# Expanding College Access and Success

CAMPUS COMPACT FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE'S
COLLEGE ACCESS CHALLENGE

Campus Compact *for New Hampshire*

3 Barrell Court
Concord, NH 33301
Ph:
E:
www.compactnh.org

# Contents


Executive Summary . . . . . 1

CCNH and the Challenge of Expanding College Access and Success . . . . . 2

A Multifaceted Approach for New Hampshire . . . . . 4

- Targeted Workshops . . . . . 5
- Statewide Forums . . . . . 5
- Student Panels . . . . . 6

Program Impact . . . . . 10

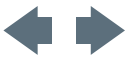
- Outcomes by the Numbers . . . . . 10
- Impact on Students . . . . . 11

The Campus Collaborations: Models for Increasing College Access . 12

- Dartmouth College (SEAD Internship Program) . . . . . 13
- Dartmouth College (Native American College Access Program) . . . . . 14
- Great Bay Community College . . . . . 15
- Keene State College . . . . . 16
- Manchester Community College (Veterans' Program) . . . . . 17
- Manchester Community College (MCC PRIDE Program) . . . . . 18
- MA College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University (Middle School Partnership) . . . . . 19
- MA College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University (CAST Partnership) . . 20
- New England College . . . . . 21
- NHTI – Concord's Community College (College Tours) . . . . . 22
- NHTI – Concord's Community College (STEM Program) . . . . . 23
- Saint Anselm College . . . . . 24
- Southern New Hampshire University . . . . . 25
- University of New Hampshire . . . . . 26
- University of New Hampshire at Manchester (EXCELL Science Program) . . . . . 27
- University of New Hampshire at Manchester (Elementary School Program). . . . 28
- University of New Hampshire at Manchester (Voices of the (603)) . . . . . 28
- Dover High School . . . . . 29
- Kearsarge Regional High School . . . . . 30

Laconia High School . . . . . .31
Lin-Wood High School . . . . . .32
Nashua High School North. . . . . .32
Nashua High School North and South . . . . . .33
Raymond High School . . . . . .34
Souhegan High School . . . . . .35
Winnisquam Regional High School . . . . . .36
Moving Forward. . . . . .37
About CCNH . . . . . .38
About This Report . . . . . .38

back to contents



The College Access Challenge is funded in part under a sub-grant from the Office of Postsecondary Education, a United States Department of Education grant administered by the New Hampshire Department of Education.

©2014 Campus Compact for New Hampshire

# Executive Summary

Given the shift toward an increasingly knowledge-based workforce, expanding college access is essential for securing New Hampshire's long-term economic stability.

Colleges and universities are making great strides in addressing this pressing need, thanks in part to the College Access Challenge, a multiyear initiative led by Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH). The initiative is a statewide effort to make higher education accessible for all students, and particularly for underrepresented groups such as low-income, minority, first-generation, at-risk, and nontraditional students.

back to contents

Over the past three years, CCNH's College Access Challenge has brought together K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and community groups throughout New Hampshire in a coordinated effort to help students from underrepresented populations see higher education as a viable choice, and to prepare them for success in college. This initiative encompasses several key components designed to build sustainable pathways to higher education:

- Workshops for educators and community groups with strategies for helping underrepresented students qualify for, enroll, and succeed in college.
- Statewide forums for sharing information and effective models.
- A series of panel sessions through which high school students have a chance to talk with undergraduates about college preparation, the admissions process, and campus life.
- Grant funding to support collaborations among campuses, K-12 schools, and community organizations in developing programs that open the door to higher education for students who may otherwise not see getting a college degree as an option.

> Expanding college access is essential for securing New Hampshire's long-term economic stability.

The impact of these efforts has been far-reaching. Grants have funded more than 60 partnerships through which 7,500 K-12 students have benefited from programs offering services such as academic support, test preparation, admissions assistance, and campus visits. Of the 4,000 high school students who have attended student panels, 96% say the experience has made them feel more confident about their college plans. Workshops have provided information and program models to 225 teachers, admin-

istrators, and community organizations that work with underrepresented populations. Statewide forums have drawn more than 1,000 higher education and K-12 educators as well as community leaders, with 91% saying they had gained useful strategies and connections for ongoing work.

