New England Initiatives Aim to Break Down Barriers to College

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EDITOR’S MEMO

I will come as a surprise to nobody that local television news producers are more intrigued by crime stories than education stories, to say nothing of higher education stories. The national Consortium of Local Television Surveys reports that crime and criminal justice accounted for 23 percent of local television news from January 1999 to May 1999, while education accounted for a meager 5 percent. What if higher education were to attain the dependable newsworthiness of a good felony? What might we hear some 11 p.m.?

Good evening and thank you for joining us. We begin tonight with mixed news on college admissions. Freshman applications to New England colleges as of the traditional May 1 deadline rose by 5 percent from spring 1999 to spring 2000, and by 7 percent the year before, according to a survey by the New England Board of Higher Education. But the modest uptick comes too late for Bradford College in Haverhill, Mass., which enrolled about 600 students before closing its doors for good in May. And New England’s total college enrollment dropped steadily during the 1990s from a peak of more than $27,000 in 1992 to about 795,000 in 1997. Jeff?

Wow, Karen, that’s a lot of Bradfords. In a related story, nearly 80 percent of the 2,000 students admitted to Harvard’s Class of 2004 chose to enroll, resulting in the highest admissions “yield” of any selective U.S. college and leading to a fair amount of gloating in Cambridge. Back to you, Karen ...

That’s fascinating Jeff, but what about that other 20 percent? Who are those 400 or so students who say thanks, but no thanks, to the world’s most famous institution of higher education?

Don’t know. But it all reminds me of a Gordon College magazine sent here a few years back with a story headlined, “Why I Chose Gordon over Yale.” Well, Karen, new at 11, Lesley College has signed a transfer articulation agreement with Urban College of Boston, a two-year institution distinguished by the fact that it was established by an anti-poverty agency, Action for Boston Community Development. The agreement provides access to Lesley’s bachelor’s programs for Urban College grads, most of whom are inner-city minorities, immigrants or otherwise nontraditional students.

“Nontraditional.” That means they’re not white 18-to-22-year-olds, right Jeff?

Er, I guess so, Karen. In other news, new rules require students applying for federal student aid to reveal whether they’ve ever been convicted of a drug-related offense. As for more affluent students, they can just say they just said no. Karen?

OK, Jeff. “Moses is coming and he’s packing heat.” That’s the word tonight from Brandeis University students greeting National Rifle Association President Charlton Heston. Jeff?

In tonight’s special feature, author Jonathan Kozol notes that teachers in the South Bronx “want to find the treasures that exist already in those children, and they know they cannot do this if they are forced to march the kids in lockstep to the ‘next’ objective or, God help us, the next ‘benchmark,’ so that they’ll be ready—and God help us, please, a little more—to pass the next examination.” Karen?

Strong stuff.

Yeah, strong stuff.

And finally, Jeff, research by a University of Massachusetts Amherst professor reveals that only about one-quarter of U.S. engineering schools require all undergraduates to take a course in the ethics of engineering. No word on how many ethicists take courses in engineering.

That’s the news. Goodnight.

John O. Harney is executive editor of Connection.
Tuition Update
The tuition story is supposed to be good news these days. For each of the past five years, Massachusetts has cut or frozen tuition for state residents attending public colleges. Maine’s technical colleges are headed into the second year of a tuition freeze. And New England’s high-priced private institutions are talking up their smallest increases in decades. Total charges for tuition, fees and room and board at both Harvard and Yale, for example, will rise by 2.9 percent to $33,110 and $32,880, respectively in academic year 2000-01—the smallest increases since 1968.

But New England colleges and universities continue to charge far more than their counterparts in other regions. New England’s public four-year institutions charged state residents $4,472 in average tuition and mandatory fees in 1999-2000, compared with a national figure of $3,356, according to a New England Board of Higher Education analysis of College Board data. The region’s four-year private institutions, meanwhile, charged students $17,330 in average tuition and mandatory fees in 1999-2000, compared with a national figure of $15,380.

Since 1990-91 academic year, average tuition and fees have risen by $1,700 at New England’s four-year public campuses and by about $6,000 at the region’s four-year private institutions.

Books not Bombs
Talk about peace dividends. A former Strategic Air Command bunker near Amherst, Mass., has new post-Cold War life as a depository for books and journals.

Constructed partly beneath the Holyoke Mountain range, the temperature in the 40,000 square-foot facility remains constant between 50 and 55 degrees—ideal for library materials.

Amherst College bought the facility for $510,000 in 1992 and has been using much of it to meet its own storage needs. Earlier this year, the Five Colleges Inc. consortium received $1.1 million from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to lease some of the unused space and create a depository for the collections of its members, Amherst as well as Hampshire, Smith and Mount Holyoke colleges and the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

The depository is a sign of the times in another way: instead of worrying about how many volumes are in their individual libraries, consortium members are focusing on easy access to materials. The Mellon grant funds development of a Web-based database of “finding aids” to improve access to the archives and special collections and to link them to the

Deflating the Test
Citing “a shifting legal landscape around race-based admissions,” the University of Massachusetts in January unveiled a new undergraduate admissions policy that de-emphasizes standardized test scores, but assigns applicants points for various qualities including achievements and honors, ability to contribute to the diversity of the campus and, most of all, high school grade point averages (GPAs). The new system takes effect with applicants for fall 2000 admissions.

Critics have long charged that standardized tests discriminate against minorities. In 1999, white college-bound seniors scored an average of 1055 on the combined SATs, while African-Americans scored 856 and Latinos 927.

A federal court ruling banning affirmative action at Texas universities and a California state policy barring consideration of race in graduate admissions at public campuses have prompted higher education administrators nationally to modify race-based admissions policies and, in many cases, de-emphasize SAT scores.

In Texas, for example, admissions of African-Americans and Latinos dropped sharply until the state instituted a policy waiving test scores for applicants with grades in the top 10 percent of their high school classes. At the graduate level, where test scores continue to hold sway, minority enrollments remain lower than they were before the landmark court case.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights recently called the strategies “regressive” and poor substitutes for affirmative action.

How the UMass Point System Works
UMass admissions officials will divide applicants into three groups based on their GPAs and SAT scores. Most of the top group will be offered admission; most of the bottom group will be rejected. The middle group will be judged based on a new point system that does not take SAT scores into account. One UMass official said five points would probably earn a student admission...

Weighted high school GPA
Maximum 7.5 points for 3.4 GPA

Massachusetts Residency
Achievement
Diversity
(7.5)
(1.0)
(1.0)
(1.0)
(1.0)
Virtually Speaking

The digitization of higher education is picking up speed:

- Washington, D.C.-based Smarthinking in February began offering online tutoring to college students at 15 pilot institutions. The program links distance learning and commuter students in real time to graduate students, community college faculty and high school teachers who serve as online tutors known as “estructors.” The program is slated to go national in fall 2000 with tutoring available 24 hours a day.
- E-Curriculum of Berkeley, Calif., and Eduprise of Research Triangle Park, N.C., entered into a partnership to provide services that measure the effectiveness of online education programs, including learning outcomes, student acceptance and financial results. E-Curriculum’s coursemetric.com compiles student and instructor feedback anonymously in real-time and provides immediate access to results in the form of reports.
- Sallie Mae introduced wired-scholar.com, billing the new Internet site as “a comprehensive ‘going to college’ resource” to help students and families plan for college, estimate costs and, in line with Sallie Mae’s bottom line, apply for student loans.

- Michael Saylor, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate who made billions in the software industry, pledged $100 million to create an online university that would use videotapes of expert lecturers to offer an “Ivy League-quality” education free to students.
- The Southern Regional Education Board began developing a special electronic tuition rate for students taking online courses. The online rate is expected to be higher than state residents pay for courses on campus, but less than out-of-state students pay.
- In New England, the for-profit University of Phoenix, which combines satellite campus operations with a significant distance learning component, won approval from Massachusetts regulators to offer programs in the Bay State. Expect Harcourt Higher Education and Pearson Distributed Learning to be among other big distance learning providers ready to penetrate the ivy-covered world of New England higher education.

Two to Four

Dean College has been around for 135 years, but next fall, the up-to-now two-year college in Franklin, Mass., will do something completely different: offer a bachelor’s degree program in dance, its first-ever four-year program. At the same time, New Economy boosters in western Massachusetts say the area urgently needs bachelor’s level programs in the hot fields of photonics and laser optics. Perfect fit for the powerhouse engineering department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, right? Not so fast. The new program appears destined for the mostly two-year Springfield Technical Community College.

Since World War II, the number of strictly two-year private institutions in the United States has sunk from more than 300 to fewer than 90, says Massachusetts higher education consultant James Samels. Some have gone out of business and some have merged with other institutions. Others like Endicott, Bay Path and Mount Ida in Massachusetts have become, in effect, four-year institutions.

The trade newspaper Community College Week, however, says it’s too hard for two-year colleges to add four-year programs (“They are told their faculty don’t have the creden-

### College Towns

What makes a town with a college a college town? Researchers at the University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs pored over telephone directories for a handful of Illinois college towns such as Carbondale and a handful of non-college towns such as Waukegan to see what effect colleges have on the types of businesses that operate in a community.

<table>
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<th>Number of Businesses per 50,000 Residents, 1999</th>
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<td>Stage theaters</td>
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<td>Movie theaters</td>
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tials necessary to prepare baccalaureate coursework. Or they are told their library isn’t big enough.”) and too easy for four-year institutions to introduce two-year programs (“Few higher education experts question if university faculty are qualified to teach associate coursework, let alone the unique student population two-year programs often attract.”)

A Community College Week analysis of U.S. Department of Education data indicates that 25 New England four-year colleges now offer two-year degrees. Why? “Some are running scared because of enrollment pressures,” says Samels. “They are trying to cater to the two-year market, but in most cases, they can’t do it as well as the two-year institutions.”

Debt Relief
The New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation’s low default rate is paying off for Granite State college students.

Under federal law, state guaranty agencies can add a 1 percent fee to federal Stafford and PLUS (parent) loans to fund default-reduction efforts. Because New Hampshire’s default rate is so low, the agency’s trustees in January voted to eliminate the fee for the second year in a row, resulting in a two-year savings of $3 million.

The foundation says a student who takes advantage of the fee waiver, combined with discounts for on-time and automated loan repayments, could save more than $1,000 over the life of a $10,000 loan.

Snippets
“The quality of the faculty members at [my daughter’s] institution is irrelevant, since they are not teaching her. With adjuncts offering 20 percent of the courses at private colleges, 30 percent at state colleges and 40 percent at two-year community colleges, the bulk of her first two years will be spent with these not-ready-for-tenure-track players (just like her Dad). So, I ask you, what the hell am I paying for?”

—Dennis N. Ricci, adjunct professor of political science and history at Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester, Mass., in a letter to the editor of The Chronicle of Higher Education.

“The predatory actions of other institutions are increasing, and we must do everything we can to make departure from this faculty unthinkable.”

—Harvard Dean Jeremy R. Knowles, in his annual letter to the faculty of arts and sciences, outlining initiatives to retain senior faculty.

* * * * *

“In the public’s mind, higher education is much like health care. Many Americans are impressed by the miracles of modern medicine; what worries them is that it may be inaccessible to them.”

—John Immerwahr, senior research fellow at Public Agenda and associate vice president for academic affairs at Villanova University, writing in National Crosstalk, the quarterly publication of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

Pomp and Circumstance
Ah, spring in New England. Red Sox raise hopes, forsythia explode in color then fade, mortarboards fly—and the famous and not-so-famous dispense advice to graduating seniors. A sampling of New England’s spring 2000 commencement speakers:

President Clinton, U.S. Coast Guard Academy
Former President George Bush, Saint Anselm College
Former President of Poland Lech Walesa, Middlebury College
Economist Amartya K. Sen, Harvard University
Former U.S. Senate Majority Leader and peacemaker George J. Mitchell, Williams College and Merrimack College
Law Professor Anita F. Hill, Simmons College
U.S. Sen. Patrick J. Lealy, Saint Michael’s College
Actor Bill Cosby, Tufts University
Biologist and environmentalist Edward O. Wilson, Connecticut College
Writer Tom Wolfe, Boston University
Former tennis star and activist Billie Jean King, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Vermont Human Services Secretary Cornelius D. Hogan, University of Vermont
Gallaudet University President I. King Jordan, Northern Essex Community College
Writer George Plimpton, Hampshire College
Former National Institutes of Health Director Harold Varmus, Wesleyan University
Syndicated columnist Mark Shields, Quinnipiac College
Former Ford Motor Co. President Edsel B. Ford II and Priceline.com CFO Heidi G. Miller, Babson College
Former Boston Celtic basketball star Bob Cousy, Becker College
Fishing boat captain and author Linda Greenlaw, Maine Maritime Academy

High-Tech Crimes
Following is a sampling of items reported stolen to the Harvard University Police Department for the week of March 12:

- 4 laptops
- 1 Palm Pilot
- 1 cellular phone
- 1 Walkman

8 NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
**Comings and Goings**

Sheila E. Blumstein, the language expert who chaired Brown University’s Department of Cognitive and Linguistic Sciences, was named interim president of Brown, succeeding E. Gordon Gee who left the university in April 2000 to become chancellor of Vanderbilt University in Tennessee after just two years in Providence. ... University of Southern Oregon President Stephen J. Reno was named chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire, replacing William J. Farrell who announced his retirement after eight years as chancellor. ... University of Pennsylvania historian Drew Gilpin Faust was named the first dean of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, the entity created by last year’s merger of Harvard and Radcliffe. ... Former Democratic U.S. Sen. David Pryor of Arkansas was appointed director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government, succeeding former Republican U.S. Sen. Alan K. Simpson. ... James H. Breece, a policy analyst with the University of Maine System, became interim president of the University of Maine at Machias, succeeding Paul E. Nordstrom who retired at the end of 1999. ... Marylin Newell, former vice president and academic dean at Mid-State College in Maine, became president of Andover College, succeeding Brenda Berry who will become registrar of the two-year proprietary college in Portland after 13 years as president. ... Edward J. Liston announced he would retire as president of the Community College of Rhode Island in June 2000 after more than 20 years at the helm of New England’s largest two-year college. ... Debra W. Stewart, vice chancellor and dean of the Graduate School at North Carolina State University, was named president of the national Council of Graduate Schools, replacing Jules B. LaPidus who will retire after 16 years as president. ... Allen P. Splete announced he would retire as president of the national Council of Independent Colleges in June 2000 after 14 years in charge.

