

theindependentvoice

Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges... *Student Success Statewide*

An Investment in Knowledge Pays the Best Interest



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

The 2002 Connecticut legislative session was difficult for all participants due to a growing budget gap caused by declining revenues and the ever-increasing needs of Connecticut residents. In fact, as of this writing, legislative leaders have yet to agree on a revised budget for the coming fiscal year as the debate about increasing taxes or decreasing expenditures is heard throughout the Capitol.

All agree, however, on the fact that Connecticut's recovery and future growth depend on a strong and educated workforce that can meet the demands of the global marketplace. Because our state is relatively small and is not expecting the kind of population growth projected for other states, we must make sure that all of our residents are adequately prepared to meet the challenges before us.

As noted in a recent article by Kristin Conklin of the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices, states must "continue to invest in higher education in the short run for a long-term productivity payoff... The wisest states will invest for the long term in education at all levels, including early childhood education, K-12, postsecondary, and adult education. They will avoid cutting higher education to protect spending on other levels of education."

We must make sure that all future and current workforce participants can get the education that they need in order to be productive contributors to Connecticut's and their own economic success. This type of access requires both vital academic programming and financial support for those in need. One without the other will not allow us to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Accordingly, we must work together to ensure proper funding of need-based aid programs at both the federal and state levels. For the poorest 40% of Connecticut families, inflation adjusted

income is actually less today than it was in the late 1980s. It is only marginally better for the middle 20% of Connecticut families. Yet, this 60% of our workforce serves as the backbone of our economy. *How can we afford not to invest in their futures?*

Applying to College?



CtMentor.org, a free Internet-based information system helps prospective students prepare for college admission, seek information about higher education opportunities in Connecticut, and find the best college choice among the many colleges and universities in this state.

CTMentor.org takes prospective students on multimedia virtual campus tours, helps them match their needs and interests with specific institutions, establishes direct e-mail communication with campus representatives, performs scholarship searches, and provides a host of other features, including a comprehensive section on

financial aid to help students and their families understand their financial aid opportunities and eligibility. Once students have narrowed down their campus choices and decide to apply for admission, CTMentor.org provides online admissions and financial aid applications for them to quickly and easily complete and submit over the Internet.

Designed to make college accessible for all students who want to fully explore the educational opportunities available to them, CTMentor.org gives students and their families yet another tool to succeed in their pursuit of quality higher education. •

Albertus Magnus College Takes on Statewide Presence

The first 12 women to graduate from Albertus Magnus College received their Bachelor's degrees in 1928. The Class of 2002—more than 600 women and men—received their undergraduate and graduate degrees from this thriving liberal arts college. Founded by the Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the Springs, the College opened in September 1925

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The Journey Continues

Just as students grow and develop throughout their college years, a small college in New London, Connecticut has also recently undergone a significant change. Mitchell College, long known as New England's top two-year liberal arts institution, began conferring bachelor's degrees in May 2000. This spring, Mitchell College gained the unanimous approval of the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education for programs in Psychology and Sport Management. Mitchell currently offers baccalaureate programs in Human Development and Family Studies, Liberal and Professional Studies, Early Childhood Education, Business Administration and Criminal Justice. These bachelor degree additions to the College's already diverse array of academic offerings reflects the tireless efforts of faculty and staff alike to continue Mitchell's transition from a two-year to a four-year institution of higher education.

"The whole Mitchell community is excited about this latest approval. It represents the culmination of several years of work in developing a total of seven bachelor degree programs," stated Dr. Jane Friederichs, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the College. "We have a commitment to delivering academic programs which are current, innovative and prepare our students for excellent employment opportunities, as well as for lifelong learning and an appreciation of the

liberal arts. Our commitment to excellence is strengthened by these latest program achievements."



Students enjoy having classes outside on Mitchell's picturesque waterfront campus

Initially, the decision to add baccalaureate programs was motivated by student requests. Students at Mitchell expressed dismay at having discovered a small, personal institution that provided for their specific academic and extracurricular needs, yet limited their options to an associate degree. Mitchell's proactive philosophy has always been to put students' needs at the forefront.

