



NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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The Case for Competency-Based Education: A New Age of Teaching and Learning?

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Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

Speaker and Panelist Biographies

David A. Bergeron



David A. Bergeron is vice president for postsecondary education at the Center for American Progress and former acting assistant secretary for postsecondary education at the U.S. Department of Education.

At the department, Bergeron acted as the education secretary's chief advisor on higher education issues and administered more than 60 grant and loan programs that provide nearly \$3 billion annually to institutions of higher education and community-based organizations.

He also served as deputy assistant secretary for policy, planning and innovation for the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE). The OPE supports higher education programs through financial support to eligible institutions, recruits and prepares disadvantaged students for successful completion of college, promotes the study of foreign languages and international affairs, and supports international educational research and exchange activities. Notable among its programs are the eight TRIO programs, institutional development programs for minority institutions, teacher-development programs and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. OPE runs the Byrd, Fulbright, Javits and McNair programs and certifies all regional and national accreditation agencies, so they, in turn, may qualify institutions to receive federal financial aid including Pell Grants.

Bergeron has led key policy groups working on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, researched market-based approaches to loan subsidies under the guaranteed loan programs, and developed program regulations and other policy guidelines. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science and sociology from the University of Rhode Island.

Barbara Brittingham



Barbara Brittingham is president of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) at the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), where she has worked since 2000. The commission accredits 240 colleges and universities in the six New England states and nine in other countries.

Brittingham was the founding dean of the College of Education at Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates, and worked in Ankara, Turkey, while on a World Bank project. She was dean of the College of Human Science and Services at the University of Rhode Island, where she also served as interim dean of University Libraries, director of the Curriculum Research and Development Center, and professor of education. Currently she serves on the Committee on Recognition for the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as well as on the board of Quality and Qualifications Ireland and the Quality Council in Iceland.

She has served on the boards of six national accreditation organizations and has worked with ministries and universities in more than 25 countries, sponsored by the Fulbright Commission, the U.S. State Department, the World Bank and local governments and universities.

Philip DiSalvio



Philip DiSalvio is founding dean of the College of Advancing and Professional Studies at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

With over 25 years of experience in academic leadership and scholarship, DiSalvio speaks and writes extensively on the structural changes transforming higher education, issues in academic leadership and disruptive innovation.

Recent publications include his "New Directions in Higher Education" interview series with higher education thought leaders and articles on the shifting higher ed landscapes in *The New England Journal of Higher Education (NEJHE)*; "UMass Boston: Reconstituting a Continuing Education

Division to a Degree Granting Academic Unit," in the *Continuing Higher Education Review*; and "Harvard Online: Paradigm Shift, or Business as Usual?" in *University Business*.

DiSalvio holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts Boston, a master's from Northeastern University, a doctorate from Harvard University Graduate School of Education, and a postdoctoral Robert Wood Johnson Faculty Fellowship in Health Policy and Management from Johns Hopkins University.

John F. Ebersole



John F. Ebersole is president of Excelsior College in Albany, N.Y., one of the oldest accredited, private, nonprofit distance education institutions in the country.

In his 25-year career in higher education, Ebersole's personal experience as a post-traditional student has formed his approach to adult education. He has held teaching and management positions at John F. Kennedy University and Boston University, as well as management positions at Colorado State University and the University of California, Berkeley. He developed the "Berkeley Worldwide" international education program; the Colorado State University "CSUN" Network for Learning; and Boston University's "BU Global."

A retired Coast Guard commander and Vietnam War veteran, Ebersole began his college education while in the military. In addition to being a graduate of the Naval War College, he earned a doctorate in law and policy from Northeastern University; an education specialist degree from The George Washington University; and master's degrees in both business and public administration from John F. Kennedy University. He has served as a senior fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, where he conducted research into innovation in higher education.

Ebersole chairs the American Association of Community Colleges' Corporate Council. He is a former board member of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities of New York. In 2014, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the United States Distance Learning Association. A former president of the University Professional and Continuing Education Association, Ebersole is co-author (with William Patrick) of *Courageous Learning: Finding A New Path Through Higher Education* (Hudson Whitman Press, 2011).