Perhaps even more indelible than the quantitative impact is the qualitative impact these efforts have made on the lives of individual students. Thousands of middle and high school students who once considered higher education out of reach have learned not only that they can enroll in college but also what they need to do—and the support structures that are available to help—in order to make it happen. The ongoing relationships and programs created by this initiative will continue to open doors for students of all types for many years to come.

back to contents

# CCNH and the Challenge of Expanding College Access and Success

In recent years, the value of a college degree has risen sharply while cuts in state funding for higher education and for need-based scholarships have made college seem unattainable for many students.

More than ever, higher education is a pathway to economic stability; the wage gap between earners with a college degree and those with a high school diploma rose from 50% in 1975 to 77% in 2011, for the first time bringing the difference in lifetime pay to over $1 million.

Wage differences aside, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find stable work without some college-level education, both nationally and specifically in New Hampshire. Economists estimate that by 2020, more than 65% of all jobs will require some postsecondary education; in New Hampshire this figure could rise to more than 70%.

In the face of these changes, it has become a major state and national priority to increase the number of students who receive a college degree. Given the rise of immigrant and minority populations in New Hampshire and across the country, increasing college access among these and other underrepresented groups is an effective way of achieving this

"This grant allowed NHTI students to give back while simultaneously allowing high school students to break the barriers of attending college. Thank you!"

—NHTI - CONCORD'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

goal, while helping to level the economic playing field.

In 2010, Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH) launched an initiative aimed at increasing access to higher education among underrepresented groups such as low-income students, immigrants, minorities, and adult learners, including young mothers and veterans. The goal of this initiative, called the College Access Challenge, was to open the door to higher education for those who might not otherwise have considered college an option.

This wide-ranging, multiyear initiative has brought together higher education institutions and community groups with middle and high schools across New Hampshire to help students prepare for, enroll, and succeed in college. Through a series of grants, the College Access Challenge has funded programs that provide academic support for at-risk students (e.g., through subject and language tutoring) and that enlist current college students to provide guidance in areas such as standardized test preparation, the admissions process, and campus procedures and expectations. These grants have funded dozens of programs that have reached thousands of students.

CCNH believes that education is the key to sustaining strong communities and a healthy democracy.

In addition to providing funding for such partnerships, the College Access Challenge offers resources, education, and networking opportunities to help education and community leaders exchange models and strategies for making college an option for all students.

For example, a College Access Forum held in 2010 highlighted emerging practices for K-12, higher education, and community organizations seeking to expand access to college among low-income, first-generation, and other populations. The statewide Access and Success Showcase in April 2013 took training to the next level, featuring the latest research and practice findings from national organizations such as the College Board and the NSSE Institute for Effective Educational Practice.

For the past three years, CCNH's ongoing College Access Workshop series has offered advice and models on targeted strategies for helping underrepresented groups prepare for college—and succeed once they get there. Topics have ranged from leadership development for at-risk students to service-learning as a retention strategy. Another aspect of training aimed directly at high school students have been panels at which college students discussed ways to prepare for college as well as what to expect once there in order to de-mystify the campus experience.

As a coalition of college and university presidents, CCNH believes that education is the key to sustaining strong communities and a healthy democracy. The College Access Challenge is one of several innovative initiatives designed to prepare students for professional and civic life in the face of accelerating demographic, economic, and technological change. Through collaborative work with member institutions and a range of other education,

back to contents

community, and government groups, CCNH has launched complementary programs to advance diversity, equity, and academic excellence for all students and to boost skill in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

The College Access Challenge is part of CCNH's larger effort to position New Hampshire's students, businesses, and communities to succeed in an increasingly global and skill-oriented economy while educating college students to be active and responsible citizens. The challenge and related initiatives are also in keeping with President Obama's national priorities for education, which include having the United States generate the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020.

back to contents

The College Access Challenge is funded in part under a sub-grant from the Office of Postsecondary Education, a United States Department of Education grant administered by the New Hampshire Department of Education. Spurred by this support, and by the collaboration of its member college and university presidents, CCNH has been able to change the educational landscape for students across New Hampshire.

This publication outlines the activities and outcomes of the College Access Challenge. The information here serves as a record of the initiative's impact, as a source of successful partnership models for New Hampshire schools and other organizations seeking to increase access to college among underrepresented groups, and as a paradigm for other states.

