

theindependentvoice

Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges... Educators, Employers, Community Partners

Financial Aid and College Access



Judith B. Greiman, President, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges

States, colleges and universities and private funders are in partnership with the federal government to provide need-based aid options to students who wish to attend college. **The fundamental principle upon which these partnerships is founded is the desire to provide access to higher education for all students who are adequately prepared and who desire such education.** In Connecticut, we have, by and large, maintained our focus on this overriding principle by continuing to stress our need-based aid programs, rather than developing elaborate and expensive merit aid programs. **We have not, however, funded these programs at a level commensurate with identified need or at a level guaranteed to meet Connecticut's economic development needs.**

Demographic analysis of Connecticut's population shows that we are in the midst of a college age

boomlet with more residents in the traditional going-to-college age range than in years past (CTDHE Fall 2002 College & University Enrollment Report).

"Earning a bachelor's degree does much more than raise the earning power of those who receive one. These graduates have become the foundation of America's future prosperity, expanding the economy, increasing productivity, and growing the tax base. They are also more likely to give back to their communities through volunteerism and philanthropy, fostering a stronger democracy and national unity in this complex time of globalization. When the government helps students get through college, it is investing in the vitality of our nation."

-David L. Warren, President, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Many of these residents come from lower income families or families who have not attended college. In fact, in the 1990s during a period of economic growth, Connecticut families with incomes in the bottom 40% actually lost economic ground and real income of the bottom 20% fell (*The State of Working Connecticut, 2002*, Hall, Geballe). These learners will form the

backbone of Connecticut's future workforce. They are from families likely to suffer the most during periods of economic downturn and least likely to be able to weather tuition increases and aid decreases. **Given Connecticut's knowledge-based economy, potential employees from all socioeconomic and ethnic groups must be college educated to meet employer needs.**

When funding for need-based aid is reduced due to state fiscal constraints, we see a disconnect between state policy and state support for that policy. **To adequately support the policy goal of higher education access, students must believe that need-based aid will be available when they need it.** Students who are unsure of the availability of such aid due to publicized budget cuts may not be inspired to enter into or to excel in college preparatory programs and may lower their own life expectations creating both a personal, and broader community,

skill and experience vacuum.

As noted in Research Report #4 (Heller) for the National Dialogue on Student Financial Aid, **decisions made by policymakers regarding support for financial aid are likely to impact which students are able to go to college and which colleges they attend for many years. Since Connecticut's economic growth relies on a vibrant supply of educated workers, these decisions will also directly impact our ability to attract and keep existing businesses in the state.**

Connecticut lawmakers must heed the call: MAINTAIN SUPPORT FOR NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID.

CONNECTICUT'S LARGEST HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

Little Known Facts About Independent Colleges:

Educate 62,438 students

47% of students are Connecticut residents

Award 53% of the total degrees earned in Connecticut: 58% of total Bachelor's and above degrees

Award 59% of degrees earned by minority students attending four-year institutions in Connecticut

Yale University: Contributing to a Strong New Haven

President Richard C. Levin has committed Yale University to a substantial mobilization of voluntary efforts and to investments in support of economic development, neighborhood revitalization and public education. The University continues to work closely with city government officials, business leaders, clergy and neighborhood organizations in the city's growth — downtown's economic resurgence, Broadway's revitalization, increased minority home ownership throughout the city, a burgeoning biotechnology sector and thriving partnerships with public schools. The relationship between New Haven and Yale has become a model for the nation.

President Levin initiated the President's Public Service Fellowship in 1994, which provides expanded opportunities for Yale students to work on behalf of economic development, human development and neighborhood revitalization with the city's public sector and nonprofit organizations. Since its founding, over 250 Yale students have worked up to 14 weeks each summer and contributed a total of 100,000 hours of community service to 36 different organizations in New Haven neighborhoods. The summer 2002 class of 45 Fellows contributed over 3,500 hours of community service that have served over 2,000 children this summer alone.

Yale is proud of its close partnership with the city's public schools and the community's youth. Yale hosts over 10,000 young people in New Haven public schools through tutoring programs, summer camps like the National Youth Sports Program and visits to its museums, galleries and events, all free of charge. For example, the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing provide more than 200 Hill Regional Career High School students with opportuni-

ties to study at Yale and attend structured internships during the school year, including an anatomy program that brings seniors from Career High School to Yale Medical School's anatomy and histology laboratories to review and discuss Yale students' dissections.

New Haven high school students can take regular Yale College academic courses for credit and free of charge. Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute has helped train one-third of New Haven's middle and high school teachers in curriculum development in humanities. Since 1995, over 500 Yale students have worked as literacy tutors for the America Reads Challenge, in which Yale students provide one-on-one mentoring and tutoring for third graders at Dwight Elementary School.