Paul Fain



Paul Fain is senior reporter with *Inside Higher Ed*, where he covers community colleges, for-profit institutions and emerging models of higher education.

From 2004 to 2011, he was a senior reporter with *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, where he wrote broadly about college leaders, finance and governance.

Fain has contributed chapters to two edited volumes on innovation in higher education, published by the Harvard University Press and the Stanford University Press.

Before joining *The Chronicle*, Fain reported for *C-VILLE Weekly*, a newspaper in Charlottesville, Va. He has also written for *The New York Times*, *Philadelphia City Paper*, *Washington City Paper* and *Mother Jones*. Fain's writing has won numerous awards, including the 2008 Dick Schaap Excellence in Sports Journalism Award and a 2006 second-place prize for beat reporting from the Education Writers Association.

Roxanne Gonzales



Roxanne Gonzales is president at Granite State College, a public institution which has the mission to provide access to higher education for adults in New Hampshire.

Gonzales has worked in adult education and training for more than 30 years in the U.S., England and Germany, serving as an administrator and faculty member in continuing higher education programs focused on adult learners, military education and training and federally funded programs that serve first-generation and low-income learners.

Prior to joining Granite State, she held various administrative positions in continuing higher education and TRIO programs, including serving as: academic dean of the College for Professional Studies at Regis University; dean of distance learning and a tenured associate professor of adult education at Park University; assistant professor of adult education at Colorado State University; director of education and training at Hanscom Air Force Base in Massachusetts; program coordinator of prior-learning assessment at Granite State College; and guidance counselor at Bitburg Air Base in Germany.

She publishes and presents nationally on topics such as adult learning, military and veteran-education environments, online learning environments, assessment of learning, and alternative programming for adult learners. Among board affiliations, she has served on the New Hampshire Governor's Commission for Latino Affairs and is past president of the Association for Continuing Higher Education. She was co-founder of the Park Warrior Center at Park University, serving wounded veterans.

Gonzales holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Maryland University College, a master's in counseling from Creighton University and a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Massachusetts Boston.

Christopher Hopey



Christopher E. Hopey became president of Merrimack College on July 2010.

During his first year, he engaged the college community in a collaborative strategic planning process to help the comprehensive Catholic college chart a clear vision for the future. The outcome was Merrimack's strategic plan, offering a renewed focus on faculty, students and enrollment. This past fall, the college welcomed its largest-ever freshmen class and has added more than 30 faculty members who are focused on continuing academic innovation and maintaining a distinctive educational experience for students.

Under Hopey's leadership, Merrimack has been ranked among the top 10 Best Regional Colleges-North three years in a row by *U.S. News and World Report*, a Best Northeastern College by the *Princeton Review*, a Top College by *Forbes* and one of the "Great Colleges to Work For" by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Recently, the college built the new Student Residences Project, a 348-bed residence village and a new fitness center; completed the Merrimack Athletics Complex expansion project, as well as introducing additional study-abroad opportunities and greater access to on-campus resources.

Before joining Merrimack, Hopey was vice president and dean for the College of Professional Studies at Northeastern University, and before that, vice dean at the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania.

He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Northeastern University and a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania.

Howard E. Horton



Howard E. Horton is president of New England College of Business (NECB).

Since beginning his tenure in 2006, Horton has guided NECB toward a highly affordable tuition model where undergraduate and graduate degree programs are delivered to employees of several-hundred corporate partners in a 100% online format.

In 2014, NECB was cited as the most affordable private college in New England by the U.S. Department of Education and was also awarded the Gold Medal for Best Practices by the United States Distance Learning Association.

Prior to his tenure at NECB, Horton served as president of Bay State College and, before that, president of New England Institute of Art (known as Massachusetts Communications College during most of his tenure). Before entering higher education, Horton was a practicing attorney with Foley Hoag and also served under former Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis as executive director of the Massachusetts Cable Television Division. He began his professional career as a news producer and editor at WBUR-FM and WGBH-FM.

Horton holds a bachelor's degree from Antioch College, a master's from Boston University and a law degree from Suffolk University.