# A Multifaceted Approach for New Hampshire

## The initiative's approach encompasses a wide range of activities to make college a viable opportunity for all types of students.

Key components include grant funding for campus partnerships with middle and high schools or with community groups working to increase opportunity for at-risk or other populations; workshops for education and community leaders; student panels to provide direct guidance for high school students seeking information about college preparation and practices; and statewide education forums.

"The Campus Compact grant program is a wonderful resource. We are thankful for the opportunities it has provided for students at Nashua North."

—NASHUA HIGH SCHOOL NORTH

The following sections outline this activity over the past three years. Later sections describe documented outcomes as well as details of the campus outreach efforts funded through

the College Access Challenge, with replicable models for expanding college access.

## Targeted Workshops

CCNH's ongoing Access and Success Workshop series brings together participants from K-12 schools, higher education, and community-based organizations to explore key strategies in depth. In addition to models for helping underrepresented students qualify for and enroll in college, workshops address ways to help these students succeed and remain in college through graduation.

The Access and Success Workshop series has addressed these topics, among others:

back to contents

- Building an Inclusive Campus Community that Supports Student Success
- Financial Aid 101
- Service-Learning as a Retention Strategy
- College Access Challenge Grant Partners Panel
- NH Approaches to College Access and Success
- Successful First-Year Programming
- Engaging Veterans
- Leadership Development for At-Risk Students
- Institutional Effectiveness
- Ensuring Access, Inclusive Excellence, and Civic Engagement
- Helping Homeless Students: How High Schools and Colleges Can Partner to Promote Student Success

Hundreds of education practitioners have attended these workshops and have come away with successful models for expanding college access among underrepresented students. They've also gained strategies for implementing these models with different populations and age groups, as well as new connections for sharing information and ideas going forward.

## Statewide Forums

Large-scale forums for exchanging information and models are an important strategy for advancing this work across the state. CCNH began by exploring emerging practices and has since been able to showcase a wide range of successful models stemming from campus partnerships funded by the College Access Challenge sub-grants.

CCNH hosted its first College Access Forum in November 2010. The forum featured Wanda Mitchell, Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Inclusive Excellence at the University of New Hampshire, as the keynote speaker. Forum workshops highlighted ideas and emerging practices for expanding college access. The forum drew more than 80 participants from K-12, higher education, and community-based organizations across New Hampshire.

In April 2013, CCNH held the College Access & Student Success Showcase, which brought together more than 100 K-12 educators, community partners, and college faculty members, staff, and administrators to gain practical strategies for increasing student access to and success in college. A series of workshops offered findings from both research and practice to guide ongoing efforts.

The showcase featured speakers from both state and national organizations, offering models from across the country. Presenting organizations included the College Board, Granite State University, Keene State College, the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF) Network Organization, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) Institute for Effective Educational Practice, and the University of New Hampshire at Manchester. The keynote speaker was Jillian Kinzie, Associate Director at the NSSE Institute and the Center for Postsecondary Research at the University of Indiana.

back to contents

Concepts addressed spanned innovative research-based ideas as well as successful program models. Presentation topics included using peer tutors to boost academic success; supporting at-risk students through summer acclimation programs; capitalizing on relationships and real-world experience as a means of improving student performance; establishing effective college planning and mentoring programs; and helping multicultural, first-generation, and low-income students adjust to the academic and social demands of college through peer advising and other programs.

## Student Panels

As part of the College Access Conventions, CCNH has hosted nearly two dozen student panels that allow high school students to hear from current college students about the process of preparing for and enrolling in college. These panels gave the high school students a chance to ask questions, hear the ins and outs of the admissions process, and learn about life on a college campus.

> Of the 4,000 high school students who have participated in panels, 96% report feeling more confident about their college plans.

Panels reached thousands of students in the following communities:

- Manchester Area
- Lakes Region
- North Country
- City of Nashua
- Monadnock Region

More than 4,000 high school students have participated in these panels and report an overwhelmingly positive response. For example, 96% of participants have reported that the panels made them feel more confident about their college plans. For more than a third of them, this was the first opportunity they had had to talk about the possibility of continuing education with a current college student.

