

theindependentvoice

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

Education Now. Prosperity Tomorrow. Growing Connecticut's Future.

The data tell the story.

Education is key to Connecticut's future but we have a long way to go to ensure that Connecticut remains a state prized for its educated workforce and that its residents are able to participate fully in its economic growth.

The data listed here should provide a foundation and mandate for all stakeholders to come together to support modifications to our pre-K-20 systems of education. We have no other choice.

This data is excerpted from information compiled by Connecticut State University System in support of the recent "Education Now. Prosperity Tomorrow. Growing Connecticut's Future" town meeting series:

- ❑ In Connecticut each year, 13,000 students drop out of high school, and 8 % of the state's strongest academic students do not continue on to higher education. *Next Steps: The Role of Education in Preparing for Quality Work Force, January 2008*
- ❑ For every 100 public high school ninth-graders nationally, only 69 will graduate from high school four years later, only 39 will enter college the fall after they graduate, only 27 will return to their college for sophomore year and only 18 will earn associate degrees within three years of enrolling in college or bachelor's degrees within six years of enrolling. *Connection, New England Board of Higher Education, Spring 2007*
- ❑ Nearly two-thirds of employers ranked reading comprehension as "very important" for high school graduates, yet 38 percent consider most high school graduates deficient in this basic skill. *Achieve Inc., April 2007*
- ❑ In 2006, fewer than half of Connecticut tenth graders met Goal in Mathematics (46.3%), Science (44.6%) and Reading Across the Disciplines (46.5%). *CT State Department of Education, CT Education Data & Research, (CEDAR) 2006*
- ❑ Nationally, 75% of students raised in high income families receive at least a bachelor's degree by age 24 but fewer than 9% of students growing up in low income families do so. *Promise Abandoned, The Education Trust, August 2006 (*top quartile)*
- ❑ By 2020, nearly half of the 25-29 year olds in Connecticut and more than a quarter of Connecticut's working-age population will be minorities. *New England 2020, June 2006*
- ❑ Forecasts predict that the number of young people with bachelor's degrees in Connecticut will shrink by more than 4% between 1993 and 2020, even as the percentage of jobs requiring a college degree continues to grow rapidly. *New England 2020, June 2006*
- ❑ Jobs requiring higher education will grow by 22 percent between 2002 and 2012 – nearly double the rate of non-college jobs. *Bureau of Labor Statistics*
- ❑ African Americans between the ages of 25 and 29 attain bachelor's degrees at nearly one-half – and Latinos at one-third – the rate of whites. *Promise Abandoned, The Education Trust, August 2006*
- ❑ Nearly 30 percent of college freshmen must enroll in at least one remedial course because they are not prepared for college-level work in a particular subject. *Achieve Inc. April 2007*
- ❑ College instructors estimate that more than 4 in 10 high school graduates are not ready for college courses. Employers estimate that 45 percent of high school graduates do not have the skills to advance beyond entry-level jobs. *Achieve Inc., American Diploma Project, 2005*
- ❑ Connecticut lost 85,000 40-64 year olds between 1990 and 2000 – a staggering figure nearly equivalent to the population of Waterbury. *New England 2020, June 2006*
- ❑ Connecticut now ranks 44th among the states in the growth of technology capability and 40th in the growth of human capital, a critical component to the amount of output an economy produces. *Benchmarking Connecticut 2007, Connecticut Economic Resource Center, 2008*

(Data cont. on p. 3)



Internet cafes are often drab, uninviting places where patrons pay a few dollars, plunk themselves down at a vacant workstation, check their email and squeeze in a game of solitaire before their computer time expires.

About the only similarity between your basic garden-variety Internet café and Trinity College's wholly-owned and operated Trinfo.Cafe is that they both have computers, are open to the public and offer coffee (though Trinity's is free).

Trinfo.Cafe, a stone's throw from the college's campus on Broad Street in Hartford, is a welcoming venue where neighborhood residents, merchants and civic groups are learning to overcome the digital divide by becoming computer literate, enrolling in classes in English and Spanish and using technology to look for a job or buy and sell goods on EBay.

Although Trinfo.Cafe was originally opened in 2000 thanks to a W.K. Kellogg grant, Trinity took the computer lab under its wing four years ago when the grant expired. Now, under the auspices of the college's Center for Urban and Global Studies, Trinfo.Cafe is broadening its scope.

"Trinfo.Cafe is not only a bridge to the community but a bridge to the urban and global levels," explained Carlos Espinosa, the café's director and one of its two full-time employees. Most recently, a special effort has been made to reach out to Hartford's growing Bosnian, African and Brazilian immigrant communities.

But the benefits of Trinfo,Café aren't limited to neighborhood residents; the facility has also proven to be a unique learning tool for Trinity students, who, as young adults attending a liberal arts college, are taught to be citizens of the world.