Sally M. Johnstone



Sally M. Johnstone is vice president for academic advancement at the Western Governors University, an online competency-based education (CBE) institution. She is currently working with colleges across the U.S. assisting them in developing their own CBE programs.

Prior to joining WGU, Johnstone was the provost and vice president for academic affairs at Winona State University in Minnesota. She also spent almost two decades as the executive director of WCET at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

Johnstone continues to work on issues of higher education policy, quality assurance, CBE and open and distance learning. She serves on the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, the editorial boards for *Change* magazine and the *Journal of Open Learning* (UK). She has written dozens of articles, books, and reports on issues of integrating information and communication technology into academics.

Johnstone holds a doctorate in experimental psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Alison Kadlec



Alison Kadlec leads the design and implementation of Public Agenda's higher education and workforce development research and engagement work. She and her team have worked with dozens of colleges and universities across the country to support the capacity of institutional leaders and faculty at every level to effectively engage members of their communities as constructive partners on behalf of student success.

Kadlec and her team also work with the U.S. Department of Education, state policymakers and system leaders in more than half the states in the U.S. to help improve the quality of policy development and implementation around higher education and workforce issues. She leads the work on competency-based education at Public Agenda, which includes design, facilitation and project management for the Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN).

Before joining Public Agenda in 2005, Kadlec was a visiting professor in the political science department at Macalester College and an adjunct professor in the political science departments at the University of Minnesota, Baruch College and Hunter College. She is the author of a book on the democratic theory of John Dewey, *Dewey's Critical Pragmatism* and of articles on subjects related to stakeholder engagement and public deliberation both within and outside of higher education.

Cathrael Kazin



Kate Kazin is chief academic officer for the College for America (CfA) at Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), an innovative, online, low-cost, competency-based program for underserved working adults.

She created the CfA competency-based model and continues to oversee all aspects of curriculum and assessment development. CfA was the first entirely competency-based program to be approved by its regional accreditor, NEASC, and the first program to be approved under the "direct assessment" provision of Title IV by the U.S. Department of Education.

Kazin went to SNHU from Educational Testing Service, where, as executive director for the Higher Education Division, she led efforts to develop next-generation assessments for 21st century skills.

Kazin holds a bachelor's degree in English from Smith College and a doctorate in English from Cornell University. She was a faculty member in the University of Iowa English Department. She is also an attorney specializing in civil rights and higher education law. She earned a law degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and was an editor of the *Law Review*. After working at the law firm of Hogan and Hartson (now Hogan Lovells), she joined the U.S. Department of Labor, where she served both as an attorney and as a speechwriter to Secretary of Labor Robert Reich.

James Kennedy



James Kennedy teaches online MBA classes at the University of Maryland, University College (UMUC) on subjects such as Ethical Leadership in Organizations and Society, The Manager in Organizations and Society, and Marketing and Strategy Management in the Global Marketplace.

UMUC has long been involved in competency-based education (CBE) and in the past two years has embarked on a radical transformation of the entire curriculum, which appears likely to result in a range of CBE models, including hybrid models which continue to involve professors following traditional “teaching” in online and on-ground classrooms, even if the “professing” is more likely to involve the Socratic dialogue and flipped-classrooms approach than lectures. He serves on UMUC’s Faculty Advisory Council and on the Executive Committee for the University Advisory Council.

Growing up in an “Army” family, Kennedy served as a “muddy boots” lawyer in the JAG Corps, where he advised leaders on challenging legal and leadership issues. He has spent time advising CEOs and executive directors, serving on profit and nonprofit boards of directors, and advising political leaders, including a presidential transition team. He first began teaching at the university level as an undergraduate student, and continued, teaching law to soldiers and leaders, business subjects to undergraduate and graduate students, and business executives around the world.

Prior to his UMUC work, Kennedy developed curriculum and taught on-ground courses at major European business schools in classes of five to 100 or more students from around the world, a wide range of subjects, including: comparative leadership and management, advanced multinational strategic management, international investments and international business management. He also taught international business management at the Rutgers Business School.

He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Hawaii, an MBA from New York University Stern School of Business and a law degree from Southern Methodist University.

Scott Kinney



Scott Kinney was named president of Capella University in January 2012.

