the MIT Corporation, the university's governing body, came and went without the naming of a new president. In December, a group of corporation members called on the departing dean to tell him that his name had been put forward for the presidency. Two days before his Sloan faculty farewell party, Johnson received a call from the corporation chair James Killian and was asked ("with zeal," Killian reports in his memoirs) whether he would accept the presidency if elected. Soon thereafter, Johnson, never even a "dark horse," according to *Science* magazine, became MIT's 12th president.

The book's title refers to the events that swept across U.S. campuses during the tumultuous period from 1966 to 1971. Johnson rightly notes in his preface that "little has been written about these events on other campuses by those with organizational responsibility" and expresses the hope that his memoirs may provide insight into such situations. In this, he succeeds admirably.

Here is a vivid personal account of both campus turbulence and cultural change. The MIT experience, complete with occupation of campus buildings, demonstrations, contingency meetings and personal threats, has a familiar ring for one who experienced the times in another setting. So do the efforts to provide leadership to an able cadre of administrative and faculty leaders on issues of civil rights, equal opportunity and curricular change in a day-to-day atmosphere of crisis management. To an unusual degree, MIT leaders shaped—

and the institution benefited from—national research and development policies throughout World War II and the Cold War, adding complexity to the antiwar turmoil on this particular campus. Yet all in all, MIT and Johnson acquitted themselves better than many institutions during those turbulent times.

After leaving the presidency, Johnson spent 12 active years as chair of the MIT Corporation, to my knowledge, the only full-time chairmanship of a higher education governing board. He also served for five of those years as president of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, overseeing a period of growth and increasing openness.

Howard Johnson's memoirs are a tale of the American Dream come alive. Yet he recounts his academic career modestly, presenting the reader with a straightforward record of accomplishments, frustrations and turbulence. Johnson describes MIT's incredibly strong alumni network in industry, government and academia in the United States and abroad. He also connects readers to his family, his friendships—some sustained over many years—and his colleagues, without resorting to name-dropping.

Moreover, Johnson, while not himself a scholar, understood the academic enterprise and the people who comprise it. His years as president and corpora-

tion chair have left a profound mark on MIT. Long after the turmoil of the 1960s, MIT, more than many other universities, takes institutional issues seriously, addresses problems and finds and implements solutions. Witness, for example, the university's recent candor in assessing the status of women at MIT—an issue on which Johnson took pioneering steps.

*Holding the Center*  is more than a recounting of a professional life in academe. It is a full story of a man's life, recounted with grace and warmth.

**David C. Knapp** is president-emeritus of the University of Massachusetts and chair of the New England Board of Higher Education.

## Cyber-Libraries

Alan R. Earls

*Civic Space/Cyberspace: The American Public Library in the Information Age*, Redmond Kathleen Molz and Phyllis Dain, MIT Press, 1999, \$30

With the explosive proliferation of the Internet in this decade, the public library has faced an unexpected though perhaps not unwelcome challenge to its mission as the primary purveyor of "information" to the broad public outside academia. In *Civic Space/Cyberspace*, authors Redmond Kathleen Molz and Phyllis Dain, both of Columbia University, trace the chain of events that brought us the public library of today and offer observations relative to the institution's place in the era of the Internet.

Too bad the focus and content of *Civic Space/Cyberspace* do not fulfill the title's apparent promise of prescriptions for the future; only in the book's closing sections do Molz and Dain offer a glimpse of the road ahead.

*Civic Space/Cyberspace* does provide a concise, coherent and readable account of the growth of American public libraries from the 19th century to the present, with some special attention to the influence of technology. And the story features a number of New England regional characters eminent in the early development of libraries. Consider the ever-prescient MIT dean Vannevar Bush predicting in the July 1945 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* that future scholars would be equipped with a device he dubbed the Memex, which would instantly connect them with the information they needed.



The ubiquitous modem-equipped personal computer comes stunningly close to this vision.

But the major skein in *Civic Space/Cyberspace* is the argument over what a library ought to be and whom it should serve.

