

theindependentvoice

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

College Access—Opportunity for Connecticut, Opportunity for Families



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

Connecticut continues to be a state of contrasts. There truly are two Connecticut.

As evidence, the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) recently found that Connecticut ranks fifth in the nation in the proportion of heads of households who have at least four years of college. We should not, however, celebrate this important measure since a look at Connecticut's racial and economic minorities tells a decidedly different story.

> Connecticut ranks 33rd out of 50 in the ratio of college graduates among the wealthiest 20% as compared to those among the poorest 20%.

> Connecticut ranks 42nd out of 46 (5th worst) in the ratio of college graduates in homes with white heads of household as compared

to those with non-white heads of household.

Nationally, qualified low-income students attend four-year institutions at half the rate of their comparably qualified higher-income peers. Access Denied, February 2000.

Why has this happened?

- ◆ The cost of higher education has risen steadily as a % of family income only for low-income families, at the same time that middle-income affordability and merit have displaced access as the focus of policy makers.

- ◆ This shift in priorities has caused a steep rise in the unmet need of lower income students.

- ◆ In response to high levels of unmet need, lower income students tend to abandon plans for full-time, on-campus attendance and end up attending part-time, working long hours and borrowing heavily, thereby lowering the probability of their

persistence and degree completion significantly.

It seems obvious that, "State appropriations for financial aid programs cannot go down when tuition rates go up if college affordability is to be preserved," as noted by Postsecondary Education OPPORTUNITY in July 2002.

But, how has Connecticut responded to the challenge of preserving affordability?

- ◆ Connecticut's college participation rate for low-income students declined by 50% between FY99 and FY01.

- ◆ Connecticut's need-based financial aid programs were cut this year by 15% and 6%.

- ◆ Based on these cuts, in constant dollars, Connecticut spends less on need-based aid today than it did in FY90.

How can we reverse these trends?

- ◆ Set as a benchmark for the state that lower

income students must have the same opportunity as their middle and upper-income peers to pursue and complete a bachelor's degree without excessive work or borrowing.

- ◆ Increase funding for need-based aid programs.

- ◆ Keep state funded financial aid targeted toward lower income students.

We must work together to get our message across to our leaders. ***We must work towards one Connecticut where all residents are valued and all residents have equal access to college to enable our workforce to grow and our families to prosper.***

DID YOU KNOW?

Borrowing an extra \$1000 to pay for school results in a 3% increase in the drop-out rate for low-income students, but getting an extra \$1000 in grants reduces the drop-out rate by 14%.
Institute for Higher Education Policy, 1995

Delivering Good Health Care in The Community Fairfield University

Delivering good healthcare in the community requires more than knowledge about the ins and outs of clinical care.



Success also depends upon your ability to work in a fluid situation. Unlike a hospital, where the environment is regulated, community-based healthcare initiatives face a world of unknowns: from distracting surroundings to limited medical equipment. Yet the community provides opportunities to meet people where they live and work.

Nursing students at Fairfield University are getting that hands-on experience through the School of Nursing's Health Promotion Center (HPC). The center, begun in 1993, provides health screenings, education and referral services to underserved people in Bridgeport, Conn. Students get supervised real world experience, while residents of the community get free healthcare services they might otherwise never receive.

"Most of the services are provided by students through service learning," said Lydia Greiner, BSN, RN, manager of community services for Fairfield University's School of Nursing.

"You're getting direct experience in what you're going to do," said Kimberly Fahey, a junior nursing student at Fairfield. As part a nursing class, Fahey and other students provide screenings for everything from vision and hearing at ABCD Head Start to cholesterol at senior citizen housing sites. Students in the psychiatric nurse practitioner program also provide mental health screenings and education.

Guiding the HPC's mission is

Director Philip Greiner, DNSc, RN, Associate Professor in the School of Nursing, who just completed a two-year Health Partners Fellowship at the International

Center for Health Leadership Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The program helps fellows develop mutually beneficial interactions between academic institutions and community groups.

"The HPC is a recognized leader in health education services in Bridgeport. Our approach is to partner with other agencies. An example is the subcontract from the City of Bridgeport, Department of Youth Services, to manage the Health & Wellness Center at Bassick High School," says Dr. Greiner. There, the HPC offers an assortment of classes, from the Healthy Kid's Club to stress management to salsa dancing.

Pamela Smart attends the classes regularly. "It just keeps you motivated," said Smart, a nanny from Bridgeport. "It takes you away from everything else."

Attending classes at the Health & Wellness Center is a mother-daughter affair for Tatiana Richardson. The eighth grader at Longfellow Middle School volunteers to help with children's activities during the evening, such as arts and crafts classes, while her mother pursues women's wellness and aerobics. Richardson and her mother visit the Health & Wellness Center about three times a week.

Since it began offering programs in September 2001, the Health & Wellness Center has grown substantially, now serving more than 300 people.

"We now have waiting lists for our programs," Lydia Greiner said.

