

theindependentvoice

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

INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES PUMP \$6.2 BILLION INTO CONNECTICUT'S ECONOMY

The economic impact of Connecticut's 16 independent colleges and universities to the State is \$6.2 billion annually, according to a recent study done by the Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis for the Connecticut Independent College & University Institute for Research & Public Service (*cicu-IRPS*).

"We looked at the payrolls of the independent colleges and universities, their spending for goods and services, the spending done by students, faculty and staff and the indirect and induced job creation and spending that occurs because of the presence of the 16 private institutions," said Judith B. Greiman.

Among the findings:

- In the aggregate, the independent sector is Connecticut's third largest employer trailing only the State of Connecticut and United Technologies.
- Total jobs created in Connecticut as a result of economic activity generated by the independent colleges and universities equals 81,070, with more than 22,179 full-time equivalent employees working at the institutions and another 58,891 jobs supporting them in other sectors of the economy.
- Independent colleges and universities pump \$4.1 billion in salary and wage dollars into Connecticut's economy.
- The 195,186 alumni of member institutions living in Connecticut have annual earnings of \$13.86 billion, which results in \$1.2 billion in state tax revenues being generated.
- There are 63,247 full-time equivalent students attending independent not for profit higher education institutions in Connecticut.
- Connecticut receives \$374.58 million in state and local tax revenue from the sector's economic activity.
- New students and visitors to the state's independent colleges and universities spend \$229 million annually.
- From 2003-2007, the sector invested over \$528 million in institutional capital expense resulting in a \$2.3 billion impact on the economy.

"Our primary economic benefit to Connecticut, of course, is the first-rate education delivered to students served by these schools and the high number of degrees that are relevant to the needs of Connecticut employers," said Steve Kaplan, president of the University of New Haven and chair of the *cicu-IRPS* Board. "Today, the skills and knowledge of the workforce are the most important elements of any state's economic infrastructure."

"Stability is an under-appreciated element of the economic impact of these schools," Greiman said. "Independent colleges and universities don't move out of state or outsource operations overseas. We are educators, employers and community partners that are here to stay."

Integration of Living and Learning, Fairfield University

Deborah Cady Melzer, Ph.D., Dean of Student Development



Universities have increasing responsibility to engage students in learning experiences that connect their intellect with community responsibility. The integration of living and learning, critical to today's liberal arts education, means something greater as demands for citizenship are paramount to solving today's complicated problems.

At Fairfield University, President Jeffrey von Arx has envisioned an educational experience that makes seamless student learning inside and

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Handel Performing Arts Center Brings a New Vitality to Hartford's Albany Avenue



Every day the Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts Center of The Hartt School at the University of Hartford is buzzing with the sounds of dance and theatre from early morning to late night. Collegiate dance and theatre students arrive by University bus and by personal cars as early as 8 a.m. for classes at the building located at the corner of Westbourne Parkway and Albany Avenue in Hartford, just under 2 miles from the University's main campus. Hartt Community Division students add their animated excitement after school classes and rehearsals for performances last well into the evening.

The Handel Center opened as the new instructional home for The Hartt School's dance, theatre and Community Division students on Sept. 3, 2008. It is a 55,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art facility that has five dance studios, four theatre rehearsal studios, three vocal studios and two black box theatres as well as faculty offices, a community room, a branch of People's United Bank and the Backstage Cafe. A \$16 million construction project transformed a vacant automobile distributorship site that was a "brownfield" into the University's newest teaching and performing facility.

The presence of this dramatically renovated building is expected to help create a cultural corridor in North Hartford on Albany Avenue between the Handel Center and the Artists Collective, which is located several blocks down the street. The Handel Center already has added significantly to the vitality of the Upper Albany neighborhood as it brings more



than 200 collegiate dance and theater students, 400 Community Division dance students, numerous University faculty and staff, and visitors to the area on a weekly basis.

During the center's dedication celebration, University of Hartford President Walter Harrison said, "The opening of the Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts marks a rejuvenation and rebirth for The Hartt School and the University, as well as an important moment in the rebirth of the City of Hartford."

The University of Hartford purchased the property in 2001; environmental testing and remediation of the site was completed by 2006; and renovation/

construction began in the summer of 2007 and was completed a year later.

Built in 1929, the building was designed by renowned architect Albert Kahn. The transformation retains the brick and glass exterior of Kahn's "showroom of the future" but the windows now are modern and energy efficient. Inside the project preserves the exposed beams and high ceilings of the original building yet specialized spring-loaded floors for the dance studios and state-of-the-art acoustics and new mechanical systems help make it a performance facility for today.

SmithEdwards Architects of Hartford, specialists in adaptive reuse, and Performance Architecture of New Orleans, designers of some of American's top performing arts facilities, were collaborating architects on the project. Downes Construction Company of New Britain and Capitol Restoration in Hartford were the construction managers. During the construction, 40 percent of the construction contracts were awarded to small businesses, minority-owned business or women-owned business, and more than 20 percent of the hours worked on the project were worked by Hartford residents. The project has created six new jobs in the bank and café.