Molz and Dain note that the library achieved its familiar modern form in the 19th century under the influence of bourgeois values, with just a touch of populism thrown in. The library's stated ideology was usually highly democratic. But while the common touch has become ever more apparent—large collections of popular fiction and video tapes, for example—libraries still serve an elite audience, mainly the educated and the comparatively well off.

This mismatch between democratic ideals and elitist reality has produced a number of movements over the years intended to revitalize or refocus libraries, particularly toward the needs of the inner city and underserved minorities. Many

of these efforts were accelerated from the 1960s through the 1980s as traditional middle-class patrons moved to the suburbs, forcing the nation's major municipal libraries to rebuild their political support and redefine their function.

Now come the challenges of the Information Age. The most daunting is the question of what role librarians should play in providing patron access to and/or censorship of the Internet. The issue of censorship has invaded libraries before, most notably during the 1950s. But with virtually unlimited and ever-changing content available universally over the Internet, at virtually no cost, control of library content is now at best little more than a futile political gesture. Still, such gestures can gain support as librarians and others discovered with the passage of the short-lived Communications Decency Act of 1996. And there are continued local attempts to have content, for children at least, filtered by librarians.

Much of the book focuses on possible incremental changes in future library operations that new technology may permit—and relies, logically, on the presumption that individuals will continue to be "bandwidth-limited" in the future—a scenario that is hard to credit given the enormous strides being made monthly in this area of technology.

*Civic Space/Cyberspace* may not provide a futurist's look at tomorrow's libraries. But Molz and Dain have succeeded in providing an excellent primer on the social, political and economic forces shaping the public library—no matter how rapidly technology evolves.

**Alan R. Earls** is a writer based in Franklin, Mass.

**CAMBRIDGE, MASS.** — Harvard University was awarded a five-year, \$2.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation to launch the Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality & Social Policy. The program for Harvard doctoral candidates in economics, government, sociology and public policy, focuses on: work and wages; neighborhoods and spatial segregation; family structure and parental roles; immigration, race and labor market segregation; and access to education. The dozen or so Ph.D. candidates admitted to the program participate in seminars as well as a national fellows program and research apprenticeships, and receive stipend support. Program participants also lead a week-long summer institute designed to introduce minority and economically disadvantaged undergraduates to the field of inequality and social policy.

**WARWICK, R.I.** — The Rhode Island-based New England Institute of Technology won approval from the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education to offer an on-site bachelor's program in electronics engineering for employees of EMC Corp. in Franklin, Mass. The program, offered to approved employees on a part-time basis over 13 academic quarters, is covered through tuition reimbursement.

**BOSTON, MASS.** — Boston University's School of Management began offering an on-site master's in business administration program for employees of Thomson Financial Services in South Boston. The MBA program is offered on a part-time basis over 29 months. Students are required to take their last 16 credits at BU's main campus. The customized curriculum incorporates an intensive week-long leadership seminar as well as Thomson case studies and guest speakers from the company, which provides information services to banks and other financial institutions. The program is covered through tuition reimbursement.

**DANVERS, MASS.** — North Shore Community College was awarded a one-year, \$544,214 grant by the Massachusetts Corporation for Business, Work and Learning to help retrain workers who lost their jobs when Osram Sylvania closed its Danvers plant last year. During the winter, 125 of the 500 workers who lost their jobs were working with community college instructors to prepare for new jobs or enroll in college programs.

**MEDFORD, MASS.** — Tufts University's School of Medicine introduced a master's degree program in pain research, education and policy, which will begin enrolling students in fall 1999. Program organizers expect applicants to include doctors, nurses, dentists, physical and occupational therapists, pharmacologists, psychologists and other health care providers.

**MIDDLEBURY, VT.** — Middlebury College received \$8 million from the Starr Foundation to support Middlebury Schools Abroad, a 50-year-old college program that includes schools in France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Russia. The largest foundation grant in Middlebury's history will allow the college to support the existing network of overseas schools and consider new locations in Asia and Latin America.