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**OFFICE OF THE CLERK—U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PAGE RESIDENCE HALL PROCTOR**

Proctors have primary responsibility for supervising House Pages -- approximately 72 high school juniors who come to the House to attend the Page School and work. Proctors are scheduled for active duty shifts some weekday evenings, some weekends and during special Page events. The Proctor is responsible for monitoring the Page Residence Hall, supervising Page activities, responding to emergencies, enforcing rules, providing office coverage, etc. All Proctors must reside in the Page Residence Hall, a non-smoking, pet-free environment, and serve as adult role models and adult supervisors for a wing which houses about 18 Pages. The Page Residence Hall is currently in need of two Proctors on the girls wings.

Requirements include a bachelor’s degree, experience supervising students, experience in residential living, an availability for evening and weekend work, and a demonstrated interest in providing services to youth. This position is safety sensitive and subject to random drug testing. Candidate must work well under pressure, handle stress appropriately, and be competent in the operation of IBM-PC compatibles, multi-tasked, and detail oriented. The Office of the Clerk is an Equal Opportunity/Reasonable Accommodation Employer. This position provides an excellent benefits package and a starting salary up to $21,212. Employment to begin at the end of August 2000. Continued employment is contingent upon satisfactorily completing a criminal history record check.

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U.S. House of Representatives, H-154 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515
facsimile: 202.225.1776
Feedback: 
Access and Philanthropy

To the editor:

I greatly enjoyed the Fall/Winter 1999 issue of CONNECTION. Thanks for your always excellent work.

I have been studying differences in state behavior related to support of higher educational opportunity. I have been looking at the contribution of six policy influences (three measuring student financial aid and three measuring pre- and in-college support services) controlling for either educational attainment of state adult populations or personal incomes. They are highly correlated. My study has been frustrated by unresolvable colinearity problems and so will probably not be published.

One breakthrough discovery for me, however, was the explanatory power of the Gini coefficient, which measures the distribution of income in a population. The Gini coefficient is positively correlated with state efforts to foster higher educational opportunity. The way this variable behaves in multivariate modeling, the more unequally income is distributed in a state, the weaker the state's commitment to fostering higher educational opportunity for underrepresented populations. The more equally income is distributed in a state, the greater the state's commitment to (and success at) fostering higher educational opportunity for these at-risk populations.

The distribution of income in the United States has grown steadily more unequal since 1967. This helps explain why perverse social policies like merit-based scholarships and federal Hope and Lifetime Learning tax credits that exclude poor people seem to be so popular. It also suggests a future of growing income inequality as educational opportunity is rationed.

It was against this backdrop that I appreciated both George McCully’s article on charitable giving in New England, and the conscious efforts in New England to get the affluent to part with their “surplus” money for public benefit. McCully’s article was an eye-opener for me, and I thank you for publishing it. I wish the solicitors success with the solicited. Such efforts seem to me essential for social health and success.

I read Paul Harrington and Andrew Sum’s article on academic preparation for college within a week of having read U.S. Department of Education Senior Research Analyst Cliff Adelman’s Answers in the Toolbox report on the very powerful connection between taking a rigorous high school curriculum and being successful in college. The CONNECTION piece on access and Adelman’s study make the same point. Most important, academic preparation is a policy tool to enhance success in college—one that we can control if we care to.

I read Adelman’s report and CONNECTION while preparing data for the February issue of OPPORTUNITY on academic preparation for college by college-bound high school seniors. The ACT data I looked at say that the proportion of these seniors who completed ACT’s core (college prep) curriculum declined in 1999 for the first time since ACT started reporting these data in the aftermath of the 1983 report A Nation at Risk.

I have also been critical of the cheap political theatrics of education reformers like governors and legislators who think they are doing some good by raising the bar to high school graduation but do nothing to help prepare students to meet the higher graduation requirements that result (test score or course taking). They do more damage than good. Research like the article you published and that Adelman has done remind us of what needs to be done and that effective public education policy requires that it be done if we truly want students to be successful. The price of doing this is steep, but so too is the price of not doing this.

Thomas G. Mortenson
Editor
Postsecondary Education
OPPORTUNITY
Oskaloosa, IA
Growth in U.S. college enrollment, 1986-1996: 12%
Growth in college enrollment in the South during the same period: 24%
In New England: 2%
Percentage of first-year University of Vermont undergraduates who are from Vermont: 32%
Rank of Connecticut among home states of first-year students at the University of Hartford in 1999: 2
Number of previous occasions when Connecticut has not ranked first: 0
Net migration between Connecticut and other states, 1990 to 1998: -217,000
Net migration between Connecticut and foreign countries, as well as Puerto Rico: +68,000
Number of Connecticut residents among Forbes 400 richest Americans: 7
Number of those who live in the town of Greenwich: 5
Number of 1996 applicants to Wesleyan University who began their application process through the university’s Website: 88
Number of 1999 applicants who did: 2,049
Men as a percentage of 1970 recipients of bachelor’s degrees in architecture: 95%
Men as a percentage of 1996 recipients of bachelor’s degrees in architecture: 64%
Men as a percentage of 1970 recipients of bachelor’s degrees in biology and life sciences: 70%
Men as a percentage of 1996 recipients of bachelor’s degrees in biology and life sciences: 47%
Men as a percentage of all U.S. citizens who earned doctorates in 1997: 54%
Men as a percentage of African-American U.S. citizens who earned doctorates in 1997: 39%
Number of women among 100 highest-paid CEOs in Greater Boston: 1
Number of New England universities among 50 U.S. institutions awarding the most doctorates: 4
Percentage of U.S. doctorates granted by public institutions: 65%
Percentage of New England doctorates granted by public institutions: 15%
Number of New England institutions represented on the national Council of Graduate Schools board of directors and affiliates’ representatives: 0
Respective ranks of Anna Maria, Bryant and Gordon colleges among U.S. four-year campuses whose neighborhoods have the lowest risk of violent crime: 1, 2, 3
Approximate percentage of housing on U.S. college campuses protected by fire sprinklers: 25%
Number of Vermont towns served by the Saint Michael’s College Rescue Squad: 5
Percentage of 1999 U.S. college freshmen who say they finished high school with an A average: 32%
Percentage of freshmen who said so 30 years ago: 13%
Chance that a Massachusetts nursing home bed is owned by a company that has filed for bankruptcy: 1 in 6
Estimated annual turnover rate in direct care nursing positions at Massachusetts nursing homes: 60%
Decrease from 1998 to 1999 in number of Massachusetts nursing homes found to be in substantial compliance with federal and state requirements: 74
Average lifetime value of lost wages, lost pension contributions and reduced opportunities for promotion, training and good job assignments among Americans who provide care for elderly relatives: $659,000

Sources: 1, 2 Southern Regional Education Board; 3 New England Board of Higher Education; 4 University of Vermont; 5, 6 University of Hartford (New York ranks first); 7, 8, 9, 10 University of Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis; 11, 12 Wesleyan University; 13, 14, 15, 16 Thomas G. Mortenson; 17, 18 National Science Foundation; 19 NEBHE analysis of Boston Business Journal data; 20 NEBHE analysis of University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center data; 21, 22 NEBHE analysis of U.S. Department of Education data; 23 NEBHE analysis of Council of Graduate Schools data; 24 APB News; 25 National Fire Sprinkler Association; 26 Saint Michael’s College; 27, 28 Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles; 29, 30, 31 Massachusetts Extended Care Federation; 32 Brandeis University


Too many of New England's young people are denied educational access and opportunity. The stakes are high not only for our disadvantaged youth but also for the rest of us. A population denied access to college carries significant economic and social costs and ultimately places our nation at risk. Dennis Moore, superintendent of the Madison County, Georgia, schools, has calculated the financial cost of lack of access. Moore's research shows that every student who fails to graduate from high school costs his community an average of $600,000 over a 20-year period in public assistance, incarceration and other health and social services.

The question ultimately becomes not how much damage is done or who's at fault, but how do we provide greater access, thereby closing the widening gap between have's and have-nots?

Many commentators contend that the solution cannot be found in our schools but lies with society. Earlier this year, for example, James Traub argued in the New York Times Sunday Magazine that what happens in school cannot overcome cultural, economic and family forces. As the leader of an organization that has helped hundreds of students take one more step, I disagree. We must look to our public schools to help make college a reality and begin closing that gap between haves and have-nots. But how?

At the Foundation for Excellent Schools 1999 National Conference, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley rightly said, "We must first end the tyranny of low expectations."

Once committed, we need strategies to help all young people achieve. Proven practices in low-income communities are especially important. The nonprofit Foundation for Excellent Schools (FES), based in Cornwall, Vt., is currently helping 80 schools in low-income communities in 25 states to raise student performance. FES helps schools strengthen their capacity to serve students by providing training for team-building, leadership development and planning; building partnerships among schools and colleges, communities, parents and businesses; and maintaining a national network that allows schools to share successful practices.

In the impoverished, crime-wracked Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, David Ruggles Junior High raised its reading scores by 12.5 points last year. No magic bullet, students were rewarded for reading, and classrooms competed to see which one could cumulatively read the most pages. Faculty from the University of Vermont trained Ruggles teachers in the pedagogy of reading and writing. Ruggles adopted a culture of literacy.

Pickens County, Georgia, is the rural counterpart of Bed Stuy. Pickens County lowered its dropout rate from 42 percent to 8 percent in five years by first admitting that it had a problem and then enlisting the
community, parents and higher education in the quest for solutions. More than 100 community members and local businesses contributed $1,000 each to support scholarships, ensuring that every Pickens graduate had a “nest egg” for college. Community members spoke in schools throughout the county on Friday afternoons, chronicling their struggle to access education.

In New England, FES has created connections among schools and between schools and colleges that are helping at-risk students access educational opportunity. In Vermont, One More Step, a statewide initiative directed by FES and supported by the Nellie Mae Foundation, pairs 800 student mentors from 15 different colleges with at-risk students from 20 different schools. At Vermont’s Bridgeport Central School, principal Ron Conry reports that “Our seventh and eighth graders are handing in their homework more consistently. There’s a buzz about going to college. It’s because of the mentors.” At Oxbow High School in Bradford, teacher Becky Difrancesco says, “It’s brought two dozen at-risk students into the higher ed loop. The college connections have created dreams for our kids.”

Early this year, 50 students from Middlebury and Williams colleges mentored, tutored and practiced taught in the Bronx and Harlem. One student at Harlem’s A. Philip Randolph High, who had struggled with math concepts, finally learned algebra through one-on-one support from her Williams College tutor. “A light went on. You could see the excitement in both the tutor and the Randolph student,” says Philip Smith, the Williams admission dean emeritus who oversees the exchange. Smith reports on another bonus, “About a third of our students who intern in New York City schools during January pursue teaching in low-income schools.” That movement of the best and the brightest into the teaching profession may be the most crucial step in improving schools, according to “Quality Counts 2000,” a special report published by Education Week.

Throughout New England, examples of higher education-sponsored early awareness programs abound. As educational demographer Harold Hodgkinson has noted, low-income kids are not exposed to the “folklore of college.” We need to provide this exposure. In urban centers nationwide, Harvard alumni chapters are sponsoring early awareness programs for middle school students and families. The Harvard program spawned the idea for an FES early awareness day at Columbia University last May for 300 New York City students and families. They heard from admissions and financial aid personnel and chatted with young alumni from a half-dozen New England colleges over pizza. “It helped our kids and their sibs get street smart about moving through the maze to college. Usually they learn too late, if at all,” says Aura Rivera, principal of Roberto Clemente Junior High.

On a chilly Saturday in January, Middlebury College students hosted 50 middle schoolers from Vermont’s rural schools for an early awareness day. At “Middle Day,” the middle schoolers participated in a chemistry experiment, ate in the dining hall, learned about applying to and paying for college and watched a hockey game. Nancy Frenette, principal of Currier Memorial School, says, “The day was motivational. Our students began to think about their future, and that’s meant more focus in the classroom.” Many of the middle schoolers have stayed in touch with their Middlebury hosts via email.

Another initiative has college athletes conducting goal-setting sessions in schools across the state. Bill Beaney, coach of the Middlebury men’s hockey team that has won five straight national championships, enlists his players and other athletes from colleges in Vermont to meet with small groups of students and ask them about goals.

There’s no easy way to close the college access gap. It begins with the belief that access can be a shared dream, that we have high expectations for all children. Then we can look to our schools—the institution that serves our youth. School leaders need examples of success to build the will and the know-how. They need to reach out and find creative solutions to the access challenge. Ultimately we all need to get involved in creating connections. Wouldn’t it be great if every college and university admissions officer in New England spent a week visiting elementary and high schools talking to younger students about accessing higher ed? How about if each one of us gave an hour a week mentoring a young person from a low-income community? If we all don’t get involved, we all stand to lose.

Rick Dalton is president of the Vermont-based Foundation for Excellent Schools and former director of enrollment planning at Middlebury College.

Artists For Humanity

It seemed entirely fitting to illustrate this issue of CONNECTION’s Cover Stories—focused as they are on aspirations, obstacles and ultimate achievement—with the fine work of the Boston-based Artists for Humanity, whose mission is to use art to empower at-risk youth and bridge the city’s economic, racial and social divisions. Artists for Humanity is a comprehensive four-year program, in which inner-city teens learn fine and applied art skills under the direction of accomplished professionals. For more information, call 617.737.2455.
While this story took place more than 100 years ago in Alexandropol, it bears some resemblance to New England’s contemporary struggle to break out of its established, circular precepts of what defines a worthwhile educational intervention program.

We now have extensive experience with academic support programs that provide after school or summer enrichment to help low-income students overcome barriers to college enrollment and success. Through such models as the federal TRIO programs and school-college collaborations, educators and grantmakers have helped increase the number of disadvantaged, first-generation, minority and physically challenged students who enroll in postsecondary education. With every successful effort that increases the number of disadvantaged students who attend college, our belief in serving these student populations is reinforced. This is important and worthwhile work, to be sure, and should remain a central feature of responsive education and philanthropy. But perhaps we too are being confined by our own circle.