"The SEAD Internship program is incredibly beneficial for promoting greater college awareness in our partner high schools. In addition, it provides Dartmouth students with a transformative opportunity through service and leadership."

—DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

## Campus Grants

A cornerstones of the College Access Challenge is the sub-grant program for campuses working in partnership with middle schools, high schools, or community-based organizations to open the door to higher education for students who may otherwise not see getting a college degree as an option. Grants have been awarded to more than 60 organizations, including K-12 schools or community-based organizations in partnership with a higher education institution as well as campuses working in such partnerships.

back to contents

CCNH has awarded nearly $70,000 in sub-grants, helping thousands of underrepresented students see going to college as a viable option.

Grants cover expenses for programs aimed at expanding college access among low-income and first-generation students, minorities, immigrants, veterans, and other underrepresented groups. The grants have funded new programs and initiatives as well as enhancements or expansion of existing programs. Among those given priority have been programs designed to have a measurable impact among underrepresented students and new initiatives that might otherwise not have been possible without financial support.

Grants typically range from $700 to $1,000, with an additional $500 for programs that engage veterans in accessing higher education. Programs have included academic support, college counseling, classroom workshops, college and career fairs, campus visits, and assistance with areas such as test preparation and admissions, among other approaches. Grants have also funded related costs such as travel to community sites, speaker fees, meeting materials, technology costs, field trips, and transportation for test-taking or campus visits.

From 2010 to 2013, CCNH awarded nearly $70,000 in sub-grants to promote partnerships between K-12 schools, community groups, and New Hampshire colleges and universities, helping thousands of underrepresented students from across the state see going to college as a viable option. Most grants were awarded to CCNH member campuses working in partnership with K-12 schools and/or community organizations such as veterans' services agencies and organizations serving low-income, immigrant, refugee, disabled, and other students. Approximately one-third of the grants were awarded to area K-12 schools and community organizations partnering with higher education institutions.

Following are the CCNH member colleges and universities that received grants for their college access programs or, in a few cases, that partnered with K-12 schools that received grants. Many campuses received grants for multiple programs or for programs that spanned several years.

Dartmouth College

Granite State College

Great Bay Community College

Keene State College

Lakes Region Community College

Manchester Community College

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University

Nashua Community College

New England College

NHTI - Concord's Community College

Plymouth State University

Rivier University

Saint Anselm College

Southern New Hampshire University

University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire at Manchester

back to contents

New Hampshire K-12 schools and districts that received grants to partner with higher education and other institutions, or that partnered with campuses that received grants, include:

Alvirne High School

Bedford High School

Berlin High School

Dover High School

Franklin High School

Hopkinton High School

Kearsarge Regional School District

Kennett High School

Kimball Union Academy

Kingswood Middle School

Laconia High School

Lin-Wood Public High School

Lisbon Regional High School

Littleton High School

Manchester High School Central

Manchester High School West

Manchester School District

Mascoma Regional Valley High School

McLaughlin Middle School

Memorial High School

Merrimack Middle School

Milford High School

Moultonborough Academy

Nashua High School North

Parker Varney Elementary School

Pittsfield High School

Prospect Mountain High School

Raymond High School

Unity Elementary School

Virtual Learning Academy Charter School

West High School

West Running Brook Middle School

Winnacunnet High School

Winnisquam Regional High School

Woodsville High School

Other partnering organizations included nonprofit organizations, community agencies, education organizations, veterans' services agencies, and business partners from across New Hampshire. The following list gives an idea of the scope of organizations involved but is not complete, as it was not always possible to record the activity of every group that played a role in bringing programs to students.

Amherst College Reader-to-Reader Program

Boys' & Girls' Clubs of Manchester and Souhegan Valley

Career Dimensions, Inc.