"A significant number of students who had earned an associate's degree at Mitchell requested that the College consider offering bachelor's degrees," said President Mary Ellen Jukoski. "Given this student request and interest, Mitchell responded to an important educational need. We were founded to meet the needs of the community. Expanding our degree offerings was a natural progression in the College's growth and journey."

Mitchell College's new baccalaureate programs have done more than accommodate students wishing to continue their studies

on campus. Last year, enrollment was up 14 percent.

Mitchell experienced the most growth of any institution of higher learning in the state of Connecticut.

Now, Mitchell finds itself in competition with larger four-year liberal arts colleges and universities. To address its changing role in the education marketplace,

Mitchell created a marketing campaign entitled 'Begin Your Journey.' "Regardless of where students come from or where they're headed, Mitchell can provide them with the tools and direction to chart their course and become academically successful," stated Kevin Mayne, vice president for enrollment management and marketing. Symbols of the campaign include a compass and nautical references, which are used to reinforce the 'Journey' theme of direction, while also capitalizing upon Mitchell's unique location.

At Mitchell, the journey continues...for students and for the College itself. •

Teikyo Post and Project SEARCH Team Up to Test the Waters

Students from Teikyo Post University's Biological Sciences and Environmental Theories and Applications Programs have recently joined Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH, a collaboration between the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Science Center of Connecticut, uses volunteers to gather water quality data from

the state's 5,800 miles of streams. This partnership provides students with an opportunity to learn about benthic macroinvertebrates (animals without backbones that live in the bottom of streams) and their use in biomonitoring.

Project SEARCH trains high school science teachers on water quality monitoring procedures and data analysis and then assists with integration of the monitoring into existing courses at the school. After deciding how best to integrate the program within a school's science curriculum, a local river or stream is selected for the students to monitor. Students then collect biological, chemical, and physical site data, which is compiled by the students and prepared by SEARCH staff for an Annual Report on Water Quality. Used as baseline data for each sampled stream, the collected data also is included in DEP water quality reports sent to Congress.

This spring, Project SEARCH staff held a special training session at the DEP Training Facility in Bethany to teach TPU students about biomonitoring, utilizing macroinvertebrates as indicator species to help characterize stream or river quality. Students from TPU's Environmental Impact Assessment, Zoology and General Biology classes learned about collecting and sampling aquatic invertebrates and identifying macroinvertebrates using

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training manuals and identification keys. Students gained practical experience and a greater understanding of science in the field that should assist them in several class projects, including an impact assessment project of the culvert at the intersection of Country Club Road and Route 63, animal diversity assessment, evolutionary patterns in insects, and freshwater productivity analysis.

Student reaction to the training and river assessment was overwhelmingly positive. TPU sophomore Zasha Soto enjoyed her participation in Project Search and said she would like to do it again. "It was designed for us to learn more about what lives in and beneath the lakes and streams, so it was both fun and educational," she remarked.

"The project was really interesting, looking at structures of the organisms," said freshman David Huang. "It was nice to understand what lies beneath the sand and gravel of the lakes – micro-organisms that are unable to be seen with the naked eye."

Future collaboration between TPU's science programs, the DEP and Project Search will open opportunities for TPU students to gain field and work experience. Additionally, by assisting local high schools in Project Search work, TPU science faculty and the student-run Science Club will be able to increase awareness of biological and environmental science in the community. •

The Trinity College Field Station at Church Farm

Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. has embarked on a precedent-setting effort in Ashford, Conn. to preserve and renovate a historical site that has become home to the Trinity College Field Station at Church Farm (TCFS).

The TCFS was established in late 1999 when Joseph and Dorothy Zaring donated portions of their historic property to the College. The site includes a historic home that dates as far back as the 1700s and a barn that was built in 1895. Both structures are on the National Historic Registry. The field station comprises 152 acres held by the College. Another 104 acres are held by the Joshua's Trust, a land trust dedicated to the preservation of open space in northeastern Connecticut. The Joshua's Trust has made its holdings available for the College's research use.