Over the past several years, a number of new early intervention and college-access models have been developed and implemented by grassroots and community organizations across the region. At first glance, some of these seem so removed from the mainstream that government, educators and foundations do not break through the circle and thoroughly examine their...
effectiveness. The delivery mechanism is too new, too nontraditional or too sectarian to get their backing or endorsement. Often, funders require empirical evidence of success, gained through evaluation, before they will take a chance on a new model with no track record and serving a less than typical population.

But as New England's population grows larger and more diverse, it's time for academia, government and grantmakers to recognize the importance of these nontraditional programs.

Redefining opportunity

Disadvantaged youth in traditional educational access programs, as well as the newer federal GEAR UP initiative (see sidebar), are generally defined as poor, minority, first-generation, college-bound students who may also be physically or learning disabled. We might think of these students as “first-tier disadvantaged.” Nontraditional access programs move outside the edges of this circle to serve what could be defined as “second-tier disadvantaged” or “third-tier disadvantaged” students: those who are pregnant or parenting, are involved with the courts, have suffered abuse, have severe behavior problems, are recent immigrants, have substance abuse problems, are functionally illiterate, are current or former welfare recipients, are geographically remote, are linguistically isolated, are transient or homeless, or are adult learners in need of a second chance.

At the Greater Egelston Community High School in Jamaica Plain, Mass., Project ProPEL has helped pregnant and parenting teens stay in high school and get their diplomas, learn job skills and increase their readiness for postsecondary education. A few years ago, pregnant girls were shunted out of school and into a cycle of intergenerational poverty. Today, programs like ProPEL break the pattern of social dependence for the teens and their children. These young mothers and fathers instead are working as interns while in high school, taking courses at community colleges and learning life skills that will earn them more than just a subsistence wage. A teen mother, Chermion had been in five different high schools and received little support even high academic achievers from low-income families are five times less likely to attend college than their more affluent peers. But a new federally funded initiative dubbed GEAR UP aims to support programs that encourage economically disadvantaged middle-school students to study hard, stay in school and take the right courses to go on to college.

Congress created the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (mercifully shortened to GEAR UP) as part of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. In August 1999, President Clinton announced the first round of GEAR UP grants, 185 grants to states and partnerships worth a total of $120 million. (Congress increased the GEAR UP budget to $200 million for fiscal 2000. President Clinton has proposed increasing the budget to $325 million in 2001.)

GEAR UP partnerships begin working with students no later than seventh grade, and provide them with counseling, tutoring and mentoring as they move through school. The partnerships also steer them toward algebra and other gateway college-prep courses and provide information on scholarships and financial aid.

GEAR UP supporters say the program’s focus on middle schools sets it apart from less effective access efforts that attempt to reach students in high school—too late to put many on the college path.

The new program also ensures community commitment. To be eligible for grants, partnerships must include at least one college, one school district serving one or more low-income middle and high school and two businesses or community groups. The GEAR UP partnership in Lowell, Mass., joins the UMass Lowell Center for Family, Work and Community, Middlesex Community College, Lowell High School and five middle schools. And each federal grant must be matched by a local partner. The Nellie Mae Foundation, for example, has provided nearly $250,000 to Gear Up partnerships in New England.

The American Council on Education (ACE), while supporting GEAR UP in theory, has mobilized opposition to regulations it says require unreasonable disclosure of aid information by campuses and put the federal government too squarely into the business of campus aid decisions.

<table>
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<th>GEAR UP 1999 NEW ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP AND STATE AWARDS</th>
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<td>Vermont Student Assistance Corp.</td>
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before she found Project ProPEL. She quickly immersed herself in the ProPEL program, even enrolling for a biology class at a local community college. From there, she participated in an intensive internship at MIT in genetic research, and was later accepted at a private university in New York.

Offering a nonjudgmental, safe, educational environment for young parents eliminates the major obstacles that cause them to drop out, such as day care issues and the stigma of teen pregnancy and parenting, while nurturing their aspirations and helping them develop as responsible adults and parents.

In Burlington, Vt., the College Connections program works with high school dropouts and otherwise low-achieving teens to help them complete GEDs and expand their educational horizons. Sometimes described as invisible students, these low-income young people have reached a dead end in high school, and slip away before graduation only to find themselves unemployed, unskilled and on a track to nowhere.

Run by a school-to-career partnership initiative called Linking Learning to Life, College Connections takes students who have dropped out, are court-involved or otherwise unable to thrive in a traditional high school setting, and places them in a community college setting where they take classes, explore job opportunities and learn skills that enlarge their employment and education options. The program has been successful because it incorporates applied learning strategies and directly connects students' coursework with career planning and development.

Safe spaces

Other nontraditional programs reach students through trusted faith-based or social service-based education resource centers which until recently were considered too sectarian to receive funding from the government or private grantmakers. In Brockton, Mass., the Higher Education Resource Center at Mount Moriah Baptist Church has brought college information within reach of low-income, minority students and their families. “Our church-based center is very comfortable for the students, especially those who really don’t seem to thrive in environments similar to schools or public libraries, which tend to be large and not always able to provide enough one-on-one help,” says program director Ruth Neville. “Religion is important to people of color. Walking into a church to get information about college gives positive feedback to adults and youth because its an environment they know and trust.”

Nontraditional learners who have experienced difficulty or failure in the mainstream educational system may be directed to alternative schools better able to help with their behavioral issues. One such program at Youth Opportunities Upheld (YOU Inc.) in Worcester, Mass., has created unique learning methods and environments that give students a feeling of accomplishment—in some cases, for the first time in their lives. Through adventure-based learning models, students meet physical and environmental challenges that teach them to set and meet goals, trust their peers and teachers, and build a stronger sense of themselves and their abilities to achieve. Students who meet their challenges experience profound change in the way they view their own potential, and they begin to view obstacles as opportunities for growth and success.

While YOU Inc.’s primary goal is to get their teens back into a regular school setting and graduate, for many students, the experience is a critical stepping stone on the path to college.

In the grantmaking world, middle and high school education programs are frequently assessed by the college-going rate of students. A high percentage of disadvantaged students going on to college means an easy decision for a grantmaker: fund them. But programs that measure success by keeping a student in high school or helping them remain drug-free or out of the courts—not by grades or SAT scores—are not a high enough standard for many grantmakers. These education programs instead must scramble for very competitive grants from the federal, state and local government and funding from the school system to sustain services for their students. Yet such programs should be called “life-savers” because the intense level of intervention provided is often the only thing keeping the student from falling even further away from an education path that can ultimately lead to postsecondary education.

Opening the circle

The increasing diversity of New England’s population cries out for a change in the way grantmakers, educators and public officials view educational intervention and support.

At-risk students who had some type of intervention while in high school, such as participating in “pipeline” programs that supplemented their schoolwork, attended postsecondary education at more than twice the rate of at-risk youth who were not involved in supplementary or alternative programs, according to a recent report from the National Center for Education Statistics.

Students in K-12 and higher education systems across New England represent different needs, learning styles, abilities and backgrounds. Yet we have been reluctant to open our belief system to include the kinds of programs that serve second- or third-tier disadvantaged students in addition to programs that represent more traditional models of academic enrichment and precollege preparation. These students too, like the Yezidis boy, deserve our protection and support. Like young Gurdjieff, we can swipe an opening in the circle of neglect and ignorance. We can and we should.

Blenda J. Wilson is president and CEO of the Nellie Mae Foundation.
Amidst all this activity, however, private scholarships remain an enigma to many people, partly because scholarship organizations run the gamut from well-organized, 501(c)(3) community groups to family-run memorial foundations, bank scholarships based on donor-designated criteria and town-run programs making awards ranging from $25 to $25,000. Virtually every high school has its own school-based program.

Media coverage of scholarships adds to the confusion. Fox News recently interviewed the New England regional office of Dollars for Scholars about a Harvard student who had won $90,000 in scholarships. “Wasn’t that great?” the folks at Fox wondered. Sure, it was great for *wunderkind* and his parents, but terrible for all the other students for whom a single scholarship might have made a real difference.

**No need?**

In fact, because local scholarship groups are sometimes apprehensive about prying into their neighbor’s 1040s, scholarships are awarded to students with little or no attention paid to the critical question: What does the student NEED? So well-meaning but uninformed awarding groups frequently give their awards to the best and brightest student even though the student’s family income may be quite high.

Many an awards assembly features a very small number of students collecting mostly merit-based scholarships. Not that merit is bad, but awarding scholarships without any consideration of financial need or basic understanding of the financial aid system is a sure-fire recipe for trouble. It also leaves a lot of hard-working, solid B students out in the financial cold.

Moreover, an undetermined number of scholarships are given directly to students, sometimes in cash. No wonder campus financial aid directors may not feel all that warm and fuzzy about outside scholarships.

It’s time for scholarship organizations to wake up to the realities of the financial aid world and work with colleges and universities to assist students who truly need the help. Where many separate scholarship groups operate in a community, they need to coordi-
nate their efforts so more resources can be made available to more students who need the funds. That’s where local Dollars for Scholars chapters come in, serving as umbrella organizations where all the scholarship groups in a community work together to raise more money and help more students who need help.

Dollars for Scholars began with a chapter in Fall River, Mass., in 1958. In the past 10 years, the program, affiliated with the national Citizens’ Scholarship Foundation of America (CSFA), has mushroomed to encompass more than 800 U.S. chapters. The total value of scholarships grew from less than $5 million in 1990 to almost $13 million last year, and the number of students served more than doubled to nearly 21,000.

The chapters increasingly tackle basic financial need analysis in an effort to give more money to more students who need it. For example, for years, the Wakefield, Mass., chapter, the nation’s largest, gave awards only to high school seniors and based only on achievement. Chapter leaders eventually realized that if they were really to help families and students with the rising cost of a college education, they had to learn about need. They began requiring financial aid statements from all applicants, which were scored by the national office of Dollars for Scholars. They wanted to know the cost of attendance and they started doing some basic financial need analysis.

Wakefield chapter officials also became leery of so much scholarship money being frontloaded on entering freshmen, noting that students often faced serious financial gaps if their freshman-year scholarships could not be renewed. So the chapter began to encourage aid for continuing students. Last year, Wakefield awarded $383,000 in need-based scholarship aid to 314 students, only 40 percent of whom were entering freshmen.

Upping the ante
It is time for scholarship programs to significantly raise the amount of individual scholarships rather than granting students what amounts to “fancy book money.” Not long ago, there was little incentive for larger awards because colleges would customarily reduce their own grant awards to students by the amount of the local scholarship. Families became irate, and ultimately most colleges stopped the practice. Now, many colleges instead use the local awards to meet unmet need and reduce the “self-help” (loans and work-study) portion of the student aid package.

Nearly 400 U.S. colleges have joined the Dollars for Scholars Collegiate Partner program, pledging to use awards first to reduce any unmet need or “gap” between the cost of attending the college on the one hand and the family’s contribution plus the financial aid package on the other. The Collegiate Partners also agree to use up to $1,000 to reduce the self-help portion of a student’s package and not reduce previously awarded grants. About a third of the Collegiate Partners further agree to match Dollars for Scholars awards if unmet need still exists, and are willing to use more than $1,000 to reduce loans and work-study. Dollars for Scholars chapters and Collegiate Partners also cosponsor financial aid nights, and colleges occasionally host chapter meetings and fundraising events.

The arrangements give local chapters a sense of support as well as an incentive to increase per-student awards. Indeed, Collegiate Partners in New England have become preferred recipients of scholarship funds, with average grants valued just under $1,200, compared with $375 at colleges that don’t participate in the program.

Community power
Dollars for Scholars has been successful in large part because the program is based in local communities where volunteers raise scholarship funds that go to local students. When students realize these awards came from the efforts of volunteers and that the contributions came from friends, neighbors, aunts and uncles, they often see it as a statement of the community’s belief in them and in their future.

A few years back when the New England Board of Higher Education was celebrating its 40th anniversary, Bentley College Graduate Dean Patricia Flynn illustrated the power of community scholarships. The widely respected economist grew up in Lynn, Mass., in a family where no one had gone to college. She wanted to be the first, so she mailed off hundreds of letters seeking scholarship money. One group, the North Shore Emmanuel [College] Club, replied that it no longer offered scholarships. But a few months later, another letter arrived from the Emmanuel Club with a check for $200. Inspired by Flynn’s request, club members put on a carnival to raise the money. “It was nowhere near Emmanuel’s tuition,” explained Flynn, “but I swear to this day it was that $200 check that got me through college. Whenever I didn’t feel like studying, I thought of these people who had the faith in me to actually give me the money to go forward.”

More recently, the New England office of Dollars for Scholars held a “friend-raising” event for volunteers and supporters in Vermont to celebrate the opening of six new chapters in the state. One speaker David Fitzpatrick, had been a recipient of a local Dollars for Scholars award some 35 years ago. Now he is a producer of ABC’s 20/20. He brought a picture of himself receiving the scholarship and an Emmy award he had won for his work during the Gulf War. With the Emmy in one hand and the photo in the other, he explained, “Without this (the scholarship) there is no this (the Emmy).”

The impact of community-based scholarships on those who receive them is clear. Now, it’s time for scholarship organizations to enhance their impact on the college financial aid process—indeed, on access, broadly speaking. Time for local scholarship organizations to grow up and ante up.

David Duncan is executive director of New England Dollars for Scholars.
2010: An Education Odyssey

WENDY LINDSAY AND CAROLYN MORWICK

Boston, 2010—At news conferences held simultaneously today in New England’s state capitols, the region’s six governors announced creation of the region’s first-ever interstate public university, New England State University (NESU). Funded jointly by the six states, NESU incorporates the six New England land-grant universities and the 31 state colleges and universities, which will be consolidated and serve as NESU campuses. The states will continue to operate New England’s 40 community-technical colleges.

In explaining their new cooperation, the governors pointed to the difficulty the six states have encountered individually trying to provide adequate financial support for public higher education, compete for diminishing research and development (R&D) funds, address severe shortages of faculty and K-12 teachers and prepare graduates for a rapidly changing, high technology-based economy.

Although NESU will offer all the academic programs expected of a large university, it will feature unique majors, flexible and accelerated degree programs and smooth articulation among two-year and four-year programs. In addition to its campus-based offerings, NESU will provide comprehensive online programming.

NESU will provide flexible teacher-training programs leading to regional teacher certification and various incentives to keep graduates in New England.