He is passionate about the opportunity for innovation in higher education to deliver on the country's need for a higher-skilled workforce, while improving access, affordability and completion.

Prior to joining Capella, Kinney held leadership roles at Thomson Reuters, including president of West Education Group and president of FindLaw. He began his career as a software engineer with two financial services software firms, and later joined The Boston Consulting Group, holding managerial positions in Boston, Chicago and Melbourne, Australia. He joined the online financial services company BigCharts in 1998 as COO/CFO and, after its sale to CBS MarketWatch, ran the online content and technology business for five years as executive vice president of licensing.

Kinney holds a bachelor's degree in geology from Dartmouth College and an MBA from Stanford University.

Becky Klein-Collins



Becky Klein-Collins is associate vice president of research and policy development for the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), overseeing the organization's research in topics related to higher education innovations, prior learning assessment, competency-based education, mature learners, student veterans, workforce development and lifelong learning.

In addition to her research activities, Klein-Collins assists in developing new approaches for policy change at both the federal and state levels, she speaks regularly to national audiences on topics related to adult learners, and she is the author of numerous articles and policy papers for CAEL.

Ed Klonoski



In February 2008, Ed Klonoski was named president of Charter Oak State College. The college, created by the Connecticut Legislature in 1973, assists adult learners in achieving their educational goals. Charter Oak's academic program is offered online to 4,000 students across Connecticut and the nation, with approximately 500 new bachelor's degrees conferred each year.

Previously, Klonoski was president of the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC), a collaborative effort by 50 Connecticut institutions of learning to deliver high-quality, web-based education. From course management system applications to pedagogy, student services and institutional research, Klonoski facilitated the consortium's online innovations. In 2004, the CTDLC received a Higher Education Excellence Award from the New England Board of Higher

Education.

Klonoski currently chairs the President's Forum, a collaboration of accredited, national, adult-serving institutions and programs that have embraced the power and potential of online education, and chairs the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education, a collaboration of the public and private higher education institutions in the Greater Hartford area.

Klonoski holds degrees from the University of Connecticut and the University of Hartford.

John LaBrie



John LaBrie is dean of Northeastern University's College of Professional Studies and vice president for professional education.

He leads one of the country's largest colleges of professional studies, offering qualified returning students and working adults the opportunity to pursue bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. His responsibilities include oversight of Northeastern University (NU) Global, a unique group of international and U.S.-based programs for international students to study at the university's undergraduate and graduate levels. Additionally, LaBrie oversees Northeastern University Online, which offers online undergraduate and graduate degree programs. He joined the Northeastern faculty in 2009 as a senior fellow teaching in the Doctorate of Education Program, and continues to supervise the dissertations of doctoral candidates.

Prior to joining the college, LaBrie served as dean of continuing studies at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, BC, where he led the largest continuing education university program in western Canada. His professional leadership roles include terms as the national president and executive director of the North American Association of Summer Sessions, the nation's largest professional association for directors and deans of summer and special session programs. He also has served on accreditation review teams in Canada, and has conducted program and management reviews of continuing education programs in the United States.

Himself an adult learner, LaBrie earned a bachelor's degree in French part-time from the University of Maine at Fort Kent. He then went on to earn a master's in management from Saint Michael's College and a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania.

Amy Laitinen



Amy Laitinen is deputy director for higher education at the New America Foundation.

Laitinen previously served as a policy advisor to the undersecretary and assistant secretary for vocational and adult education at the U.S. Department of Education. In that post, she was responsible for developing policy and budget proposals for postsecondary and workforce education, including the \$12 billion American Graduation Initiative and what became the state-focused Race to the Top for College Affordability proposal. She also served as a policy advisor at the White House on community college issues and helped plan the White House Community College Summit.

Prior to joining New America, Laitinen served as a senior policy analyst at the nonpartisan think tank Education Sector. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* named her one of its top 10 innovators of 2013 for her work on competency-based education. Her current work focuses on federal policies to increase quality and transparency in higher education.

Laitinen is the product of public higher education, holding an associate degree from Miami-Dade Community College, a

Paul LeBlanc



Paul J. LeBlanc is president of Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU).