"It's essential that Trinfo.Cafe relates to the core mission of the college — teaching kids to become more and more integrated into the urban and global environment," said Espinosa.

Trinfo.Cafe is open six days a week, 50 weeks a year, and is staffed by Trinity students — during the academic year and six in the summer. The students are paid and given free housing when school is out. Trinity provides \$160,000 each year to keep the technology center up and running.

There are 22 custom-built computers, 17 in the lab and five in what's called the social space. A wireless connection allows patrons to use their laptops. And the basement serves as a classroom and workroom where used computers from Trinity are refurbished for distribution to the community. More than 400 have been dispersed over the past six years.

What began as a trickle of patrons has evolved into a constant flow, with the busiest times occurring mid-morning and after school. Trinfo.Cafe averages 27,000 visits a year, an amazingly high figure given that no formal advertising is done; it's all word of mouth.



Raquel Calderon

Raquel Calderon is a self-described "community advocate" and Trinfo.Cafe regular. "It's a great place to come for information," she said. "It's next to Trinity College and the Learning Corridor. This place is like gold."

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Albertus Magnus College Celebrates 10th Anniversary of Master's of Art Therapy

During the 2007-2008 academic year, Albertus Magnus College celebrated the 10th anniversary of its Master of Arts in Art Therapy program, the only one of its kind in Connecticut.

Established in 1997, the Albertus program met a crucial need for those seeking a master's degree in the field--now considered necessary for employment in the profession--by giving them an opportunity to remain in Connecticut for their graduate work, instead of heading to another state and, perhaps, not returning.

Art therapy is a human service profession that bridges the disciplines of art and psychology; it emerged during the 1950s and has since become an established profession. Art therapists, using art media and the creative process, work with clients to explore their inner feelings, reconcile emotional conflicts, enhance self-esteem and increase coping and problem-solving skills. Together, the therapist and the client strive to understand what the content of the client's art reveals.

For many years, art therapy had been a popular undergraduate major at Albertus. Seniors searching for graduate programs in at therapy often felt that they really did not want to leave the state, but had no choice. The feeling was shared by others already in the work force who realized that a graduate degree in art therapy was necessary to move ahead.

Dr. Ragaa Mazen— then chairperson of the Albertus psychology department and later the first director of the Master of Arts in Art Therapy program— began the research, planning and curriculum development that eventually led to approval by the College of the proposed graduate program and to approval by the state of Connecticut.

The Albertus program meets or exceeds educational standards set by the American Art Therapy Association and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs.

Students in the 60-credit master's program, which includes required supervised clinical experience, come mainly from Connecticut, but increasingly from other states as well. "We have been swamped with applicants for this fall, says Dr. Donna Kaiser, director of the program since 2006. "For the first time we have had applicants from Texas, Maine, North Carolina, Georgia, California, Ohio and Virginia—and even Pakistan."

CareerBuilder.com named art therapist as one of its 10 Hot Jobs for 2007. "All of our graduates are getting jobs, and right now there is such demand for art therapists that some jobs are going begging," says Kaiser. Among jobs held by graduates of the Albertus Master of Arts in Art Therapy program are art therapist, rehabilitation specialist, clinical coordinator of adolescent substance abuse service, expressive arts coordinator, psychotherapist and art teacher. They work in hospitals, homes for the elderly, public school systems, clinics and private practice.

Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts Wins Grant For Teacher Professional Development

Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts (Lyme) in Old Lyme, Connecticut was awarded a 2008 Teacher Quality Partnership Grant for \$150,000 from the Connecticut Department of Higher Education (CDHE) in April 2008. The Teacher Quality Partnership Grant was one of only 5 awarded in 2008, and the first awarded in the humanities in many years.

The grant funds *ArtMusica*, a professional development institute for 50 Connecticut teachers in the visual arts and music for grades K through 12. The institute will be held in July 2008. The grant will cover costs of attendance and provide a stipend for participants.

Lyme was the lead in a partnership that includes Fairfield University (Fairfield),

Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), the Florence Griswold Museum (the Museum), and the New Haven Public Schools (NHPS). Lyme will provide studio-based education to art teachers, Fairfield will provide education to music teachers; the Museum will provide education in art history; CCSU and CSDE will provide 25



hours of instruction in pedagogy

and assessment to both art and music teachers.

The program will offer parallel, two-week, 55-hour summer institutes and 15 hours of follow-up activities during the school year. Thirty hours of studio art instruction will be provided in painting, drawing, and sculpture, all from observation. Thirty hours of music instruction will be provided in composition, vocal improvisation, and African drumming. The Museum will provide education in the American Impressionist movement, and how to convey art historical information in the visual arts classroom. The Museum will also provide Web-based services for ongoing lesson planning and curriculum development.