With its regional presence, NESU is expected to attract major R&D funding to address regional issues, including the environment, health care, K-12 education, transportation and economic development. With its considerable purchasing power, NESU will save the states billions of dollars in capital and operating expenditures and in health care and other benefits for faculty and staff.

The NESU board of trustees will comprise representatives of business and industry, government, elementary and secondary education and higher education, from all six states.

NESU will have three separate tuition levels for all New Englanders: one for two-year programs, another for bachelor’s programs and a third for graduate programs. Non-New England residents will pay a surcharge. A flat regional rate will be charged for all online or other distance education courses.

NESU grew out of a 50-year-old New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) exchange program, in which residents of one New England state could pay significantly reduced tuition at campuses in the other five New England states if they pursued programs not available in their home states.

Enrollment in that successful program had grown from 300 in 1958 to 10,000 in 2008.
A farfetched scenario? That depends on who you ask. More than three-quarters of New Englanders surveyed by NEBHE and the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts Boston in 1999 said they liked the idea of a regional State University of New England System to share academic resources and reduce administrative costs. And a Federal Reserve Bank economist has suggested creating an electronic New England university and providing regional funding for higher education.

To be sure, some New Englanders who are acquainted with the region’s interstate politics, are more skeptical. “That’s an idea that wouldn’t get four feet off the ground in any legislative building in New England,” quipped UMass pollster Lou DiNatale who worked on the survey.

Still, higher education leaders in the six states agree that access, affordability, state funding for higher education and competition among institutions are vital policy challenges that no single state can easily address on its own. And while the notion of a single university replacing six or more existing public higher education systems may be a stretch, sharing programs regionally is not.

In fact, New England land-grant universities have been collaborating in this manner since the 1950s. They thought it made good fiscal sense to share unique programs across state lines. It was a win-win situation, allowing New England residents to pay lower, in-state tuition for those unique programs, while eliminating the need for states without those programs in place to incur the often high cost of creating and sustaining them.

NEBHE’s Regional Student Program (RSP) was the brainchild of six New England governors who realized that expanded access to higher education opportunities within New England could help pull the region out of its economic stupor. The governors signed the New England Higher Education Compact which was subsequently ratified by the six state legislatures and authorized by the U.S. Congress. Out of this agreement came NEBHE in 1955 and soon thereafter, NEBHE’s chief program, the RSP.

It was a good enough idea to catch on with all the state colleges and community colleges throughout New England. Today, all 78 New England public colleges and universities participate in the RSP, to create, in effect, a New England campus offering hundreds of specialized majors and stretching from Presque Isle, Maine, to New Haven, Conn.

**Invisible campus**

Under the RSP, New England residents can attend a public college or university outside their home state and pay close to the in-state tuition rates if the program they are interested in is not offered by their home state’s public institutions.

The RSP has saved thousands of New England residents more than $250 million in tuition costs over the past decade. In 1999-2000 alone, more than 7,400 New Englanders took advantage of the program, saving an average of $5,000—between 48 percent and 75 percent off-out-of-state tuition rates.

For example, no marine biology and oceanography program is offered at any two-year public college in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island or Vermont. So students from any of those five states can study marine biology and oceanography at Southern Maine Technical College and pay about half the out-of-state tuition rate.

Similarly, students from Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont can pursue six-year pharmacy programs at either the University of Connecticut or the University of Rhode Island and pay reduced tuition because there is no pharmacy program offered at any public college or university in their home states.

All the while, New England taxpayers save millions of dollars because the individual states don’t have to duplicate expensive academic programs that are already accessible and affordable to New England residents.

If Maine, for example, were to try to replicate UConn’s School of Pharmacy, the capital investment for classrooms and laboratories could reach $50 million,

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**IN THE 1999-2000 ACADEMIC YEAR, RSP STUDENTS SAVED UP TO 75% IN TUITION**

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**Regional Savings**

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CONNECTION SUMMER 2000 23
while annual operating costs would range between $6 million and $10 million, according to one estimate.

**Regional access**

Importantly, a recent NEBHE survey reveals that about half of RSP students are first-generation college students—that is, they come from families where neither parent has earned a bachelor’s degree. Not surprisingly, the survey also confirms that family incomes of first-generation students are lower than those of students whose parents had earned at least bachelor’s degrees. The same survey also found that 86 percent of RSP students also received some form of financial aid.

While the financial merits of the RSP are laudable, the program’s academic opportunities and workforce development impacts are equally important.

More than 700 undergraduate and graduate degree programs are offered at reduced tuition through the RSP. Many of the programs prepare students for high-demand technical occupations. Majors include aquaculture, biomedical engineering, bioresource engineering, geographic information science, interactive digital media and laser electro-optics technology.

A Maine resident who was unable to pursue a master's degree in biotechnology at a public institution in Maine found the program available through the RSP at the University of Connecticut’s graduate school. Following graduate school, he became employed at a biotechnology company in Portsmouth, N.H.

RSP majors in visual and performing arts, recreation and tourism contribute significantly to New England’s quality of life.

The RSP, however, is somewhat limited in its ability to solve the problems of access and affordability, because of the conflict that often arises between what’s good for the region and its citizens vs. what’s good for an institution or what’s good for the individual state. Indeed, some highly competitive academic programs that are not available in every New England state are withheld from the RSP because campuses count on the full out-of-state tuition revenue.

In fact, institutional budget pressures have diminished the RSP tuition break over the years. RSP tuition matched the in-state rate for the program’s first 20 years then went up to 125 percent of in-state for the next 13 years. In 1991, the RSP tuition rate was raised further to 150 percent of in-state tuition.

Recently, however, some New England public institutions have begun charging the in-state rate to out-of-state students enrolled in distance-learning programs. For example, the University of Maine at Augusta’s online associate degree program in library information technology and Southern Connecticut State University’s master’s in library science are offered at in-state rates.

At the same time, for-profit institutions especially in the distance education arena, are moving aggressively to penetrate New England’s higher education market and offer their own solutions to the access problem. For example, the University of Phoenix recently gained accreditation in Massachusetts, and software billionaire Michael Saylor floated his plan to create a free, online university.

Merging into one institution may be politically impossible, but New England public campuses surely can take a major step toward regionalism by dissolving state barriers in their tuition structures and allowing all New England residents to pay in-state tuition. The time is ripe for the six New England states to take the RSP concept to a new level of regional innovation and make higher education affordable, accessible and flexible for all New England residents.

Wendy Lindsay is associate director of regional services at the New England Board of Higher Education. Carolyn Morwick is director of the program.
Last October, Partners for Livable Communities organized an excellent conference on regionalism called “Crossing the Lines: A National Leadership Forum on Regional Strategies.” Conference attendees explored regional approaches to tough problems and promising opportunities amidst the real-life lessons of a reawakening downtown Memphis, Tenn.

Discussions covered downtown redevelopment, smart growth, transportation, arts and cultural heritage, and much more. But another theme is never far away in Memphis, where hundreds of millions of dollars in reinvestment are being poured into a downtown core surrounded by barren, rundown neighborhoods occupied by African-Americans.

The sponsoring chief executive of the event was not the black mayor of Memphis, but rather the white mayor of Shelby County, of which Memphis is a part.

Among Memphis attractions, few compare to Beale Street, touted today to tourists as the home of the blues. Beale Street was known during segregation days as the national center of the African-American community. (That’s why the blues was born there.) Today, all the properties and all but one business on the street are white-owned.

It’s also hard to miss the monument to Nathan Bedford Forrest, a grand statue in the center of a park that hosts an annual State of Tennessee commemoration of the great things this man did for the South. Forest, you may recall, was the founder of the Ku Klux Klan.

Back in New England. I’m walking in Memphis, trying to process long-distance information about New England, for around the same time, delegates to the New England Board of Higher Education instructed staff to craft a comprehensive 2000-2005 strategic plan targeting college access and affordability as the top priorities for the first years of the 21st century.

Why access and affordability?

First, the limited supply of skilled workers for New England’s technology companies demands that higher education’s doors be flung open widely. Second, those still unemployed and underemployed in New England despite the unprecedented economic boom are falling farther behind. As they do, the quality of life in many New England cities and rural areas is in jeopardy.

Demographer Harold Hodgkinson has noted: “Many low-income, ethnic minority and immigrant children do not get exposed to the folklore of ‘how you get into college’ in junior high years, while the ‘favored’ have brothers and sisters in college, parents who are college graduates and lots of advice.” CONNECTION Executive Editor John O. Harney noted: “Without a college education, [large groups of New England residents] are deprived of the fruits of the region’s booming knowledge-based economy, which is paradoxically starved for workers. They have virtually no social mobility—no chance of the American Dream.”

Higher education access and affordability is about aspirations: the realization that a college education is important in life, along with the will to work for it. It’s about opportunity: the openness of institutional and community cultures to students from different backgrounds and preparation levels. And it’s about money; perceived
affordability and availability of financial support structures. That’s the big picture—a picture that will increasingly become shaded by issues of race, ethnicity, and cultural learning habits because of rapidly changing national and regional demographics.

“What is the most important educational challenge for the United States?” asks the College Board’s National Task Force on Minority High Achievement. “Many would say that it is eliminating, once and for all, the still large educational achievement gaps among the nation’s racial and ethnic groups.”

The task force reports that the share of minority children among children in low-income families is projected to increase significantly from 49 percent in 1990 to 65 percent in 2015. In 1990, Hispanic children were twice as likely as non-Hispanic white and Asian children to be raised in low-income families, and blacks were nearly three times as likely. These disparities among racial and ethnic groups are projected to increase by the year 2015. By that time, moreover, minorities will account for fully 85 percent of children raised by parents who are high school dropouts.

If current projections hold, by 2050 “the minority will no longer be the minority,” Rhode Island Superior Court Judge O. Rogeriee Thompson recently told a NEBHE conference. “So it is in our national interest to keep after this.”

New England is no exception. The Nellie Mae Foundation’s Laying the Groundwork warns: “With the fastest growing minority population in the country proportionately, New England’s cities, towns and school systems have become multicultural faster than the region has been able to adapt.”

New England, meanwhile, has the highest annual tuition rates in the United States, averaging $4,472 in tuition and mandatory fees for state residents at public four-year institutions, compared with $3,356 at publics nationally, and $17,330 in average tuition and mandatory fees at four-year private institutions, compared with $15,380 nationally.

Furthermore, from 1990 to 2000, state higher education appropriations per $1,000 of personal income have declined in every New England state—by 9 percent in Connecticut, 23 percent in Maine, 22 percent in Massachusetts, 21 percent in New Hampshire, 34 percent in Rhode Island and 36 percent in Vermont.

The access equation is further complicated by the so-called Digital Divide or Internet Gap. “The Internet gap between blacks, Hispanics, rural and low-income folks versus middle- to-upper class America—is not only deep but getting worse,” notes syndicated columnist Neal Peirce. “The Commerce Department reported it also found the ‘cyber divide’ between the highest and lowest income groups had widened 29 percent from 1997 to 1998.”

* * * * *

Y2K road trip. It’s amazing how prosperous America looks from its interstate highways, jammed with thousands upon thousands of truckers delivering the bounty of America from highway-hugging production facilities to economic hubs, booming suburbs and vibrant rural retirement communities.

Between Christmas day and New Year’s day, we drove two cars, connected by walkie-talkies, from Boston to Colorado. The excuse was a son moving to a new job. The opportunity was for a family of four, including two adult kids, to be together and see parts of America they knew little about. The weather was beautiful all the way. No snow fell, nor was there any on the ground until we reached 6,000 feet in New Mexico and Colorado. The America we saw—a sunny America of prosperity, an America at peace, an American Y2K economic juggernaut—seemed almost perfect. But the weather was too good.

Most of the workers in restaurants, gas stations and grocery stores were black or, most memorably at the Massachusetts Turnpike Burger King on Christmas morning, Hispanic. In fact, America appeared to be a globally warmed, racially divided country with no problems, except the ones we can’t fix, don’t want to talk about and try to forget.

Americans are problem-fixers and organizers. If something’s wrong, Americans like to fix it quickly. If something can’t be fixed— and fixed quickly! — people stop talking about it, somehow immobilized and embarrassed. Then the media do the same thing.

That’s how America has dealt with race for a long time. Now, it’s how we’re dealing with climate change.

* * * * *

Now Africa. Many Americans, particularly African-Americans, contrast government, media and corporate perspectives on Africa with perspectives and policies toward Europe and Asia—and see more race-based preconceptions restricting forward movement. Nowhere was this more clear than at February’s National Summit on Africa in Washington, D.C.

Leon Sullivan (father of the famed “Sullivan principles” that for a time guided America’s investment policies with apartheid South Africa) asked how America could stand by while 11,000 Africans contract AIDS every day, after 11 million have already died from it. (In February, an official of the federal Centers for Disease Control told a Harvard conference that AIDS is turning into an epidemic of color, with African-Americans comprising half of all new HIV cases in the United States.)

Sullivan lambasted America’s foreign aid of less than $1 billion to the 54 nations of Africa—just $2 per person—when we provide so much more elsewhere. He ridiculed America’s non-response to African civil wars where mutilation and ritual
murder have dwarfed the horrors of Central and Eastern Europe. There are two sets of U.S. rules: one for Europe (“billions for Bosnia, billions in Kosovo ...”), another for Africa (“Liberia, the Congo, Sierra Leone ... we’re afraid we’re gonna hurt somebody.”) “Fight back,” bellowed Sullivan, after reciting each indignity against Africa and African-Americans. The litany lasted 45 minutes, each injustice worse than the last.

Jesse Jackson gave the final speech to the 5,000 summit attendees, painstakingly recounting connections between the struggle for racial equality in the United States and in Africa. He spoke with both pride and harshness about how black people had worked together to slay the Goliaths of slavery, segregation and apartheid.

Jackson decried an America in which “half of all public housing built in the past 10 years have been jail cells,” producing an “American jail-industrial complex on the backs of young African-American males.”

He pointed out that 55 percent of American jail and prison cells are today occupied by African-Americans. Then he linked civil rights setbacks of the Bush administration to candidate George W. Bush Jr.’s visit to Bob Jones University. “We knocked down Goliath with Clinton in ’92. ... But you can't celebrate prematurely because Goliath had sons ... giants keep coming. Now here comes this son of a Goliath.”