Under 10 years of his leadership, SNHU has more than quadrupled in size and is the largest provider of online higher education in New England, one of the five largest in the country, and the first to have a full competency-based degree program untethered to the credit hour or classes approved by a regional accreditor and the U.S. Department of Education.

In 2012, the university was #12 on *Fast Company* magazine's "World's Fifty Most Innovative Companies" list and was the only university included. LeBlanc won a New England Higher Education Excellence Award in 2012 and had repeatedly been named one of "New Hampshire's Most Influential People" by *New Hampshire Business Review*. In 2012, *Forbes Magazine* listed him as one of its 15 "Classroom Revolutionaries," he was featured on Bloomberg TV's "Innovators" series, and *Fast Company* included him in its "1000 Most Creative People" list.

LeBlanc immigrated to the United States as a child, was the first person in his extended family to attend college. He holds a bachelor's degree from Framingham State University, a master's from Boston College and a doctorate from the University of Massachusetts. Before becoming president of SNHU in 2003, LeBlanc directed a technology startup for Houghton Mifflin Publishing Company from 1993 to 1996, and was president of Marlboro College from 1996 to 2003.

Nick Lee



Nick Lee serves as a senior program officer for the U.S. Program-Policy and Advocacy team at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In this role, he is responsible for making grants focusing on federal postsecondary policy issues including financial aid, data and innovation and leading work on the Postsecondary Success team to surface new ways of structuring financial aid supports and processes to better serve low-income students.

Lee joined the foundation from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) where he spent more than five years formulating and implementing student aid policies for the George W. Bush and Obama administrations, specifically in regard to the federal government's annual \$180 billion investment in the Pell Grant and student loan programs.

Prior to OMB, Lee served at the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Senate with a focus on postsecondary education and social policy issues.

He holds a bachelor's degree in economics and international relations from Boston University and a master's in public administration from The George Washington University.

Charla Long



Charla Long is dean of the College of Professional Studies at Lipscomb University. In this role, she is responsible for designing three to four new academic graduate and undergraduate programs each year in response to time-sensitive workplace development needs; accountable for growing the college to 1,000 students and \$10 million in revenue in five years; and provides leadership for various academic offerings.

Long serves on the academic leadership team setting the academic vision for the entire university, and builds, develops and inspires a team of individuals to achieve college objectives. She founded The School of TransformAging and was selected by Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam to chair the Governor’s Task Force on Aging. As chair, she authored a strategic plan, drawing on the public, private and nonprofit sectors to better meet the needs of older Tennesseans and their families.

An attorney and civil mediator, Long was named “Woman of Influence” for Innovation by the *Nashville Business Journal* in its inaugural class of award recipients. Her recent design of the competency-based program at Lipscomb reflects her innovation in action.

Robert Lytle



Robert Lytle is a member of Parthenon’s Education Practice. For more than 15 years, he has led client engagements on general strategy, performance improvement and investment due diligence across a broad spectrum of education organizations. His clients include high-growth companies, publicly listed Global 100 companies, nonprofit institutions, financial investors and international governments.

Lytle has participated in numerous high-profile corporate turnarounds, mergers, divestitures, and privatizations in Europe, North America, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia.

Prior to joining Parthenon, he was with Bain & Company and served as a U.S. Army aviator.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from the Wharton School of Business and an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth.

Michael K. J. Milligan



Michael K.J. Milligan is executive director of ABET, a nonprofit organization that accredits 3,300 applied science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology college and university programs, in 24 countries.

Prior to joining ABET, Milligan worked for the Aerospace Corporation developing a new generation environmental satellite for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). He also served 24 years as a career U.S. Air Force officer working in the areas of operations, international research & development, and technology acquisition.

He served six years as an associate professor and deputy department head in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado.

Milligan holds a bachelor’s degree from Michigan State University, a master’s from the University of Massachusetts Lowell and a doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin— all in electrical engineering. He also holds an MBA from Western New England College and is a Certified Association Executive and senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Holly Morris



As director of postsecondary model development and adoption, Holly Morris is responsible for the management of the Breakthrough Models Academy and the Breakthrough Models Incubator, two programs offered by EDUCAUSE through its Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) initiative, which is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The incubator (for C-suite leadership teams) and the academy (for current and emerging individual leaders) are designed to promote the design and implementation of new models to advance affordability, access, quality and completion.