Green Street Arts Program Wesleyan University



There's a lot more singing and dancing on Main Street in Middletown this fall, thanks in part to a pilot program launched by Wesleyan University in conjunction with local community members. The Green Street Arts Program is a series of classes, workshops and performances designed to build momentum for the opening of the Green Street Arts Center in 2004 in the North End of Middletown, an economically depressed area of the city that is working to rejuvenate and reinvigorate itself.

"The Green Street Arts Program reflects the world arts curriculum at Wesleyan and we have worked to attract the highest caliber of teacher, many of whom have Wesleyan affiliations," said Pamela Tatge, director of Wesleyan's Center for the Arts. "The program builds on needs and interests we identified through the Ferry Street Community Garden's Summer Arts in the Garden series and the work done by Wesleyan students in mentoring programs. We hope this program will give the community a taste of what is to come once the center has been built."

The Green Street Arts Center—located in the former Green Street School—will host arts classes and workshops for children and adults with an active after-school program and morning programs for seniors, as well as providing gallery space for rotating exhibits of student and faculty work. It also will serve as an artistic home to neighborhood-based artists and art ensembles and as a home base for service learning classes taught by Wesleyan. Ultimately, the center hopes to create an apprenticeship program in applied arts such as video editing, sound recording, graphic design and photography.

The University has committed to seek \$1 million in funding for the project through a federal

community development grant, as well as grants from the state Department of Education and other state sources and state and national philanthropic foundations that support town-gown projects. Wesleyan currently is searching for a director to head up the center.

Green Street marks a trend with Wesleyan's commitment to financial involvement in the city of Middletown. Wesleyan has also contributed funds to help build a new hotel on Main Street and donated \$100,000 to the Middlesex County Community Foundation to create the Wesleyan University Community Fund, which will be used to dispense money to local groups and individuals to enhance philanthropy and improve conditions throughout the county.

Wesleyan continues its strong tradition of individual involvement in the city. The University's 2,800 students contributed 31,000 hours of community service to Middletown and the surrounding community last year, and staff and alumni added many hours to projects as well, including cleaning and refurbishing a local North End building to create a local artists' cooperative apartment complex and gallery that opened this month.

Did You Know?

The Educational Testing Service reports that if opportunities for higher education were equalized, the nation's income would receive a boost of more than \$270 billion, generating an additional \$80 billion in new tax revenues. CT's income would increase by \$1 billion if educational opportunities for minority students were equalized. We must work together to achieve such equality?

A Vibrant Performing Arts Center in North Hartford

A vacant car distributorship in the North End of Hartford is poised to become a vibrant center for performing arts education and a key element in the economic and cultural revitalization of Hartford's Upper Albany and Blue Hills neighborhoods. The



University of Hartford is planning to build a performing arts center on the site of the former Thomas Cadillac at the corner of Albany Avenue and Westbourne Parkway in Hartford, just down the road from the University's Bloomfield Avenue campus. The site has been vacant since 1995.

The center will alleviate significant space shortages brought about by the dramatic growth of The Hartt School, the University's renowned performing arts conservatory. The three-building complex will house Hartt's theatre, dance, and vocal studies programs, as well as a portion of the Community Division. At the same time, it will provide significant benefits to the community, including space for community meetings and functions, a café, and a bank branch.

The project will make Hartt's acclaimed Community Division more accessible to children and adults in North Hartford. The Community Division is one of the nation's top community arts programs, providing noncredit lessons and classes in music and theatre to more than 2,500 children and adults each semester.

In addition, the project will breathe new life into the vacant Thomas Cadillac site while preserving the unique exterior character of the buildings. The buildings were designed for

General Motors by pioneering industrial architect Albert Kahn.

The new facility will complement the programs of The Artists Collective, another dynamic arts education center located farther down Albany

Avenue. The Artists Collective was founded by Hartt School professor and jazz legend Jackie

McLean and his wife, Dollie McLean. With The Artists Collective at one end and the University of Hartford Performing Arts Center at the other, Upper Albany Avenue has the potential to become a lively cultural corridor for the city of Hartford.

The performing arts center, which is tentatively scheduled to open in 2006, has taken a number of important steps forward in recent months. The University formally took title to the 7.2-acre property on which the center will be located, and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving awarded \$1.3 million to the project, one of the largest grants in the foundation's history.

The project is expected to cost \$25 million. Funding will come from a variety of sources, including individual donors, corporations, foundations, and the state and federal government. For example, the Connecticut Development Authority approved \$2 million in bonding to help transform the Thomas Cadillac site under the state's new Brownfields Redevelopment Program. The program is designed to stimulate the growth of housing and business projects on abandoned sites known as "brownfields."

UNH LAUNCHES NATIONAL CRIME SCENE CENTER & TRAINING PROGRAM

The University of New Haven (UNH) announced plans to develop a national center for crime scene training to be financed through \$2 M in federal funds. The Center will be housed within the UNH Henry C. Lee Institute of Forensic Science.