President Clinton left summit attendees with perhaps the most memorable comment. In an era of instantaneously available global information, he said, “We can no longer choose not to know; we can only choose not to act.”

* * * * *

Sharing the wealth. Reflecting on all this brings to mind the name of the West African neighborhood where I lived for four years. It’s called Brofuyedur and it sits adjacent to Ghana’s 17th century Cape Coast Castle—simultaneously the center of operations for the British Gold Coast colony and a horrific slave-holding dungeon for hundreds of thousands of West Africans. Brofuyedur means “the white man is heavy!” So he is.

White America has pulled the wool over its eyes. The country is in the midst of an economic boom of unparalleled proportions and duration, featuring unemployment levels around 4 percent nationally and even lower in New England. Government coffers are overflowing with tax revenues—even after years of addressing budget deficits, the Social Security crisis and providing tax relief. Numerous good jobs go begging for lack of qualified applicants. Yet the gaps between participants in this boom and those who are not has widened greatly. Furthermore, the complexion of the non-participants has darkened and will darken further. At the same time, a tortuously deep-seated set of untalked-about, race-based preconceptions pervades America. New England is no exception.

There have been times like these when Americans pursued change vigorously, often at their own expense, simply because it was the right thing to do. Then there have been times when Americans pursued prosperity, often at the expense of others, simply because it was so alluring. It is abundantly clear what time it is now: it’s an Age of Prosperity. Yet it’s gotten harder and harder for the have-nots—most especially those of color—to lock on to America’s pathways to prosperity.

George Bernard Shaw said “progress is not possible without change and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.” We all need to do a one-eighty and begin committing a succession of non-random acts of resolve. Real cash and real incentives must be directed at the gap between New England’s haves and have-nots. If not now—when the money is at hand in our pockets, Uncle Sam’s pocket and in our state capitals—then when?

Nine a.m. on a chilly Saturday morning in February, and Manchester, N.H., is buzzing with reporters and television crews covering the 2000 presidential primary to be held the following Tuesday. The tone is decidedly calmer at the Holiday Inn, where candidate Gary Bauer is addressing a large group of citizens. Suddenly, the calm is broken by the chant of: “Hey Candidates, Take a Stand/Global Warming, What’s Your Plan?” Cameras turn and reporters fumble for their pens as a group of 40 or so determined protesters approach the hotel lobby.

The protesters are college students from Campus Green Vote and Ozone Action, two national organizations trying to persuade candidates to take a position against global warming. The group is led by “Captain Climate,” sporting bright purple tights and a fluorescent cape. Their smokestack-shaped hats, a protest against corporate polluters, tower over the crowd. Eventually, hotel staff ask the students to leave, and Bauer slips out a back door. For Captain Climate and crew, it’s off to another political rally, this one for John McCain.

Who says student activism is dead? A popular annual survey of attitudes among U.S. college freshmen suggests that the commitment to activism among first-year students has been falling. The survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) suggests that the percentage of freshmen who feel it is essential to “influence social values” fell to 36 percent in 1999, its lowest
Rising up

The late 1999 meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle signaled a sort of coming out for a new generation of activists. The Seattle demonstrations attracted not only local troublemakers, as the national media suggested, but also a variety of activists who see the WTO as an international cartel of corporate polluters. It wasn’t opportunistic Seattle hoods who blocked conference center entrances, screaming, “Mobilization against Globalization,” but rather activists representing grassroots organizations and environmental coalitions.

Moreover, the WTO protesters had a new potent organizing tool. Real-time Internet accounts of the WTO protests created solidarity among far-flung activist groups. This direct line of communication allowed activists nationwide to circumvent a biased or uninterested media.

Seattle is not the only evidence of an upsurge in activism. Across New England and the nation, college students are bird-dogging presidential candidates, holding vigils and mobilizing young voters in the name of causes as local as campus security and as global as sweatshop labor.

The anti-sweatshop movement has been particularly prominent on activist agendas. Brown University is among the pioneers. In 1998, after negotiations between student groups and Brown product licensing officials, the university agreed to require all manufacturers who supply products with the Brown name or university logos to adhere to a code of conduct that respects labor law, worker rights, environmental preservation and a high standard of business ethics. Since then, students on campuses regionwide and nationwide have pressured administrations to fully disclose the origin of caps, sweatshirts and other apparel with college logos and to adopt codes of conduct to make sure the clothing isn’t made with child labor or under otherwise unfair and unsafe working conditions. Now students are pushing administrators to ensure compliance by dropping out of the Fair Labor Association, a monitoring group with heavy apparel-maker representation, and joining a student- and labor-backed alternative called the Worker Rights Consortium.

The relative success of the anti-sweatshop movement has served as a catalyst for other campus campaigns, presenting would-be activists with a menu of causes and a reason to believe they can influence change.

• In February, a group of University of New Hampshire students and fellow members of the Student Environmental Action Coalition protested Occidental Petroleum’s plans to drill wells on sacred tribal land in Columbia by rallying outside the offices of one of the company’s big shareholders, Boston-based Fidelity Investments.

• In March, colleges students from across New England and the nation converged on Boston for “BioDevastation” a protest against genetically altered products timed to coincide with the largest biotechnology conference in history.

• In April, Harvard students staged a sleep-in at Harvard Yard to protest low wages among the university’s food-service and other hourly workers. Says Boston University student government leader Fouad Perez: “It’s an exciting time to be a college student.”

Getting organized

Yet organizing full-time college students is a difficult logistical task, even when the level of interest in an issue is high. Movements necessarily lose flow from year to year as student leaders take a semester abroad or graduate. Fresh recruits may lose interest before they become fully familiar with a movement and its goals. In addition, the UCLA survey finds many freshmen are “stressed out” even before they encounter college course loads, part-time jobs and sports commitments on campus.

Student involvement in activist causes tends to wane over the course of a semester as coursework piles up and exams approach.

Off-campus activist organizations (often staffed by freshly graduated activists) provide some relief for student organizers on campus. Groups such as the Center for
Campus Organizing (CCO) and Campus Green Vote collaborate with specific activist organizations and unite campus groups focusing on similar issues. Public Interest Research Groups, or PIRGs, in each state also rely heavily on student activists to fight an array of progressive political battles.

A new organization in the Boston area, the Campus Action Network (BostonCAN), seeks to bring together activist organizations at Boston-area colleges to improve communication among students working toward similar goals. Among other things, BostonCAN maintains a citywide activist calendar, so students at Emerson College, for example, can consult one source to find out about, say, a gun control rally at Brandeis, or a town meeting on recycling at Northeastern.

Local focus
Some New England students are applying their activist drive to long-neglected local politics. In an effort to promote environmental protection and encourage students to vote in local elections, the Boston Area Student Environmental Coalition last year “rated” candidates for Boston City Council on local environmental issues such as water runoff and park management. The effort ran into the usual logistical problems: The coalition managed to present its findings in several newspaper articles, but time constraints did not allow for completion of a green voter guide which would have been distributed to city residents.

Still, the initiative reveals a new pragmatism among activists. “Students tell us they’re more interested in their local communities where they feel they can make a difference, as opposed to the national political scene where they feel powerless,” says UCLA Assistant Education Professor Linda J. Sax, who worked on the freshman attitudes survey.

Media coverage of the UCLA findings contrasted supposedly lagging student interest in activism with rising student involvement in local community service. Indeed, a recent U.S. Education Department study finds that more than 70 percent of high schools organize community service activities for students, while 46 percent offered “service learning” combining community service with classroom instruction. Programs such as City Year, a Boston-based community service program of the national AmeriCorps initiative, have become widely popular among high school- and college-age students. Some students even take semesters off to work in soup kitchens and clean up city streets.

While community service may lack the political angle of activism, its proponents claim equal means of achieving social progress. As James Bernard, founding editor of XXL and Source Magazine, wrote recently: “Generation Xers do demonstrate their social values. They just prefer to do it through volunteer and charity work rather than at a rally. Perhaps they’re not so cynical after all.”

New acceptance?
The university “corporation” was a target of much student activism in the ’60s, and often for good reason. Community service, however, is easily embraced by university leaders, especially as a surrogate for activism. As BU President Jon Westling noted in an interview with the student paper, the Daily Free Press, “There are different ways of being active. One of the ways I think that BU students stand out is by their involvement in community service and volunteer causes.”

Westling goes on to describe such activity as “a hands-on way to change the world.” Many student activists say it’s not enough—that while a day of teaching disadvantaged children how to read may have a profound impact on those directly taught, it neglects the larger question of why the young people are illiterate to begin with.

Activism, questioning the underlying issues, and community service, acting upon those ideals, “would be dynamite together,” says Zelda Gamson, the former director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education who is now a CCO trustee.

Gamson also suggests that today’s college administrators better understand the issues and appreciate the activists’ new sophistication. They are “interested in an interesting student body,” she says.

The global warming activists in New Hampshire captured headlines with their purple tights and smoke-stacked hats, but the fight for change, is more complex and sometimes more mundane. For example, more than a few anti-sweatshop protesters handcuffed themselves to the administration’s office furniture, but their classmates who labored over lengthy codes of conduct did as much if not more to advance the cause.

Indeed, there is a fine line between being perceived as knowledgeable and credible student activists, and being perceived as high-energy, low-impact “college kids” suffering from “cause of the month” syndrome. It’s a line the mainstream media has struggled predictably to examine.

ABC News recently editorialized: “It feels like the ’60s [with] students occupying administration buildings—actual campus protests on a matter of principle.”

Veteran Boston television reporter John Henning summed up a clip of the New Hampshire protesters, “It’s tough to tell if they actually made any difference either to the voters or candidates today, but they had some fun.”

In its account of recent demonstrations against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the Boston Globe sniffed: “On Monday, Kate Purdy was saving the world from globalization. But Tuesday was the hard part: returning to Hampshire College to be a normal sophomore.”

Maybe saving the world is normal.

Mark Maguire is a spring 2000 graduate of Boston University and program assistant at the New England Board of Higher Education.
Global warming and rising sea levels will bring change to New England’s ecosystems, water supply, transportation systems and human health, as well as critical New England industries such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, tourism and outdoor recreation.

Historically, the northeastern portion of the United States has been prone to weather-related natural disasters. New England has witnessed significant floods, droughts, heat waves and severe storms. The frequency and severity of extreme weather events seem to be increasing across the United States and around the world, and the cost of these events is also rising as humans put themselves in harm’s way with greater and greater regularity.

Long-term trends are altering the climates to which society has become accustomed. Over the past 100 years, the temperature along the shore from Chesapeake Bay through Maine has increased by as much as 4 degrees Fahrenheit. Although general trends seem to indicate more precipitation—on the order of 20 percent more—the region has experienced more variability as well. In fact, five of the past 20 years have been characterized by significant drought. Precipitation extremes also seem to be increasing with more rain coming as heavy downpours. Over the past 50 years, the average number of days with snow cover in the region has decreased by about a week.

Each of these climatic extremes and events creates costs for individuals, communities and businesses. Examples include:

- increased insurance payouts, anxiety, and loss from flood and severe storms;
- stress to livestock, forests, fisheries and loss of crops due to drought;
- impacts on human health due to heat waves; and
- reduced winter recreation and tourism dollars because of reduced snow cover.

These impacts are caused by relatively limited climate variations; greater change lies ahead. We need to consider the projected changes and find ways to prepare.
**Scientific context**
Climate has always varied. One spring is late and another early; one summer dry, another wet. Going back tens of thousands of years, glaciers covered New England. Now, the region is forested. Although such changes cannot be predicted long in advance, scientists think they understand why these variations occur.

The short-term and seasonal variations, what we generally refer to as weather, are mostly caused by the changing state of the oceans such as El Niño or La Niña activity. Other important factors in seasonal and year-to-year variability include longer-term events like major volcanic eruptions, the strength of the Gulf Stream current, variations in the jet stream location and the number of cold air outbreaks from the Arctic, as well as a given area’s characteristics such as topography, latitude (which controls the timing of the seasons) and proximity to the coast.

The climate of any particular area is the average weather in that area over a period of years. Trends in climate result from changes in natural factors such as the amount of solar radiation (due to long-term changes in the sun’s output or in the Earth’s orbit) or changes in concentrations of atmospheric gases from both natural and human-made causes. The atmospheric composition is important because the major gases in the atmosphere—nitrogen and oxygen—are transparent to both the radiation incoming from the sun and the radiation outgoing from the Earth, so they have little or no effect on greenhouse warming. Many of the trace gases (such as ozone, carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides) and water vapor, however, are not transparent and absorb and re-radiate the outgoing heat from the Earth. This natural greenhouse-like activity results in a warmer Earth, and in fact, makes the planet habitable. Without it, the Earth would be a frozen ball in space.

Human activities are now intensifying the natural greenhouse effect. Since the Industrial Revolution began just over 200 years ago, the concentrations of many greenhouse gases have increased dramatically. The carbon dioxide concentration has increased by 31 percent and is now higher than at any time in at least the past 400,000 years (for which we have good records) and likely many millions of years. This increase coincides with the start of massive burning of fossil fuels for energy and the destruction of forests for agriculture and population growth. The concentrations of other important greenhouse gases are also increasing. The methane concentration is rising because of agriculture and energy activities; nitrous oxide concentration is increasing due to land-use changes, industrial processes and agriculture; halocarbons (e.g. Freons) were added to the atmosphere by releases from refrigeration and industrial processes; and ground-level ozone (smog) is increased with increased temperatures. As we increase greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, we significantly intensify the natural greenhouse effect, causing the world to warm.

**Change underway**
During the 20th century, the Earth’s average surface temperature has risen by over 1 degree, with about half of that increase occurring since the late 1970s. The rise is not evenly spread over the globe, although most regions are warming to some extent. This 1 degree average increase may not seem like much, but the global average temperature was only about 5 degrees to 8 degrees cooler during the last glacial maximum when about a mile of ice covered much of the Northeast, making temperatures there much colder. The recent warming has, in only 100 years, raised the Earth’s temperature higher than that seen in at least the last 1,000 years, and probably much longer. While the Northern Hemisphere was quite warm about 6,000 years ago because the Earth was closer to the sun in summer than it is now, the whole Earth may not have been as warm as it is now in thousands, maybe even millions, of years.