During the site's first full year of operation in 2000, the TCFS at Church Farm hosted six Trinity science courses and two secondary school-level courses from The Greater Hartford Academy of Math and Science in the Learning Corridor in Hartford. That same year, eight faculty research projects were launched at the site. TCFS's biodiversity is so extensive that two national monitoring programs have been implemented. Joan Morrison, assistant professor of biology, is leading Trinity's participation in the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survival (MAPS) program—a cooperative effort among public agencies, private

organizations, and individual bird banders in North America to operate a network of constant-effort mist netting and banding stations during the summer breeding season. The second program is the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) butterfly count. This past summer, Assistant Professor of Biology Scott Smedley and his students conducted inventory of various butterfly species to attain a preliminary assessment of the species diversity at the site.



The goal is to develop long-term databases to study these insect populations over time. Trinity is one of only three colleges or universities in Southern New England that has a field station affiliated with the Organization of Biological Field Stations (OBFS). Despite its concentration of over 140 colleges and universities, the region remains lacking in field stations—a circumstance Trinity hopes to alleviate by providing outreach to other academic institutions and experts from a variety of fields. In the coming months, the College will explore the use of the Church Farm buildings to support programs in the fine arts, which may include artist retreats and classroom meetings.

In terms of scientific research planning, Smedley, along with Morrison, and other professors prepared a grant proposal to the National Science Foundation (NSF) to fund the development of a site plan for the TCFS at Church Farm. Based on this proposal, the NSF awarded a \$25,000 planning grant to the College last September. This seed money will fund the development of the station's strategic plan through a series of site visits to established field stations.

Once the comprehensive strategic plan for the site is finished, the College will apply for a \$500,000 matching grant from the NSF. These funds would aid the construction of an environmental teaching and research facility at the TCFS enabling Trinity to integrate the property into more academic offerings, as well as have it become a key asset to the new environmental science major. "This clearly is an asset for the entire Northeast academic community," says Smedley. "We're looking forward to collaboration with other institutions on programming, learning and instruction."•

DATCO Supports CCIC 70th Anniversary

CCIC wishes to thank Datco Motorcoach for donating bus service to support CCIC's 70th anniversary festivities. Datco's kind contribution helped to make our day at the Capitol a success.
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Albertus (from page 1) with 44 students and one magnificent mansion, named Rosary Hall, on New Haven's elegant Prospect Hill. Today 2,400 students study at Albertus and that one all-purpose mansion has become a dozen buildings spread across a 50-acre main campus.

In recent years, Albertus Magnus has established a statewide presence through its New Dimensions Program, which has Educational Centers in New Haven, East Hartford and Stratford, and ten other sites from Stamford to Waterbury to Danbury and New London.

With New Dimensions, as well as the Accelerated Degree Program in the Continuing Education Division, the College has established a leadership role in the education of the non-traditional adult student, while continuing to offer a strong program for the traditional day student.

The New Dimensions format appeals to the busy adult because it is totally focused on students' needs: classes are scheduled at convenient times and locations; there are

pre-planned, logical course sequences in a compressed timeframe; all study materials are delivered to class sites; and there is personalized educational counseling. Students attend class once a week with their professor and meet once a week with their study group/work team.

Two of the College's four graduate programs, the Master of Science in Management and the Master of Business Administration, follow the New Dimensions design. Introduced in 1995, the M.S.M. emphasizes both the theoretical approach to management issues and the opportunity to learn from practical work-related experience through intensive student/faculty interaction. The M.B.A. program, introduced last September in New Haven, has as its hallmark a cutting edge curriculum with a major ethical focus crafted to meet the challenges of today's business environment. Courses are scheduled in lock-step sequence from business ethics and change strategy progressing through, for example, e-commerce and a capstone course in entrepreneurship, which includes the develop-

ment of a comprehensive business plan. All courses have been designed to develop competencies in leadership, team building, conflict resolution and process improvement.

The College's Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, its first graduate program, is a broad, cross-disciplinary approach to knowledge. Whereas graduate studies typically lead to an ever-narrowing focus and specialization, the M.A.L.S. degree offers a unified perspective and the freedom to explore themes across traditional course boundaries.

Albertus offers the only Master of Arts in Art Therapy degree program in the state of Connecticut. The degree is considered essential for advancement in this burgeoning profession, but previously students had to go out of state for their graduate study.

The search for truth in all its dimensions, the bedrock of the College at its founding 77 years ago, continues to support all its endeavors today. •



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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