Prior to joining NGLC, she worked in the Center for Leadership and Professional Development at the University of Washington School of Law.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University, a master's in education policy from the University of Washington and a law degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

Michael J. Offerman



Michael Offerman is dean of continuing education at the University of Wisconsin-Extension where he created the University of Wisconsin Learning Innovations Center that developed, delivered and supported online degree programs for all 15 University of Wisconsin institutions.

In 2001, he moved to Capella University, a for-profit online university with over 80% of its enrollments at the graduate level. During his presidency, Capella University developed its award-winning learning outcomes assessment model. From 2008 until September 2011, he served as chancellor of Capella University, where he worked on external university initiatives, including government affairs, regulatory affairs and public relations.

Offerman held previous positions at the University of Arizona and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. He currently consults on the use of academic metrics and competency-based learning for clients including Educause and Lumina Foundation.

Iris Palmer



Iris Palmer is a senior policy analyst focused on postsecondary issues at the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices.

At NGA, she works on the *America Works* initiative with a focus on connecting education and the workforce. She also focuses on policies supporting competency-based education from K-12 education to industry-recognized credentials to higher education academic programs. She provides state policymakers with technical assistance on using data from effectiveness and efficiency metrics in higher education and working on a demonstration project around licensure for veterans.

Prior to joining NGA, Palmer worked at HCM Strategists on the Lumina Foundation's initiative to develop innovative higher education models, including new technologies and competency-based approaches. She also provided policy expertise and thought leadership to the Education Commission of the States as part of its efforts to increase college completion rates and ensure that high school graduates are poised for postsecondary educational success. Before joining HCM Strategists, she worked at the U.S. Department of Education in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, the Office of Postsecondary Education, the Policy Office and the Office of the Undersecretary.

Palmer holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Goucher College and a master's in public policy from George Mason University.

Ray Rice



Ray Rice has served as the chair of arts and sciences at the University of Maine at Presque Isle for the past four years, where he is a professor of English.

His teaching areas include Renaissance drama, literary theory, the English novel and philosophy.

He has been involved with asynchronous and blended teaching modalities since 1999 and has been an advocate for open higher education access his entire career.

Carol Geary Schneider



Carol Geary Schneider is president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

With more than 1,300 member institutions, half public and half private and members drawn from the entire higher education community, large, small, two-year, four-year, selective and open admissions, AAC&U is the leading national organization devoted to advancing and strengthening undergraduate liberal education.

Under her leadership, AAC&U launched Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP), a public advocacy and campus action initiative designed to engage students and the public with what really matters in a college education for the twenty-first century. The LEAP campaign builds on

AAC&U's major effort, Greater Expectations: The Commitment to Quality as a Nation Goes to College, a multiyear initiative designed to articulate the aims of a 21st century liberal education and to identify comprehensive, innovative models that improve learning for all undergraduate students. Additionally, under her leadership, AAC&U has become widely recognized as both a voice and force for strengthening the quality of student learning in college for all students and especially those historically underserved in U.S. higher education.

While a vice president at AAC&U in the 1990s, Schneider headed a major initiative at AAC&U on higher education and U.S. pluralism, American Commitments: Diversity, Democracy and Liberal Learning. She has published extensively on all the major areas of her educational work and has taught at the University of Chicago, DePaul University, Chicago State University and Boston University.

Schneider holds a bachelor's degree in history from Mount Holyoke College, studied at the University of London's Institute for Historical Research and holds a doctorate in history from Harvard University.

Linda Schott



Linda Schott is the 11th president of the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

Schott is a specialist in intellectual history and the history of women in the U.S. She has published several articles on women in Texas and in the peace movement and is also the author of *Reconstructing Women's Thoughts: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1941*, published by Stanford University Press in 1997.

She began her teaching career in her native Texas working first at Texas State University, then at Texas Lutheran University, and then at the University of Texas at San Antonio where she was an assistant and associate professor of history and American Studies as well as director of the Center for the Study of Women and Gender.