The rate of warming seems to be accelerating as well. Seventeen of the 18 warmest years of this century have occurred since 1980, with 1998 being the warmest of all. Nighttime temperatures have increased more than daytime temperatures, the land has warmed more than the oceans, and mid to high latitudes have warmed the most. Permafrost is thawing; sea-ice, snow cover and mountain glaciers are melting. Warmer temperatures are allowing more evaporation and causing an increase in precipitation of about 10 percent in the United States (but with uneven distribution). Much of this increase is coming in heavy downpours. Globally, sea level rose an estimated four to 10 inches during the 20th century (the rate of local sea level rise depends on whether the land is rising or subsiding) due to ocean waters expanding as they warm and because melting glaciers are adding water to the oceans. The potential exists for global weather patterns to be altered, including the strength and frequency of El Niño events, although this very significant threat is not yet well understood.

**Consequences**
There are three general approaches to projecting future climate changes and consequences.

The first approach is to analyze the historical record. By analyzing past climate variations and their
impacts on populations and ecosystems, researchers can project potential impacts on existing or future populations and ecosystems.

By using comprehensive state-of-the-science simulation capabilities (climate models based on the fundamental laws of physics and chemistry), physically plausible projections can be made of possible future climatic conditions. Because of limits on predictive capabilities, more than one model-based scenario is normally used to test the effects of different assumptions and uncertainties.

By exploring “what if” questions, the strengths and weaknesses of societal and ecological systems can be examined to see where limits, thresholds and surprises may lurk. By asking how and how much the climate must change to effect major impacts on specific regions and sectors, we can identify vulnerabilities.

Climate changes do not occur in isolation. So in addition to projecting changes in climate, scientists need to project changes in ecosystems, human populations, energy use (especially burning of oil and coal) and economic trends.

Current projections suggest that carbon dioxide concentrations will likely increase by two to three times the pre-industrial level during the 21st century; that global average temperatures will therefore rise by about 2 to 7 degrees and U.S. average temperatures by 5 to 10 degrees; and that the rate of sea level rise will increase by two to four times what has been experienced over the past 100 years. These changes will surely affect New England’s forests, farming, coastlines, rivers and communities—but how?

**New England changes**

Two climate model scenarios have been selected to support the National Assessment of the Potential Consequences of Climate Variability and Change for the United States. The model results from both the Canadian Climate Centre and the Hadley Centre in the United Kingdom suggest that the temperature rise in the Northeast will be most significant in winter. The models suggest minimum temperatures will increase by between 7 degrees and 11 degrees by the 2090s.

Precipitation changes are less certain, ranging from 0 to 30 percent increases—some of which will actually result in less available water due to increases in evaporation. Whether the change in precipitation will be greatest in the summer or winter is uncertain. It is likely that a greater percentage of precipitation will come in heavy downpours. There is some hint that the frequency of winter storms will increase and a more consistent projection that those storms which do occur will be increasingly intense.

New England needs to begin preparing for change. The region’s incredible education system can be enlisted to better prepare everyone (including businesses, governments, policymakers and students) to understand the need for making long-term plans and decisions that recognize that change is occurring, even though the “science is in the making.” (Indeed, researchers at Tufts and Boston universities recently were awarded $900,000 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to study how global warming will affect services and systems in Boston and 100 surrounding cities and towns.)

We all need to better understand that individual decisions (like which car to buy) contribute to very large and seemingly remote environmental trends that have the potential for long-term and local manifestations. We also need to acknowledge that for most systems, present stresses from other sources such as pollution, land-use changes or overfishing may outweigh stresses from climate changes. But over decades, the impact of climate change may push those systems beyond their breaking points. In addition, the stresses from climate change will increase and accumulate with time and, for some types of problems, will become dominant as the more immediate issues are addressed.

**Becoming resilient**

How can New Englanders become more resilient in the face of climate change? The key is to understand and plan for a range of possible conditions. For example:

- An EPA study suggests that demand for water in Greater Boston will exceed supply by 2050 even under normal climatic conditions. If present trends in rainfall continue, causing an increase in rain volume in some areas along with more frequent or intense droughts and floods, water management plans will need to be re-examined to make sure water supplies are adequate while protecting against flood damage. New England’s colleges need to prepare a generation of hydrologists who understand and incorporate potential changes in precipitation in their planning.
- Already about 33 acres of land are lost on Cape Cod each year due to inundation and erosion. If the regional rate of sea level rise increases as projected, coastal protection becomes more important than ever. A higher sea level would provide a raised base from which storm surges may sweep inland, allowing for more prolific and distributed damage. This might require finding ways to allow wetlands to migrate inland; enhancing building codes and setbacks (as Maine already does); and identifying vulnerable infrastructure and acting to fortify or move it. Tomorrow’s urban planners need to incorporate the most recent understandings of climate projections and sea level rise and know how to identify areas at risk and the protection options available.
- When choosing to reforest areas after harvest or destruction, for
example, by fire or ice storm, New England’s future forest managers should choose species of trees that are able to thrive under future climate conditions rather than species suited for today’s conditions or yesterday’s. The University of New Hampshire, for example, is working closely with the U.S. Forest Service and private landowners to increase knowledge related to forest management.

- When building homes and office buildings, designers should recognize that there will be higher temperatures in summer. The New York Institute of Technology’s School of Architecture and Design, for example, is working to increase understanding of climate changes and incorporating that knowledge into courses for new architects.

- New England’s recreational assets play a critical role in the region’s quality of life and its economy. In Vermont, for example, every $1 spent in a ski area generates an additional 94 cents in spending in the state. What if climate change dramatically reduces the number of New England ski days? Outdoor recreation and tourism planners need to consider alternatives to traditional snow and cold weather-based activities. The region’s hospitality training programs should emphasize understanding of changes in environmental conditions and the ability to create innovative, environmentally sustainable recreation alternatives.

- Health risks associated with climate changes in New England could include direct risks such as changes in the range of diseases and vectors or in the incidence of heat stroke, and indirect risks through increases in air pollution and decreases in the quality of air, water and food. The region’s world-renowned medical schools and life sciences research labs could address these by developing, among other things: surveillance and response programs to identify and detect emerging diseases and sites of potential vectors; training for physicians and public health workers to recognize and treat emerging diseases; and offering programs to educate the public on how to maintain health as the climate changes.

Drawing on its preeminent university research base, New England could also lead the way in developing a regional approach to reducing additions of greenhouse gas. New England could develop regional expertise in alternative energies. The six states could offer incentives to install solar and photovoltaic systems that reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. And the region’s campuses as a group could help answer the question posed by College of the Atlantic President Steven Katona in the Fall/Winter 1999 issue of CONNECTION: “How will today’s college students direct their considerable spirit of community service into actions that will help society and the environment?”

Where are we headed?
The issue is not whether you agree with the details of climate change projections; the details are still uncertain. The issue is whether we choose to use the current knowledge to make our region more adaptable and resilient to climatic variability and change.

“If you aren’t careful,” it is said, “you will end up where you are headed.” Scientists, public and private leaders and ordinary citizens can all contribute to developing new information, and perspectives that, reasonably applied, will help the region become safer, more sustainable and more resilient, rather than ending up where we are headed—with change continually surprising us.

New England has a history of rugged individualism, personal activism and a sense of control over its own destiny. The growing understanding of the relationship between human activities and the environment provides a window of opportunity to adjust the way we live. Individuals, businesses, schools, churches and governments all have roles to play in adapting to the changing climate rather than assuming that New England’s future will be like its past.

Lynne M. Carter is regional liaison with the U.S. National Assessment of the Potential Consequences of Climate Variability and Change, part of the U.S. Global Change Research Program.
Could public colleges operate more efficiently and produce higher quality educational results if they were freed of the controls imposed by state bureaucracies? The Boston-based Pioneer Institute, which has played a leading role in advocating Massachusetts charter schools at the K-12 level as well as privatization of a variety of public services, recently asked Robert O. Berdahl, professor emeritus of higher education at the University of Maryland, and Terrence J. MacTaggart, chancellor of the University of Maine System, to explore the potential of “charter colleges.” The Pioneer white paper titled, “Charter Colleges: Balancing Freedom and Accountability” also includes an outline of the “Vanguard College” proposal advanced in 1997 by Stanley Koplik, the late chancellor of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, as well as a particularly critical letter from one of the Berdahl and MacTaggart report’s peer reviewers, James F. Carlin, the former chair of the Massachusetts board.

**The Vanguard Colleges Plan**

The charter college idea was first floated in Massachusetts in 1997 by the late Stanley Koplik, chancellor of the Board of Higher Education. Koplik used the designation “Vanguard Colleges” to avoid confusion with the controversial issues surrounding K-12 charter schools. The idea remained in the proposal stage until Massachusetts Gov. Paul Cellucci voiced support for charter colleges in his spring 1999 budget message. The following outlines the essentials of the Vanguard College proposal.

Massachusetts needs more colleges that are managed responsibly and focused on accountability, measurable outputs and performance, instead of regulation, inputs and process. Under a new designation, “Vanguard College,” campuses would agree to exceed the Board’s performance measures in exchange for greater operational freedom, fiscal autonomy and faculty benefits. Students would find an environment that is consumer-oriented with smaller classes, accessible faculty, innovative curricula and effective use of technology. Vanguard Colleges can be the fastest and most efficient way for the entire public postsecondary system to move closer to the high standards of performance promoted by the Board of Higher Education.

A Vanguard College would:

1) be exempt from certain existing board policies, such as new program approval rules, including growth by substitution and program productivity guidelines.

2) have complete financial and managerial flexibility, including:
   - relief from state purchasing regulations;
   - authority to set tuition and fees;
   - full tuition retention;
   - annual operating grant for campus operations, without burdensome reporting requirements;
   - relief from state-mandated assessments such as worker’s compensation; and
   - relief from state Department of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance oversight.

3) gain the freedom to recognize and reward faculty, including:
   - base salaries set beyond rank;
   - a merit salary pool created to reward achievement of exceptional performance;
   - freedom from the cumbersome vagaries of collective bargaining agreements;
   - presence of real, shared governance and collegiality;
   - curricular flexibility to produce more diverse program and course offerings;
   - special allocation of professional development funds;
   - creation of more “high-status” professorships;
   - greater investment in instructional technology; and
   - smaller class sizes.

In exchange for these benefits, the college would agree to:

1) increase faculty productivity;

2) exceed designated performance benchmarks for student retention, time to degree and graduation rates;

3) document that the institution’s graduates exceed achievement standards in several key outcome areas including the ability to think critically, solve complex problems and work collaboratively;

4) document that performance of students in post-graduation work...
settings or graduate school exceeds employer/institutional expectations;  
5) replace tenure with renewable faculty contracts of 1-, 3- and 5-year terms; and  
6) eliminate collective bargaining.  

In order to be eligible for Vanguard College status, institutions would need to:  
1) submit an application in a form and manner prescribed by the Board of Higher Education addressing all elements of eligibility, responsibility and expected outcomes;  
2) provide an unqualified, independent audit of funds for the past two fiscal years; and  
3) demonstrate achievement of all-board performance measures.

Balancing Freedom and Accountability

In a January 2000 Pioneer Institute white paper titled, “Charter Colleges: Balancing Freedom and Accountability,” Robert O. Berdahl, professor emeritus of higher education at the University of Maryland, and Terrence J. MacTaggart, chancellor of the University of Maine System offer the following guidelines for the establishment of one or more charter colleges in Massachusetts. Berdahl and MacTaggart suggested that the Massachusetts College of Art, the Massachusetts Maritime Academy and the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts would be particularly well-positioned to become charter colleges. Mass. College of Liberal Arts officials appeared receptive to the idea, while Mass. Maritime and Mass. College of Art officials expressed reservations.

1) The fundamental role of a high quality board of trustees. To qualify for charter status, a college or university must have or create an individual board of trustees able to accept very serious fiduciary responsibilities when the state grants maximum procedural freedoms to the institution.

   So crucial is a high-quality board of trustees to the state decision to relinquish many traditional controls over the institution that we urge Massachusetts leaders to consider strengthening their processes for screening and selected board members so that the governor may identify outstanding citizens for this role. A related process is employed by the American Bar Association to evaluate the qualifications of persons nominated for judgeships. ... The St. Mary’s example in Maryland at least suggests that higher quality lay citizens can be found and persuaded to serve when they see that their role as trustees is a meaningful one in an institution that has broad powers of self-government.

   [St. Mary’s won charter status from the Maryland Legislature in 1992. College trustees include Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee and former Johns Hopkins President Steve Muller.]

2) The basic trade-offs. Once a very strong board of trustees is in place, the trustees, the president and his or her administration, and the faculty of the institution, can consider seeking charter status. The basic requirement is pledging to the state that in exchange for getting state appropriations as a lump sum, capped to a mutually agreed amount plus future inflation, and being freed of state controls over tuition and most state procedural controls over how institutional funds are spent, the charter institution will demonstrate within five years of charter status that it is providing both more efficient and more effective higher education.

   Meeting this goal means that the quality would go up and the costs to the state would not increase. During that five-year period, the state, through its coordinating board, would retain sovereignty over the institution’s basic role and mission and over the introduction of new academic programs compatible with that role and mission. The charter institution, involving obviously its faculty, would continue to be accountable to the coordinating board for information about assessments of student learning, and such other indicators of quality assessment and economic efficiency as both parties would mutually endorse. Also during this initial period, any substantial drop in enrollment would lead to a reduction in the state block grant. In addition to quality indicators, the charter agreement could include passing along to students any cost savings in the form of scholarships or lower tuition. While not all indicators of improved performance would show dramatic gains within five years, the coordinating board would need to be convinced that sufficient improvement had occurred to merit renewal of the charter.

3) The tuition issue. We recognize that the tuition issue is particularly sensitive in Massachusetts, where the state has taken much pride in providing tax resources to reduce the relatively high (by national standards) tuition costs in public universities and colleges.

   However, we judge the capacity to set and retain tuition income to be a crucial ingredient of any institution’s effort to claim larger responsibility for determining its own fate. Related problems concerning access and diversity can be handled by attaching conditions to the exercise of this newly granted power. It must include a commitment to plow back such portions of the additional tuition income into student aid as necessary to maintain or improve the institution’s present diverse and low-income student population. If the state needs further reassurance, it can cap tuition costs.