Program faculty will include higher education faculty who are highly qualified in music or visual arts, or assessment and

pedagogy for those disciplines, and the CSDE Art Consultant. The program is designed around teacher-centered small groups.

ArtMusica, which will provide 3,500 contact hours over a 12-month period, responds to teachers' needs for greater art content learning; assistance in applying standards-based arts curricula in the classroom; and more effective, uniform, research-based student assessment practices.

The program is completely subscribed, having enrolled 50 teachers from diverse urban, suburban, and rural communities. Through use of faculty from institutions of higher education and CSDE staff, *ArtMusica* will ensure diversity in artistic backgrounds and professional training, and help mentor future leaders in art educator professional development.

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(Data cont. from p. 1)

- ❑ As recently as 2000, two-thirds of Americans believe that there were many ways to succeed without going to college. Today, less than half of Americans believe one can succeed without a college degree. *Achieve Inc., April 2007*
- ❑ Over the past 10 years, Connecticut ranks 13th among the 50 states in the percentage increase of state tax dollars allocated to higher education operating expenses. Between FY2007 and FY2008, however, Connecticut ranked 30th. *Grapevine, Center for the Study of Education Policy, 2008*
- ❑ Other developed nations now produce more college graduates per capita – the U.S. ranks 12th – while China and India, because of their sheer size, turn out graduates in greater numbers. *Governing, September 2007*
- ❑ Financial barriers prevent 48 percent of college-qualified high school graduates from low-income families from attending a four-year college and 22 percent from attending any college at all. The percentages are similar for students in moderate-income families. *Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance*
- ❑ Connecticut employers have identified their growing concern about being able to find qualified workers to maintain future competitiveness and the need for skilled workers for current open positions is acute. This could be Connecticut's most significant economic challenge. *Connecticut Business & Industry Association, 2006*
- ❑ The proportion of Connecticut workers over the age of 55 is the 7th highest in the nation. *Connecticut Voices for Children, 2006*
- ❑ From 1990 to 2005, Connecticut's population aged 18 to 34 fell by 211,000 or nearly 23 percent, while nationally this cohort remained essentially the same. *Connecticut Office of Workforce Competitiveness, 2007*
- ❑ Connecticut ranked 42nd last year among the 50 states in appropriations of state tax funds for operating expenses of higher education, based on personal income. *Grapevine, Center for the Study of Education Policy, 2008*
- ❑ Looking back, more than 70 percent of high school graduates who did not go on to college, and more than 60 percent of those who did, say they would have taken more challenging courses in high school. *Achieve Inc., American Diploma Project, 2005*
- ❑ Students who complete Algebra II are more than twice as likely to graduate from college compared to students with less mathematical preparation. *National Mathematics Advisory Panel, March 2008*

WINTER SESSION VOYAGE TO THAILAND KICKS OFF SUCCESSFUL STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM AT MITCHELL COLLEGE

Students Study Abroad in Ireland this Summer

Mitchell College began 2008 with ten students in Thailand touring and studying throughout Bangkok City and Chaing Mai. That trip, coordinated in partnership with Chulalongkorn University - Bangkok, was such a success that additional study abroad excursions, such as this summer opportunity in Ireland, are under development. Study Abroad trips are scheduled to occur during Mitchell's January Term and Summer Sessions, with semester-long programs as the next step.

"There are several objectives in mind as we develop the Study Abroad program at Mitchell College," says Kuzmich. "Students in the program will become familiar with foreign languages, gain geographical and historical knowledge, be exposed to people who process information differently than they do, see the United States from a different perspective,



Jessica Calcaterra '08 at the Elephant Camp in Chiang Mai, Thailand

create a sense of personal identity, flexibility and creativity, increase their interest in other cultures, become less ethnocentric as they become aware of cultural difference, develop language skills within a cultural context and become more culturally sensitive and accepting."

The College, in coordination with the University of Iowa and SUNY Brockport, is delighted to offer a four week study program at Griffith College - Dublin this summer. Griffith College is a highly regarded institution located in

Dublin center. It possesses a strong national and international reputation with sites in Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, as well as oversea sites in Pakistan, Russia and China. Mitchell students will depart for Dublin on June 20 and return at the end of July.

The program lectures and excursions will be facilitated by various instructors of Griffith College. Mitchell College Assistant Professor Kenneth Kuzmich will present a guest lecture titled *The Ghosts of Ireland* found in the plays of Eugene O'Neill. Students will earn six credits in one of the most exciting cities in Europe. The interactive curriculum will include the course *The Celtic Tiger* focusing on the economics of Ireland; the *Irish Culture* course will explore Irish music, literature, poetry, theater and photography and include visits to local museums, historic sites and other regions of Ireland.



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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The Independent Voice follows a regular rotation schedule featuring four of the seventeen member institutions in each quarterly issue.

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