There are dozens of other programs, including student volunteer efforts through Dwight Hall — LEAP, Youth Together, Citywide Youth Coalition and Peace by Peace — that continue Yale's long tradition of community service to its host city.

An update on Yale's contribution to economic development in the city's real estate market: since the inception of the Yale Homebuyer Program in 1994, Yale employees have purchased homes in New Haven with a total value of over \$56 million, accounting for about 10% of all home purchases in the city. To date, Yale has invested almost \$12 million in the program. Yale also is now the city's single largest real estate property taxpayer, another example of Yale's contributions to a strong New Haven.

Did You Know?

Independent colleges enroll 41.5% of all the full-time equivalent (FTE) students in Connecticut higher education. (Fall 2002)

Investment in Tomorrow



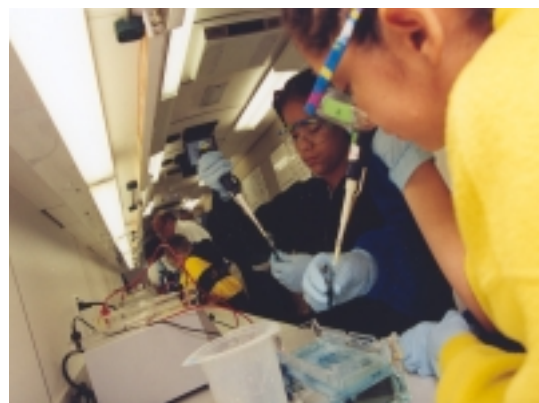
subsequently, how they influence their future children."

Mr. Hunt has been a four-day-a-week math tutor at Sanchez since 1997 and knows the students well. As members of the College Bound Club,

the students were nominated by their teachers as most likely to graduate within the top 20% of their high school classes. The scholarship program will implement academic programs for the students as they move through middle and high school. During their elementary years, they visit each of the three colleges participating in the Hunt Scholarship Program. This year, they came to Saint

The Crystal Room at Saint Joseph College buzzed with energy and excitement on the morning of November 7, as 36 students from Hartford's Maria Sanchez Elementary School began their day-long visit to campus. The fourth, fifth and sixth-graders, all members of Sanchez' College Bound Club, spent the day entrenched in academic life. They met with Saint Joseph College students, toured campus, ate lunch in the cafeteria and participated in a two-hour lesson aboard the state-sponsored Biobus.

As members of the College Bound Club, the students are eligible for scholarships at Saint Joseph College, the University of Hartford, or the University of Connecticut. The Hunt Scholarship, established by John and Carol Hunt, will fully fund 36 students to attend one of the three institutions. The Hunts' goal is to make college a feasible option for the students as they consider their future. "The idea is to teach these kids to pay attention at an early age to their education and their character," said Mr. Hunt. "The outcome we will use to measure this experiment by is how effectively we motivate these kids toward college, and



Joseph College, where they were able to board the visiting Biobus, a mobile biotechnology laboratory. Playing the roles of forensic scientists, they analyzed paint chips to solve the mystery of a stolen painting amid numerous forgeries.

Saint Joseph College stands by President Coleman's wish for the students participating in the College Bound Club: "I hope that many years from now you look back on this day and say, 'that's the day I decided to go to college,'" she told them during her welcoming remarks.

Quinnipiac University's New Institute Mentors Retired NHL Players

The Quinnipiac University School of Business has created the

Professional Athlete Transition Institute to help former National Hockey League players move from a professional hockey career to opportunities in business, finance, sales and entrepreneurship.



Dale Jasinski, left, associate professor of management and founder of the Professional Athlete Transition Institute at Quinnipiac University, and Duncan Fletcher, director of the institute.

The institute, formed to serve the NHL Alumnic Association's Life After Hockey Program, counsels retired NHL players about earning college degrees or developing skills for particular jobs.

"There's a lot of uncertainty about what guys are going to do after the game is over," said former NHL player Stu Grimson. "Regardless of how they end up financially, they have to do something they enjoy after retirement."

The Life After Hockey Program is a one-stop shop for a new career, courtesy of the National Hockey League, the NHL Alumni Association and NHL Players' Association. These organizations jointly pay fees to Quinnipiac and Drake Beam Morin, a career transition firm with an office in every city in which the NHL has a team. After applying to the program, DBM works with players to identify career choices. Then, the Professional Athlete Transition Institute counsels players on how to obtain the necessary skills.

"We are creating an institute which will provide assistance to

professional athletes through research and the develop-

ment of educational resources and services," said institute founder and executive director, Dale Jasinski, associate professor of management at Quinnipiac.