   The institutions chosen for charter status should find themselves able to raise tuition to some degree and still maintain or improve student application demand. Using the greater internal management flexibility to strike out more boldly with academic innovations and even exploiting the prestige of having been singled out for
chart status should strengthen the institution’s market position and allow it to raise its tuition successfully. Since Massachusetts would select only a few charter colleges, it could still pursue a statewide policy of low tuition for the vast majority of colleges and universities.

4) Improved private fundraising. It is also anticipated that the strengthened college board of trustees would exploit the institution’s charter status to make aggressive efforts to raise more funds from non-state sources. We note in passing here the provision in Massachusetts state Sen. Stanley Rosenberg’s Fair Shares Plan for state incentive grants to public institutions for increased fundraising. A charter college should be able to exploit that possibility to the maximum.

5) Academic innovations. A basic assumption is that combining additional tuition income and additional private fundraising with greater management flexibility in spending the limited state tax funds would empower the institution to strike out in directions of bold academic innovation. The twin purposes of this effort are far more efficient and more effective higher education. The faculty may or may not be enthusiastic about proposals to cut costs, but they certainly should welcome state initiatives that seem to encourage improvement of academic quality.

6) Institutional procedural freedoms. The greater management flexibility would include such items as freedom to make purchases without going through state purchasing controls and freedom to hire, pay, promote and fire nonteaching staff consistent with standards of due process, relevant bargaining unit agreements and fairness without state personnel controls. Charter colleges could also exercise the freedom to erect and maintain buildings without state building controls, provided that for the first five years, the buildings are privately funded. After that, if real economies can be demonstrated at the same time that quality and safety standards are maintained, this could apply even to those financed by public funds. An option suggested by one interviewee would be to split the financial savings equally between the campus and the state.

7) State post-audit. The charter institution will continue to be subject to state post-audit. If instances of financial fraud and abuse are discovered, the remedy would be to change the administrators responsible and, if necessary, replace some trustees, but not to remove the management flexibility.

8) The tenure issue. The governor’s message regarding charter colleges explicitly linked the notion to the need to abolish faculty tenure and collective bargaining. Regarding tenure, one of the purposes in considering charter status for one or more public colleges is to permit them to operate more “like private institutions.” We found that nearly all the private institutions in Massachusetts (on the whole, a very impressive group of institutions) have and want to keep the practice of tenure.

However, retaining tenure is one thing, and allowing it to approach unhealthy percentages of the faculty, e.g., 80 percent, is another. If the initial awarding of tenure is made appropriately rigorous, and if the institution will adopt a constructive form of post-tenure faculty evaluation, the issue can be accommodated without the trauma of trying to abolish it. We therefore do not recommend that tenure be abolished for the institutions chosen for charter status.

9) Collective bargaining. The collective bargaining issue cannot be “accommodated” so readily. The practice is so pervasive in Massachusetts and the political support systems so powerful that we must somehow meet the issue head-on. Critics of faculty unions feel strongly that unions and their members will oppose any innovations that even remotely threaten faculty prerogatives. We have both been college teachers, and one of us still is, so there may be prejudice in our reply that we do not see the situation as that hopeless.

Each charter college, regardless of its present legal status, should either be authorized to bargain as an individual campus unit or be allowed to add specific “local” sidebars to the systemwide bargaining agreement. While some campus leaders to whom we spoke preferred systemwide bargaining, hoping to avoid sharpening local issues of disagreement, we see no way to avoid localizing the process, if the charter college is, as the theory goes, “to take responsibility for its own fate.” ...

10) Choosing institutions for charter status. Two questions now arise: how many institutions are to be chartered and which ones? Because of our stringent condition relating to a very strong local board of trustees, we do not see this process as applying to a whole system of colleges. The University of Massachusetts system already has more operating freedom from state controls than its public segmental sisters among the state colleges and community colleges, and furthermore, it has already launched its Commonwealth College experiment in a statewide honors network. We heard the Lowell campus of UMass nominated as a likely candidate. Our own judgment is that the state and community colleges are the more likely source for initial choices.

In our scrutiny of the state colleges, we thought in terms of two categories: those who were “already ready” in one sense or another, and those with the potential to develop more distinctive missions in the future. Two institutions already have a special market niche that would ease the process of “cutting loose,” and a third one aspires to gain it. The Massachusetts College of Art and the Massachusetts Maritime Academy are both poised to exploit charter status. Each serves a distinct clientele, and each has the potential to raise even more funds in the private market given
the distinction of charter designation. The Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts clearly aspires to gain similar distinction in its mission and its student body, in effect wanting to become a public honors college similar to the St. Mary’s model in Maryland. Our recommendation would be to start with one or more of these three, and then see which others might aspire to distinctive missions in the future. It should be emphasized that charter status should not imply an elitist orientation, but rather a distinctive one. For example, in addition to the existing institutions mentioned above, charter status could be granted to an institution focusing on advanced technical education (perhaps following the European polytechnic model) or one designed to address the needs of urban populations.

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A Note of Disagreement

James F. Carlin, the former chair of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, who railed against faculty tenure and led efforts to cut back tuition at Massachusetts public colleges, was among the peer reviewers of the Pioneer report. He expressed reservations about the charter college proposal in a letter of Nov. 29, 1999.

To the Pioneer Institute:
I have had an opportunity to review the Robert Berdahl/Terrence MacTaggart study of charter colleges and I have a number of disagreements with the authors.

First, and most importantly, I am not comfortable with the authors’ discussion of college costs. Throughout the United States, student tuition and fees are much too high. This applies to the public as well as the private sector. What parents and students are willing to do to pay these outrageous bills is alarming. They remortgage their homes, work two and three jobs, deplete their savings, postpone retirement and invade their 401(k) plans. Despite these efforts, half the students in the United States leave college with significant student loans that will take years to pay back.

It appears that the charter college concept almost guarantees increased public dollars and definitely guarantees increased student costs. There is a real problem allowing trustees, especially of public institutions where taxpayer dollars are often more than tuition dollars, to set tuition amounts. Colleges’ financial appetites are limitless. I have never agreed with a high tuition-high aid approach. What really makes sense is a low tuition-high aid approach.

As involves minority access, I don’t think the situation would be any different in a charter college as compared with a non-charter college. Bright minority students can get into a long list of top-notch colleges and universities, often on a full scholarship. Minority students, like non-minorities, who are marginal academically will tend to go to the institutions that provide the lowest tuition and fees. One of the premises in this paper is that it is okay for tuition and fees to go up, which, in my opinion, is wrong and will push minorities away from our doors.

Second, I object to the defense of tenure (lifetime job guarantees). They point out that St. Mary’s reinstated tenure as a further means of promoting faculty commitment to the college. This sounds very good, but it has been my experience that the faculties and their unions, especially tenured faculty, have a major commitment to themselves first and the institution a distant second. Of course, every faculty member who has tenure wants to keep the tenure system. Until public sector leaders and private sector university boards of trustees want to address the issue of faculty productivity, including tenure, nothing is going to happen other than a rise in tuition and fees along with demands for more money from legislators.

The authors discuss the Vanguard College concept developed by Stanley Koplik in 1997. This is an excellent model and it was on my agenda for 1999-2000. You will note that, under the Vanguard model, tenure is replaced with a multiyear contract system and that collective bargaining is eliminated. There won’t be effectiveness as long as collective bargaining laws continue as they are currently written or until we do something about the tenure system. Faculty unions in Massachusetts will oppose any innovations that even remotely threaten their prerogatives or pocketbooks.

Finally, something tells me that when the faculty demands “shared governance” they are essentially asking to be a part of management. Management, by definition, is not rank and file employees. It is my belief that shared governance is a disaster. The day-to-day management of a campus is not going to improve as long as no one has clearly defined authority. We invite chaos when the trustees, the president’s office, the faculty and its unions are all trying to be in charge.

To conclude, I do think it makes sense to give certain colleges special authority as involves construction projects and other bidding arrangements. I think you can do this sort of thing, however, without setting up a charter college. It would seem to me that we should offer solid support to our charter K-12 schools before we worry about dramatic postsecondary initiatives.

Sincerely,

James F. Carlin
A Reason to Give

Massachusetts Considers a State Tax Deduction for Charitable Gifts

RITA FUERST ADAMS

A move is a foot in Massachusetts to allow Bay State taxpayers to deduct contributions to charitable and philanthropic organizations from their state income tax. The proposed “Initiative to Encourage Charitable Giving,” being promoted legislatively as House Bill 4982 and via statewide ballot initiative would allow Massachusetts taxpayers, whether or not they itemize their tax returns, to take a deduction from any wages or salaries for gifts to any philanthropic organization as defined by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. This includes private and public colleges and universities in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. The deduction, effective Jan. 1, 2001, would equal the full amount of the taxpayer’s annual contributions.

Meanwhile, Senate Bill 1509, introduced in 1999 by Sens. Cynthia Stone Creem and Steven A. Tolman would restrict deductions to gifts made to Massachusetts organizations only. (In fact, the deduction would apply only to charitable and philanthropic organizations incorporated under Massachusetts code, excluding those such as Harvard University established before the code!)

State incentives
The U.S. tax code has allowed deductions for charitable contributions since the federal income tax was introduced in 1917. The tax treatment of such philanthropy at the state level, however, has varied significantly.

Among the 41 states that levy an income tax (including all New England states except New Hampshire), 33 now provide a deduction for charitable contributions in addition to the federal charitable contribution deduction. Massachusetts and Connecticut are among the eight states that do not provide such a deduction. The other states that do not are Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Of course, because New Hampshire levies no personal income tax, no tax deduction is possible.

By reducing the cost of giving, a state charitable contribution tax deduction would stimulate philanthropic giving and thereby promote educational and cultural endeavors and improve health care and social welfare.

Philanthropic organizations are a part of everyone’s lives. We are all, in some degree, beneficiaries of philanthropy whenever we attend church, go to college, visit museums or concert halls, borrow books from libraries, obtain treatment at hospitals or spend leisure time in parks.

There are close to 13,000 not-for-profit organizations in Massachusetts. They control approximately $52 billion in assets, more than half of which—$28 billion—are controlled by education institutions. The sector employs more than 350,000 people in Massachusetts, accounting for 10 percent of Bay State jobs, according to a study by the Lincoln Filene Center for Citizenship and Public Affairs at Tufts University.

Philanthropic groups make up 85 percent of the 1,400 organizations that contract with the Commonwealth to provide health and human services.

Low giving
Nationally, nonprofit organizations derive 18 percent of their annual revenue from private contributions, according to Washington, D.C.- based Independent Sector, the national association of nonprofit groups. Private payments account for 39 percent, while government grants account for 31 percent.

New England’s philanthropic giving is lagging. George McCully, a trustee of the Ellis L. Phillips Foundation and project coordinator for The Catalogue for Philanthropy, has developed the Generosity Index to compare each state’s and each income group’s national rank in average adjusted gross income, or having, with its national rank in average deductions, or giving. Four New England states—Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Massachusetts—have consistently high average incomes and low average deductions, and therefore, low generosity. For the period 1991 through 1997, they ranked 47th, 48th, 49th and 50th, respectively. (Of the four, only Rhode Island, where the state income tax is based on federal tax liability,
OUT-OF-STATE TUITION BREAK!

New England residents get a tuition break at out-of-state public colleges when they enroll in certain majors not offered by their home state’s public institutions.

For example:
- Medicine at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine
- Aquaculture at the University of Maine
- Environmental Design at Massachusetts College of Art
- Meteorology at Plymouth State College
- Labor Studies at Rhode Island College
- Interactive Digital Media at Lyndon State College

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

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provides taxpayers with a state tax incentive to make charitable gifts.) Vermont and Maine (where state taxes—and therefore deductions—are based on federal liability) rank low in giving but have low incomes as well, thus more moderate generosity. [See CONNECTION, Fall/Winter 1999.]

Despite the nation’s third highest per-capita income, Massachusetts ranked 40th nationally in the average size of itemized charitable contributions reported on federal tax returns, according to a 1997 study by the Chronicle of Philanthropy. Itemizers in Massachusetts contributed $2,495 on average, compared to $2,967 nationally.

Giving is price-elastic. It responds to tax incentives. A 1 percent reduction in the net cost of giving results in a 1.1 percent to 1.7 percent increase in giving.

Using a 28 percent federal income tax rate, the net cost of a $1 charitable contribution deduction for a Massachusetts taxpayer who claims the federal deduction is 72 cents. With the current Massachusetts state income tax of 5.95 percent, a state deduction for gifts would reduce the cost further to 68 cents—and thereby stimulate giving.

Harvard University Professor Martin Feldstein estimates a Massachusetts charitable contribution deduction would spark an 8 percent increase in charitable contributions. Accordingly, the current giving level of about $2.75 billion would increase to almost $3 billion. For $250 million in increased gifts for charitable and philanthropic organizations, Massachusetts would forego $175 million in tax revenue on the total $3 billion in gifts. Moreover, the change would generate as much as $12 million in new federal tax deductions—much of which would stay in Massachusetts.

The most vocal and organized proponent of a charitable contribution deduction is the Committee to Encourage Charitable Giving. Created by Fidelity Investments, the committee soon enlisted the Boston Private Bank and Trust Co., the law firm of Foley, Hoag and Elliot; Goldman Sachs, KPMG, PriceWaterhouse-Coopers and Putnam Investments to push the ballot initiative. The New England Conservatory of Music and Tufts University are among more than 350 philanthropic organizations participating in the committee, chaired by Richard S. Mann, the president of the Greater Boston chapter of the American Jewish Committee.

Though an overwhelming 84 percent of Massachusetts residents support a state deduction for charitable gifts, according to an October 1999 survey by the public opinion research firm Mass Insight, the ballot initiative may meet resistance. One concern is that deduction could be vilified in tandem with a major tax cut initiative also on the ballot. It is estimated that the two initiatives, taken together, could cost the state $2 billion during the next three years. Organizations that contract with the state to provide human services are particularly concerned that the lost tax revenue coupled with increased philanthropic support could give the Commonwealth an excuse to decrease state spending on various human services.

For this reason, a few voices continue to seek a legislative solution before June 30. A loosely organized, volunteer Legislative Coalition for Philanthropy, meanwhile, has promoted a legislative solution. But the coalition has lacked the staff and resources to mount an effort on the scale of the committee’s.