This once dark, vacant building now shimmers with light and life from early morning well into the night, and in

so doing adds vitality and stability to the Upper Albany/Blue Hills neighborhood as well as wonderful and much needed space to The Hartt School at the University of Hartford.

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outside of the classroom. This vision has challenged the university to better integrate the student experience in order to develop the mind for responsible citizenship. Such integration requires practices across the academic and student affairs units that model to our students learning that occurs in all settings.

A hallmark initiative for the integration of living and learning is the building of Sophomore Residential Colleges. With two programs currently in place, sophomores have the opportunity to build intentional community around questions of self-discovery. Sophomore residential colleges may approach these questions from a variety of perspectives but have several common core components.

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Goodwin College to Offer Bachelor's Degrees

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All students in residential colleges engage in identified courses that interact with self-discovery questions. Through these courses, students approach life's larger questions from a variety of the liberal arts disciplines. This learning in the classroom is further reinforced through student participation in mentor groups. 8 students meet on a monthly basis with a faculty and/or staff mentor who guides the group in peer conversations that support both individual and collective exploration of such questions as: What are my passions, gifts and talents? How can I use my best gifts to contribute to a diverse world? From the knowledge I've gained, how will I make a difference here and now? As students explore meaningful questions, they are discerning their vocational path and make choices around not only what they want to do but who they want to be.

Sophomore residential colleges are one example of high impact learning activities that require academic and student affairs partnerships that intentionally integrate the students' living and learning experiences. Such holistic education prepares students for leadership as they respond to complicated issues in tomorrow's world.

Goodwin College became a four-year institution in December 2008, with the approval by the State of Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education of a new Bachelor of Science degree in Child Study*.

Goodwin College also received approval to offer a bachelor's degree in health sciences* an RN to BSN Completion program*, which will allow registered nurses to obtain a bachelor's degree.

Plans of study for the new degrees are structured as "2 + 2" programs, meaning that students earn their associate degree on the way to their bachelor's degree.

As a nonprofit college that delivers career-focused education, Goodwin attracts a large contingent of working adults seeking career changes and advancement. For these students, the ability to enhance their credentials while in school can translate to increased earning potential and employability.

Since the majority of Goodwin College students attend classes part time in the evenings or on weekends, the college offers three full academic sessions each year, allowing the completion of a bachelor's degree in as little as four years. Those that attend all three sessions full time will be able to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in only three years, accelerating their entry into higher-paying professional positions.

Aside from increased earning, the "milestone model" can give students a confidence boost, according to the college's president, Mark Scheinberg. This format is especially helpful to Goodwin College's many first-generation college students, with approximately 54% of new students each fall entering as the first in their family to attend college.

"If you are someone that has never been to college before, it can seem very overwhelming to think of attending classes for four years before earning a degree. But students in our new programs can earn their first degree in less than two years, and continue on to a bachelor's degree, building their skills and confidence as they go," Scheinberg said.

In addition to the new programs, the ten-year-old college will continue to offer a range of associate degrees and certificates in several healthcare fields, human services, homeland security, business, and English as a second language.



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*These programs are licensed by the State of Connecticut and are pending approval by NEASC, the regional accrediting agency.

Civic Engagement and a Liberal Arts Education Wesleyan University

Recently the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected Wesleyan University for inclusion in the 2008 Community Engagement Classification in the category of Curricular Engagement, Outreach and Partnerships. The Foundation acknowledged "documented excellent alignment among mission, culture, leadership, resources and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement."

For generations, Wesleyan students, faculty, staff and alumni have connected their educational work to making positive contributions to the world around them. As President Michael Roth put it, "Here we have long believed in the power of a liberal arts education not only in helping one to live a more reflective and considered life as an individual, but also in enabling one to engage with one's community in effective and generous ways." Close to 70 percent of the Wesleyan students perform one kind of community service or another during their four years on campus. On average, they provide about 30,000 hours of local community service each year. They volunteer at the nearby housing development



A Wesleyan student is tutoring a participant in the after school program at the Green Street Arts Center.

Traverse Square and in the after school program of the Green Street Art Center, and for their work with the Long Lane Farm and the Action Science Kids Program they were honored with the Connecticut Higher Education Community Service Award.

Wesleyan's newest vehicle for studying public service generally is the nascent Allbritton Center for the Study of Public Life. The Center will bring together social scientists and activists, humanists, journalists, and elected officials to study complex social problems and the types of engagement used to address them. President Obama's call for Americans to step forward in service to their communities is one that has resonated powerfully at Wesleyan, and a number of new curricular initiatives identify strongly with the theme of public service, including a certificate program for civic engagement and a college of the environment.

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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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