**KINGSTON, R.I.** — The University of Rhode Island's College of Engineering was awarded nearly \$12 million over six years by the U.S. Department of Transportation to establish the URI Transportation Research Center. The federal support must be matched with funds from the state and other partners. Recent federal legislation creates 23 new university transportation centers nationwide to add to the 10 existing regional centers. In addition to conducting research, the URI center will help develop a master's degree program in transportation management and a transportation-related associate degree program to be offered through the Community College of Rhode Island.

**BOSTON, MASS.** — Boston College was awarded a five-year, \$5.25 million grant by the federal Social Security Administration to establish a center for research on retirement. The Boston College Center for Retirement Research is headed by BC professor Alicia H. Munnell, a former member of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors. The center plans to conduct research on issues ranging from investment of the Social Security trust fund in the stock market to trends in work and retirement.

**WALTHAM, MASS.** — Brandeis University was awarded a three-year, \$750,000 grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to close an apparent gender gap in retirement preparation that leaves many women indigent in their old age. The new Program in Women's

Education for Retirement will conduct research, education and policy analysis on women in retirement. In a separate development, the Brandeis-based National Center on Women & Aging, one of the program's sponsors, was awarded \$98,888 by the research arm of the American Association of Retired Persons, to develop a World Wide Web site on aging and personal finance.

**LONGMEADOW, MASS.** — Bay Path College received a Cambridge, Mass.-based travel school as a gift from a key figure in the travel industry. Linda Paresky, co-founder of Crimson Travel and later co-chair of Thomas Cook Travel USA, established the Travel Education Center in 1975. With satellites in Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire, the center became the largest travel school in the country and began offering the only accredited travel training program over the Internet. Bay Path, meanwhile, has offered travel and hospitality programs for more than two decades and recently became the first New England women's college to offer a bachelor's program in information technology.

**STORRS, CONN.** — The University of Connecticut's School of Business Administration was awarded a \$1.4 million grant from Science Applications International Corp., a defense contractor, to provide MBA-level courses to the Defense Department's non-military senior managers. The grant supports design, development and delivery of five two-week courses to be offered twice over a one-year period.

**WORCESTER, MASS.** — The UMass Cancer Center at the University of Massachusetts Medical School received \$2.2 million in stocks and securities from David Proctor of Pepperell, Mass., the sole trustee of the Eleanor Eustis Farrington Trust. The gift will establish two endowment funds. One will support the Our Danny Cancer Fund, which provides grants to innovative cancer researchers at the center. The other will create an endowed chair in cancer research, named for Farrington, who was the heir to a Maine potato fortune.

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** — Brown University was awarded \$1.2 million by the U.S. Department of Education to prepare 15 Southeast Asians for Rhode Island teaching jobs during the next five years. The grant funds workshops, financial aid,

technology instruction, mentors and job placement services for aspiring Southeast Asian teachers. Though an estimated 18,000 Southeast Asians live in Rhode Island, few teach in schools.

**NEWTON, MASS.** — Aquinas College introduced a joint admissions program that guarantees Aquinas graduates admission into bachelor's degree programs at Paxton, Mass.-based Anna Maria College. In addition, Anna Maria College agreed to offer upper-level bachelor's and graduate programs in criminal justice and business administration at the Aquinas campuses in Newton and Milton, Mass.

**MEDFORD, MASS.** — Tufts University philosopher Norman Daniels received a \$250,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to conduct health policy research. Daniels, who has studied the role of private employers in rationing health care, will use some of the grant to write a book on limit-setting in managed care and to develop a matrix for evaluating health care reform proposals in developing countries. Daniels is one of eight researchers nationally to win the foundation's Investigator Award in Health Policy Research.

**BOSTON, MASS.** — Boston University was awarded \$3.4 million by the Whitaker Foundation to support a new cardiovascular imaging center, which will be housed in the BioSquare II research facility near BU's School of Medicine in Boston's South End. The grant will fund space for the center, help purchase state-of-the-art heart imaging equipment and enable recruitment of an expert in cardiovascular imaging.