Above all, the volunteers working through the coalition and the organizations of the committee have had one goal: to encourage charitable giving in Massachusetts and New England. Their efforts on behalf of the proposed Massachusetts deduction have also provided an important impetus for a regionwide discussion of philanthropy, including higher education’s critical role. After all, we give because we are taught to give.

Rita Fuerst Adams is president of Boston-based Charitable and Philanthropic Management Counsel, which provides consulting for nonprofit organizations. She is also a senior fellow at the Lincoln Filene Center at Tufts University, and government relations chair and director of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives.
A Civic Action
Joseph M. Cronin


New Englanders continue to provide leadership in criticizing higher education for too narrow a definition of mission and purpose. Producing research papers and competent graduates cannot be the only measures of success.

Universities also have civic responsibilities and, as former Harvard University President Derek Bok pointed out a decade ago, these should include attention to the unsolved issues of poverty, inequality, hunger, disease, racial injustice and crime. Ernest Boyer while at Carnegie asked whether people might think colleges and universities were part of the problem.

What’s worse, a bipartisan national commission chaired by Democratic ex-Sen. Sam Nunn and Republican William Bennett discussed the decline in citizen participation including voting, without ever analyzing whether our colleges might help reverse the decline. Other than Robert Putnam of “Bowling Alone” fame, do faculty members care and could colleges make a difference?

New Englanders, led by Zelda Gamson, then at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and former Indiana University President Thomas Ehrlich, once of Cambridge, chair an American Council of Education (ACE) Commission on Civic Engagement.

_Civic Responsibility and Higher Education_ features the working papers and best presentations from a major ACE session on what different types of colleges have done or might do to elevate the priorities of service and citizenship.

Ehrlich and Elizabeth Hollander of the Campus Compact based at Brown promulgate a “Declaration of Civic Responsibility of Higher Education” signed by dozens of campus presidents to dramatize the potential of university initiatives. Bentley professor Ed Zlotkowski reviews the enlightened decisions by more than 20 academic societies from Accounting to Zoology to incorporate service-learning in course offerings and programs, described in a full series of volumes produced through the American Association for Higher Education with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts.

University of Vermont President Judith Ramaley argues that older notions of public service or professional service by faculty should be subsumed under the broader term “civic engagement” in collaboration with communities. The faculty role must be redefined and rewards provided for faculty who apply their research to serve the public good. Hampshire College President Gregory Prince calls for a new public philosophy, a commitment to promoting social change, both individually and institutionally. He praises Connecticut College and Marlboro College for embracing total community participation as a vital strategy.

Teaching and research remain core functions of any university but service and citizenship were seen as fundamentals by early founders including Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. Most of this volume calls for a restoration and renewed commitment to citizenship education and problem-solving. Legislators, trustees, faculty committee members and administrators should read it to see where our colleges might have lost their way and how the new century might be better served by academia.

Joseph M. Cronin is a senior fellow at the New England Board of Higher Education. He is former Massachusetts secretary of educational affairs and former president of Bentley College.

The Big Green Book
John O. Harney


The title itself conjures up Ivy League pomp—and this series of essays edited by Pulitzer Prize-winning _Boston_
NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Kearns Goodwin of fer particularly David Halberstam and historian Doris studying art and architecture. Author spent his senior year in Hanover. Nelson Rockefeller recounts how he insisted the new “cohogs would blow the curve, ruin the football team and force everyone into summer school.” Dartmouth went coed and the boys of students or faculty to be wrong, or any action which seems to the larger group is force into or trapped into some small groups on almost every campus unless and until the college is forced into or trapped into some action which seems to the larger group of students or faculty to be wrong, or which draws a lot of people in on some issue other than the one which the extremists originally created.”

Also in Dickey’s interview, see roots of the later backlash against political correctness on campus: “At some campuses, we are also beginning to get students who are militant against the militants; they are tired of the demonstrations they have to walk through, tired of the strikes that make life intolerable for all students.”

This is, after all, the alma mater of Illiberal Education author and p.c.-basher Dinesh D’Souza, known in Hanover as Distort D’Newsa, according to Benjamin Hart’s otherwise stiff account of the 1980s founding of the controversial Dartmouth Review. Some of the essays are best left in Hanover. One might ask, for example, whether the Earl of Dartmouth’s bicentennial greetings are necessary. “In 1904, my grandfather came here to lay the cornerstone of the new Dartmouth Hall … ‘It was,’ he said, ‘a reunion between Dartmouth and Dartmouth.”

John O. Harney is executive editor of Connection.

The New Boob Tube
John O. Harney


Just as some innovative American schools—and at least one governor—begin talking of laptops for every child, a pair of Canadian writers launch a broadside against computers in education. Among other things, Alison Armstrong and colleague Charles Casement charge that school districts’ headlong rush into technology has come at the expense of art, music and physical education, and they use the Massachusetts town of Mansfield as an example.

But their argument is too choppy to gain strength. Computers cause eyestrain. Classroom computers are outdated. Computers get stolen. Schools are left high and dry when technology grants run out. Employers want social interaction skills that technology doesn’t teach. At times, it seems as if Armstrong and Casement are seeking revenge for some catastrophic system crash in their pasts.

Their chapter on how the pervasiveness of the computer screen corrupts young readers is well argued. And their point about computers being no replacement for good teachers is well-taken. But even in this, they go overboard. “Computers cannot match a good teacher’s ability to inspire interest and excitement in learning. They cannot speak with passion and commitment about ideas,” the authors note. “Although a computer program may post a word or two of praise when a child gives a correct answer, the computer doesn’t care whether the answer is right or not.”

(For a more constructive assessment, consult Tech Savvy, the recent report by the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation, which recommends, among things: “The focus for professional development needs to shift from mastery of the hardware to the design of classroom materials, curricula and teaching styles that complement computer technology.”)

Armstrong and Casement leave the reader thinking that there really are arguments to be made against excessive reliance on computers in education. But they don’t make them.

John O. Harney is executive editor of Connection.
FALL RIVER, MASS. — Bristol Community College received a $125,000 grant from the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education to introduce support services for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and to provide career training in C-PRINT captioning, a computer-aided system that converts speech to print. The grant will also allow Bristol to employ up to 10 classroom C-PRINT captionists. The captionists type lectures and student comments into a specially equipped laptop computer, and the information is displayed on a second laptop or television monitor to be read during class or printed.

NEW HAVEN, CONN. — Yale University researchers were awarded a four-year, $3 million grant by the National Science Foundation to test triarchic instruction, a teaching method that focuses on children’s analytical, creative and practical strengths rather than their academic skills. Researchers note that while creative and practical abilities are keys to success in life and work, they are not measured by achievement tests. The method will be tested on students in grades 1 through 4 in selected schools nationwide.

KINGSTON, R.I. — The University of Rhode Island was awarded a three-year, $1.5 million grant by the National Science Foundation to match graduate teaching fellows in marine and environmental sciences with K-12 teachers in Warwick, Providence, Westerly and Newport. With guidance from URI faculty mentors, 12 graduate fellows will work with schools on formal and informal marine and environmental education activities and introduce teachers and students to research technologies such as geographic information systems and remote sensing.

PORTLAND, MAINE — The University of Southern Maine was awarded a three-year, $300,000 grant from NASA to establish a pilot program aimed at helping people with disabilities study earth science. Disabled people have

Looking for a Few Good Engineers

The following is excerpted from “New England as the 21st Century Approaches: No Time for Complacency,” an article which appeared in the Nov./Dec. 1999 issue of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston journal called New England Economic Review. The article was written by Patricia M. Flynn, dean of graduate, executive and professional education at Bentley College; Ross J. Gittell, associate professor of strategic management at the University of New Hampshire's Whittemore School of Business and Economics; and Norman H. Sedgley, visiting assistant professor of economics at the Whittemore School, with research assistance from Bentley graduate student Ashima Jindal. The full article may be downloaded from the Boston Fed’s Website at www.bos.frb.org.

New England's share of engineering and math/computer science degrees awarded in the United States has fallen over the past two decades. The region's share of U.S. engineering degrees conferred fell from 8.7 percent in 1975 to 6.2 percent in 1995 at the bachelor's level, from 9.1 to 7.5 percent at the master's level and from 12.9 to 8.2 percent at the doctoral level. For math/computer science degrees, the region's share fell over this 20-year period from 8.4 to 6.1 percent at the bachelor's degree level, from 6.9 to 6.5 percent at the master's level and from 9.8 to 7.5 percent at the Ph.D. level.

The supply of new graduates in engineering and math/computer science at the bachelor's degree level exhibited a boom-bust pattern both regionally and nationally between 1975 and 1995. New England, however, has experienced significantly larger declines since 1985 than the rest of the country. From 1985 to 1995, baccalaureate engineering degrees awarded fell by 37.4 percent in the region, nearly double the decline in the nation. A similar story emerges for bachelor’s degrees in the math/computer science category.

These patterns in engineering and math/computer science degrees awarded reflect not only regional population declines but also a nationwide shift in the interests of students away from these technical fields of study. The change in student interests is especially pronounced at the bachelor's degree level. For example, 8 percent of the bachelor’s degrees awarded in New England in 1985 were in engineering; by 1995, this figure had dropped to 4.8 percent. At the master's and doctoral levels, 7.1 percent of graduates in New England were in engineering in 1995, versus 8.1 percent in 1985. For math/computer science, only 2.9 percent of four-year degrees awarded were in this field in 1995, down from 5.2 percent a decade earlier. The share of graduate degrees awarded in New England in math/computer science remained relatively constant at approximately 3 percent from 1985 to 1995.
been particularly underrepresented in earth science programs because of the fieldwork that is usually required. Under the program, the university will recruit and train teachers from Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont to teach disabled students using NASA curriculum materials that focus on how climate change, land use and various global systems interact in coastal areas.

LOWELL, MASS. — A University of Massachusetts Lowell researcher was awarded $206,303 by the National Science Foundation and $229,300 by Boston-based Tekscan Corp. to study the stresses and pressures created by granular materials. Professor Samuel Paikowsy will use Tekscan sensors to see how soils move around and press against underground structures such as tunnels, bridge foundations and pier supports. The research also has applications in handling materials ranging from cements to sugar.

WESTFIELD, MASS. — Westfield State College was awarded a three-year, $340,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to study how predicted increases in ultraviolet radiation reaching the earth’s surface will affect plant life. The study of ultraviolet stress in marine macroalgae will be conducted by Westfield State assistant professor Carl Grobe in collaboration with University of Maine researchers Ian Davison and Malcolm Shick.

HARTFORD, Conn. — Trinity College received $500,000 from advertising executive and alumnus Everett E. Elting to support the college’s Human Rights Program for five years. The interdisciplinary program includes an undergraduate minor in human rights and year-long lecture series that brings leading human rights activists to the Hartford campus. Elting graduated from Trinity in 1958 and later became president of Grey Advertising Ltd. of Canada.

MEDFORD, MASS. — Tufts University’s Women’s Center was awarded a $395,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice as part of an $8 million national program to prevent violent crimes against women on college campuses. The Tufts program will provide peer-led workshops, residential staff training and printed literature aimed at Latino, Asian-American, African-American and lesbian and bisexual women who are underserved by existing violence prevention programs.

WILLIMANTIC, Conn. — Eastern Connecticut State University received a $90,000 grant from Southern New England Telephone to fund a one-year, pilot program that will help nontraditional learners and other underserved populations in eastern Connecticut become computer literate. The self-paced, self-directed program provides training in basic computer literacy and workforce skills, such as math. The program is accessible online. The initial phase will target a focus group of up to 25 nontraditional learners.

BENNINGTON, VT. — Southern Vermont College was awarded $275,000 from the Teagle Foundation to launch a strategic planning process which campus officials say will ultimately reduce the number of degree programs offered by the college, currently 25, and emphasize individualized degree programs.

WORCESTER, Mass. — Worcester Polytechnic Institute introduced seven-week, full-salary sabbaticals for tenured or tenure-track faculty who have at least three years of service. The new sabbaticals, based on WPI’s seven-week academic terms, complement existing options allowing professors to take a full year away from teaching at half salary or a half year away at full salary. Currently only 40 percent of WPI faculty take advantage of those options.

BRANDEIS, Waltham, Mass. — Brandeis University unveiled the Brandeis Adult Learning Institute to serve older people who want to continue learning in a structured environment. The institute, set to offer its first classes in September 2000, is geared to retirees age 55 and older, the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. Courses will cover a range of subjects including history, literature, religion, psychology, theater and writings of noted authors, thinkers and politicians. Daily “lunch and learn” sessions will feature lectures by Brandeis faculty members.

FAIRFIELD, Conn. — Sacred Heart University introduced Connecticut’s first master’s degree program in occupational therapy. The two-year program emphasizes small group tutorials where faculty members help students mesh what they learn in the classroom with clinical experiences. Trained to work with people whose day-to-day functioning is limited by injuries and illnesses, occupational therapists are...
in growing demand due to the aging of
the population, changes in health care
law and advances in medical technology.

AMHERST, MASS. — The University of
Massachusetts Amherst introduced
three online master’s degree programs.
The programs in business administra-
tion, public health and nursing in com-
community/school health will be offered
through eCollege.com, a major provider
of online education, and taught by
UMass faculty.

PORTLAND, MAINE — The University
of New England unveiled an online
graduate certificate program in educa-
tional leadership geared to experi-
cenced teachers and school
administrators who already have mas-
ter’s degrees. The program, set to begin
in fall 2000 pending state approval,
requires students to take part in one
weeklong summer seminar; all other
requirements may be satisfied online.
The program was designed in collabo-
ration with eCollege.com, which pro-
vided a $78,000 planning and startup
grant and will help faculty develop
online courses and support systems.
The university already enrolls 650 stu-
dents nationally in a distance learning
master’s program in education.

BOSTON, MASS. — Boston University
established the Michael Bronner e-
Business Center and Hatchery to help
management students start their own
businesses while remaining in college.
The center will match business faculty
with students whose proposals for
electronic businesses are judged
promising and put the student entre-
preneurs in contact with venture capi-
talists. The venture capitalists have
pledged to give back to BU 10 percent
of whatever equity they take in the stu-
dent businesses. Bronner dropped out
of BU 20 years ago to start a coupon
marketing company, then founded
Digitas, an Internet consulting firm
with billings of $1.3 billion. BU officials
say today’s business students are
tempted to leave school to make money
in the booming digital economy.