If a player wants to become a financial planner, for example, the institute recommends finance courses or workshops to attend and determines what examinations must be taken for certification. If the player wants to earn a bachelor's or graduate degree in financing, the counselor recommends colleges or universities to attend and helps facilitate the application process and registering for classes. The adviser helps determine degree requirements, including the necessary number of credits, entrance examinations and prerequisite courses.

After achieving the necessary skills, DBM helps players find a job. "DBM brings to light all the options in the workforce," said Pat Flatley, chairman of the Life After Hockey Committee. "Quinnipiac brings to light all the options on the

education side."

Grimson, 37, a former left wing for the Chicago Blackhawks, Mighty Ducks of Anaheim and Nashville Predators, is one of the institute's first clients. An injury has put his career on hold after the 2002 season. Grimson wanted to earn his degree from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, where he completed two years before beginning his professional hockey career.

"The window of time to achieve at a pro sports career is narrow," Grimson said. Athletes play professionally when they are young or they don't play at all. However, when they retire, usually in their 30s, there are many years of life ahead.

Rather than completing his degree in Winnipeg and spending time away from his family (he has four children ages 3-11), Duncan Fletcher, the institute's director, worked with the University of Manitoba, which is allowing Grimson to take classes at Belmont University in Nashville, where he lives. This, along with some distance education and direct-study courses from the University of Manitoba, enables Grimson to earn his bachelor's degree in economics without losing credits he earned at Manitoba. Grimson plans to graduate in May 2003 with a degree from Manitoba and is contemplating graduate school.

"Connecticut's economic health is based on maintaining and improving skills. It is crucial to maintain the focus on education."

*Rae Rosen, economist,
Federal Reserve Bank of
New York*

Principles for Investing in Higher Education to Create Greater Value for America

From The College Board, National Dialogue on Student Financial Aid, January 2003

1. The fundamental purpose of student financial aid...is to assist financially needy students; ...the centerpiece must be closing the gap between the cost of attending college and family resources available to financially needy students.
2. The federal government should lead, in partnership with states, colleges and universities, and the private sector in developing programs and incentives that promote investment in need-based aid.
3. Expanding access to and opportunity for a successful college experience for all students who are prepared and desire to attend is essential to the nation's social progress and economic prosperity.
4. To achieve greater access and success, federal, state, institutional and private partners must invest more equitably and efficiently in college success skills for all students...and in early outreach and retention programs.
5. Accountability for outcomes of investments in pre-college and college support programs, as well as financial aid, should focus on measuring the degree to which student access, persistence and success are increased.

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY EXPANDS MENTORING PROGRAM

M and J Zimmermann Foundation Supports 3-Year Middle-School Study

Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Connecticut, has reached the midway point in their involvement in the Jones/Zimmermann Academic Mentoring Program (AMP) study, a program designed to develop, implement, and evaluate three school-based academic mentoring programs which could serve as a national model for urban school systems.

The study focuses on four primary areas of concern: understanding more fully the effect of academic mentoring on academic performance and school retention; evaluating the behavioral and cognitive correlates of improved discipline and academic achievement among participants; examining if the susceptibility of children to drop out of school is decreased when a child is supported by an academic mentor; and contributing to the "mentoring" body of literature in the field of Education, while also drawing from scholarship in Law, Business and Medicine.

Sacred Heart University was selected for the Academic Mentoring Program study because of its proximity to an urban location (Bridgeport), its available pool of under-

graduate and graduate mentors, its multicultural students and faculty, and its on-going partnership with the local school system.

A pool of 67 students in the 6th grade at John Winthrop Elementary School in Bridgeport were entered into a lottery to select 35 students to participate in the mentoring programs from the 6th through the 8th grade. At the same time, 16 mentors were carefully chosen from a group of 23 who applied. This allows for two mentees for each mentor and encourages the students to support each other in understanding the tasks presented, in learning to cooperate and in being more aggressive in pursuing their goals.

Before the program commenced, each mentor went through a rigorous training program that provided a clear roadmap to the goals of the program. With a charge of helping improve competency in two fundamental skills areas - language skills and mathematics/quantitative skills - they were also introduced to strategies for building self confidence and developing positive social values in the mentored

students.

An additional goal was to reduce truancy in school while encouraging middle school students to aspire to higher education levels and, ultimately, to graduate from high school.

Halfway through the pilot program, some interesting and encouraging results are being realized. Early on, meaningful bonds were formed between the mentors and mentees. After the first year, more than 67% of the students showed improvement, while another 14% remained the same against comparative level indicators of their grade.

On balance, the mentors found that most mentees experienced growth in academic confidence and self-esteem, were less likely to be absent, and were more motivated for academics. At the same time, it was noted that the mentees are forming a community both with their mentors and among themselves.

It is an auspicious start, and all are anticipating what is to come in the final 18 months of the study.



The Independent Voice is a publication of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges, a public policy association representing Connecticut's nonprofit independent higher education institutions.

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