In 2003, Schott moved to Eastern Michigan University, where she rose to associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. In 2008, she began serving as dean of the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at Fort Lewis College in Colorado.

Schott holds a bachelor's degree in history and German from Baylor University, a master's in history and a doctorate in history and humanities from Stanford University.

David Soo



David Soo is a senior policy advisor in the Office of the Under Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education. His work focuses on a broad array of higher education policy issues, with a particular focus on areas of academic quality and innovation. He also provides leadership to the department on financial capability for young Americans.

Soo joined the department as a Presidential Management Fellow in 2011.

He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Boston College and a doctorate in higher education from the University of Pennsylvania.

Pamela Tate



Since becoming president and CEO of the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL) in 1990, Pamela Tate has become nationally and internationally recognized for her work within the higher education, public, and private sectors to make it easier for adults to get the education and training they need to succeed and to remain employable.

Tate is also known for helping colleges and universities develop prior learning assessment programs and improve the quality of their services for working learners. She has worked with employers on tuition assistance policy, implementation of career and educational advising for employees, and exemplary practices in employee learning and development.

She has led CAEL in the development of projects that unite business, government, labor and postsecondary education to address workforce skill shortages, resulting in industry-sponsored degree and certificate programs online, industry-wide career pathways programs, and regional lifelong learning and talent development initiatives.

She currently serves on the Excelsior College Board of Trustees and is a member of the Commission on Quality Assurance and Alternative Higher Education, formed in 2013 by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Tate holds master's degrees in both English and journalism from the University of Illinois at Champaign and completed her doctoral coursework at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications.

Michael K. Thomas



Michael K. Thomas is president and chief executive officer of the New England Board of Higher Education.

Thomas joined NEBHE in 2002 and served as both senior director and senior vice president, directing NEBHE's policy, research and programmatic activities. Thomas has worked in corporate training and human resources and held varied administrative positions in higher education institutions, both public and independent, including as executive assistant to the president at Lesley University.

He has been a faculty member, adjunct professor and lecturer at several universities and served as trustee and vice chair of the board of Worcester State University.

Thomas holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Brigham Young University and master's degrees in higher education from Teachers College, Columbia University and Harvard University. He holds an MBA from Boston University and a doctorate in education and social policy from Harvard University.

Carol Vallone



Carol Vallone joined Educate Online in 2012 and is a seasoned technology executive with over 30 years experience in market-leading companies.

Prior to Educate Online, she served as chair, president and CEO of Wimba Corp., a global leader in virtual collaboration software for higher education. Vallone led the company until its acquisition in 2010.

Vallone also founded WebCT Inc. in 1999, a company that defined and delivered the premier e-learning solution for education. As chair, president and CEO, she built a higher education global customer base in 70 countries, and sold the company in 2006.

Prior to her pioneering efforts in education, Vallone held several executive level positions with companies breaking ground in the corporate technology sector, including, UCCEL, Software Arts and Honeywell Information Systems.

Vallone currently serves on the chairs the Ventures Committee at McLean Hospital, a major teaching facility of Harvard Medical School that is world renowned for its research in neuroscience and psychiatric clinical services. For more than 10 years, she served on the board of the Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council. As Education Foundation Chair, she spearheaded an effort to rewrite the Massachusetts Department of Education's Instructional Technology Standards with a focus on integrating technology into the curriculum. In 2013 she was named to Partner's HealthCare Innovation Advisory Board.

Vallone also served as a member of the National School-to-Work Advisory Council during the Clinton administration, where she worked with the U.S. secretaries of Labor and Education to integrate school and career activities. Internet, and for the Distance Learning and the Future of the Research University hearing.

In 2000, she was named one of the most influential women in science and technology by Women in Technology International (WITI). In 2002, Mass High Tech named her to their annual list of "Top Ten People to Watch" and she was honored by the Massachusetts eComm Association when they selected her as one of the year's Mass eComm 10. Vallone was named "Entrepreneur of the Year" by Broadstreet Capital and the Merrimack Valley Venture Forum in 2006.