UNH President Larry DeNardis; Dr. Albert B. Harper, director of the UNH Henry Lee Institute; Dr. Henry C. Lee; and Congresswoman Rosa Delauro, joined in announcing UNH has been formally notified by the U.S. Department of Justice that it will receive funding to develop and operate the UNH National Crime Scene Training Center.

The UNH Lee Institute will be the only academic resource in the country where law enforcement and other professionals will be able to receive specialized crime scene training according to uniform standards.

The funding will enable development of the center and training of law enforcement officials - from police investigators and laboratory scientists to prosecutors - with the most advanced technology and real life learning available.

A former U. S. Congressman, Dr. DeNardis was directly involved in securing the funding. It was included in the nation's annual appropriations package and was reviewed by the Justice Department and a panel of experts selected by the Justice Department.

The federal money will be used to develop the center, purchase equipment and fund a small number of additional personnel. UNH was successful in gaining congressional and Bush administration approval for the program because, despite rapid scientific advancement, especially in DNA technology, many cases are not solved or are lost in court due to problems with the evidence. These problems can relate to

recognition, collection, and preservation of evidence, and lack of appropriate knowledge, process and procedure at the crime scene. There is a critical need for a state-of-the-art national crime scene technology center.

The center will be open to all law enforcement officials and forensic scientists, ranging from police officers and laboratory scientists to prosecutors and judges.

The benefits of the UNH National Crime Scene Training Center will include standardized training of crime laboratory personnel, law enforcement agents, and state's attorneys who will be given standardized training in the range of disciplines associated with crime material as it progresses from discovery, through testing, to presentation as evidence in court. This will result in more successful investigations, enhanced efficiency of testing relevant evidence, fewer courtroom challenges, improved public perception of the criminal justice system and overall lower costs related to enhanced accuracy and efficiencies.

Dr. DeNardis said, "At this difficult time for our nation, when the people of America are absorbed in the details of Washington Area sniper cases, one of the most critical issues is the evidence associated with these horrible assaults and murders. At UNH, our forensic scientists are most acutely aware of controversies associated with evidence in these and other major crimes that affect the tranquility and safety of our society."

Dr. Henry C. Lee and other forensic specialists and criminal investigators associated with the Lee Institute of Forensic Science and the School of Public Safety & Professional Studies have determined that outcomes of many important cases have

(See UNH on page 4)

been altered by improper or uninformed management of evidence - sometimes aggravated by poor communication or the absence of cross training among professionals. In some cases, vital evidence is not found or collected at all.

"We aim to help change this and believe that the UNH National Crime Training Center can be a new contributor to effective criminal justice in America," DeNardis said.

Among the public officials and UNH leaders invited to the conference, were Acting Chief State's Attorney Chris Morano; CT Commissioner of Public Safety Arthur Spada; UNH Forensic Science Department chairman, Dr. Howard Harris; Lee Institute chairman, Robert Alvine; UNH School of Public Safety & Professional Studies Dean Thomas Johnson; the Office Chief of Training for the Connecticut Public Defender's Office, Catherine Meyers; executive director of Court Support Services, William H. Carbone; Milford State's Attorney Mary

Galvin; Commissioner of Corrections John Armstrong; the chief court administrator, Joseph Pellegrino; chairman of the legislative Public Safety Committee, Rep. Steve Dargan; chairman of the legislative Judiciary Committee, Rep. Michael Lawlor; Mayor of West Haven H. Richard Borer, Jr.; State Medical Examiner Dr. Wayne Carver; the director of scientific services for the Department of Public Safety - Major Timothy Palmbach; and members of State Crime Lab staff - Elaine Pagliaro, Ken Zercie, Bob O'Brien and Debbie Messina.

The UNH Henry C. Lee Institute of Forensic Science was established at the West Haven campus in 1997. Its focuses are the conduct of forensics research, public education programs and training of professionals in criminal justice and related fields. In 2001, the Institute - with the involvement of school, public safety and political leaders - launched a national web site devoted to school safety. Each year, the Institute conducts the national Arnold Markle

Conference on criminal justice issues, attracting law enforcement professionals from throughout the country. The Institute is named for Dr. Henry C. Lee, the nation's most prominent criminologist and forensic scientist. Dr. Lee, retired as commissioner of the state Department of Public Safety and director of the state's Forensic Science Laboratory in Meriden, joined the University of New Haven in 1975 as an associate professor. Lee is the first person to be honored with the Dr. Henry C. Lee Endowed Chair in Forensic Science at UNH and he continues to teach a course in the field at the West Haven campus.



CCIC would like to wish you and your family a "Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving!"



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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Dr. Lawrence J. DeNardis
President, University of New Haven

Vice Chair

Dr. Winifred E. Coleman
President, Saint Joseph College

President

Judith B. Greiman
Connecticut Conference of
Independent Colleges
ph: 860.236.0900
fax: 860.236.0910
e: greimanj@theccic.org
www.theccic.org

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