**WELLESLEY, MASS.** — Wellesley College announced it would boost financial aid funds next academic year by about 13 percent, increasing annual grant aid by an average of \$2,000 for each eligible student. College officials say the increase will allow Wellesley to continue its policy of admitting students regardless of financial need and meeting 100 percent of students' demonstrated need. Wellesley's comprehensive fee—covering tuition, room and board and other fees—will rise by 3.5 percent to \$30,554 in academic year 1999-2000.

**PORTLAND, MAINE** — The University of Southern Maine unveiled Maine's first bachelor's degree program in environmental safety and health to prepare students for careers in workplace safety. USM officials say Maine

companies in industries such as construction, forest products and manufacturing have strong demand for specialists who are able to address risk management, air quality, hazardous materials and safety in the workplace.

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** — Johnson & Wales University announced plans to offer a new bachelor's degree program in Web management and Internet commerce and an associate degree program in Web site development, beginning in September 1999. University officials say the programs will provide graduates with the technical ability to create and maintain World Wide Web sites as well as the business sense to use the Internet as a marketing and communications tool.

**BURLINGTON, VT.** — Champlain College announced it would begin offering a single new two- and four-year degree program in Web site development and management, beginning in fall 1999. Students in the program will earn an associate degree in Web site development and management after the first two years and a bachelor's in either computer information systems or professional studies after two more years of study and internship experiences with New England Web service firms.

**FALL RIVER, MASS.** — The Bristol Community College Foundation was awarded a four-year, \$200,000 grant by the Jaffe Foundation of Stockbridge, Mass., to endow a five-week, summer institute designed to bolster the math, reading and writing skills of disadvantaged students before they enroll in college. The free institute, which begins in the summer of 1999, also includes seminars in time management and study skills. The foundation was created by the late Meyer Jaffe, founder of J&J Corrugated Box of Fall River.

**RUTLAND, VT.** — The College of St. Joseph received \$50,000 from the A.D. Henderson Foundation to support its Classroom Teacher Technology Mentoring Project. The project, also supported by the Bell Atlantic Foundation, will train College of St. Joseph faculty and student teachers to use educational software and explore integration of technologies into the K-12 curriculum. The funds also provide student teachers with laptop computers to use in the field.

**BRISTOL, R.I.** — Roger Williams University announced it would offer its first master's degree program, beginning in September 1999.

The graduate program in criminal justice will enable full- and part-time students to specialize in either criminology or justice system management. The university already offers bachelor's degrees in criminal justice and paralegal studies and operates a Justice System Training Institute to provide pre-service and in-service training for law enforcement officials.

**STORRS, CONN.** — The University of Connecticut and the African National Congress formed a partnership to make UConn the official North American depository for materials related to the ANC's struggle for human rights in South Africa. In addition, UConn and South Africa's University of Fort Hare agreed to exchange faculty, staff and students, conduct an annual conference on comparative human rights and co-publish a semi-annual journal on comparative human rights.

**NORTH ADAMS, MASS.** — Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts teamed up with General Dynamics Defense Systems in nearby Pittsfield to develop an office of lifelong learning on the grounds of the high-tech engineering and software development company. Staff from MCLA, formerly North Adams State College, will subcontract with instructors nationwide to offer credit and noncredit courses throughout the year via conventional and distance learning.

**CASTINE, MAINE** — Maine Maritime Academy canceled the training vessel State of Maine's scheduled summer visit to Piraeus, Greece, due to fighting in the Balkans. Nearly 200 academy students seeking officer's licenses as third mates or third assistant engineers take part in the training ship's annual two-month training cruise to foreign and domestic ports-of-call.

**DURHAM, N.H.** — Solar researchers at the University of New Hampshire's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans and Space were awarded a three-year, \$1.2 million grant from NASA's Sun-Earth Connections Theory Program. The UNH Solar Terrestrial Theory Group is one of just three nationally that has been funded continually since the NASA program began in 1980.

**SMITHFIELD, R.I.** — Bryant College and the New England Patriots signed a three-year contract extension to keep the NFL football team's summer training camp in Smithfield, where it has been based since 1976. During camp, Bryant also hosts Patriots Experience, an interactive football theme park.

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