Community College System of New Hampshire

Community Partners NH

Easter Seals Deployment Cycle Support Care Coordination Program

Employment Support of The Guard and Reserve

International Institute of New Hampshire

Institute for Art-Based Literacy (University of New Hampshire - Dartmouth)

Lutheran Social Services

Manchester Outright

Manchester VA Medical Center

McIntyre Ski Area

MoneySmart

My HealtheVet

Nashua Granite Statemen

New England Educational Opportunity Association

New Hampshire Army National Guard

New Hampshire Citizens for the Arts

New Hampshire Department of Education

The New Hampshire Transition Assistance Advisor

New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation

NHPTV

One Sky Community Services

Portsmouth Regional Hospital

Project Lead the Way

Rhythm of New Hampshire Show Chorus

Snowday

TD Bank

The Tucker Foundation (Dartmouth University)

UNH Maiden Harmony

Upward Bound (University of New Hampshire, Keene State University)

The Veterans Benefits Administration

The Vet Center

WZID

These and other community organizations provided essential support for campus partnerships, including collaborating on program design, providing educational materials and services, offering facilities, providing media coverage, and participating in a wide range of campus projects and events for programs throughout the state.

# Program Impact

The impact of CCNH's College Access Challenge initiative can be seen in the dozens of partnerships created to help expand access to college, in the hundreds of education and community leaders dedicated to this effort, and in the tens of thousands of dollars dedicated to sustaining these programs.

Most of all, it can be seen in the thousands of K-12 students who now see college as a real possibility and who have a path laid out both for getting to college and for succeeding once they arrive.

back to contents

## Outcomes by the Numbers

From the numbers alone, the program's impact has been far-reaching:

- CCNH has awarded 64 grants totaling more than $69,800 for school and community partnership activities aimed at encouraging underrepresented students to access higher education.
- More than 7,500 K-12 students have benefited from these activities, which include academic support, test preparation, admissions assistance, campus visits, and contact with current college students through mentoring and other programs. Most of these students reported that experiences constituted their first direct exposure to campus life and to detailed information about college options.
- More than 4,000 high school students have attended information panels presented by college students at CCNH events. By getting a chance to ask questions and have their concerns addressed by their peers, many of whom came from backgrounds similar to their own, these students were better able to see themselves in a college setting.
- The Access and Success Workshop Series has presented more than a dozen sessions for K-12, higher education, and community groups on topics ranging from leadership development for at-risk students to service-learning as a retention strategy.
- More than 225 participants from K-12, higher education, and community-based organizations have participated in these workshops to date. Evaluations show that the vast majority of participants value the knowledge and expertise of the presenters and are enthusiastic about applying newly acquired skills in their communities.
- More than 1,000 higher education, K-12, and community representatives have

"The outcomes of this initial program will be far-reaching and significant as we move to enhance and grow our contacts within the veteran's community in the Manchester area in the identification and support of potential students."

—MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

participated in CCNH's statewide College Access forums and conferences.

- Evaluations from these forums consistently show that participants gained new knowledge at each event and rated their experiences very favorably—91% rated the sessions useful or very useful. In addition to finding presentations themselves valuable, participants indicated that it was helpful to make connections with others and to hear about college access efforts from across the state.

## Impact on Students

back to contents

Evaluations from high school students participating in the student panels also show overwhelmingly positive results:

- Of the 4,000+ high school students who have participated in CCNH's student panels, 96% report that interacting with the college student panelists helped them feel more confident about their college plans.
- Nearly 90% of high school students from across all of the panels indicate that hearing from the college student panelists was important in helping them understand what to expect from college.
- Over 80% note that the panel helped them learn something they did not previously know about college.
- More than 60% say they will share the information they learned from the panel with their friends.
- More than a third of the students report that the panel was their first experience talking directly with a current college student about the possibility of continuing their education.

Participating high school students come away from the panels more aware of how to prepare for college.

These figures indicate that participating high school students come away from the panels more aware of how to prepare for college as well as what to expect once they arrive. By making the process more transparent, these panels help put students at ease and make them feel more confident about their college prospects. For students who have never had the opportunity to discuss college with a current student, merely starting the conversation can open both eyes and doors.

Students participating in other grant-funded programs share similarly positive responses. Collaborating middle and high schools that conducted surveys following campus visits, mentorship programs, college preparation programs, and other grant-funded activities reported that students were not only more comfortable with the idea of going to college following the experience but were also more likely to make specific plans for pursuing a college degree.

"My future isn't as scary as I thought it was."

—PARTICIPATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

# The Campus Collaborations: Models for Increasing College Access

The College Access Challenge includes direct training for campus, K-12, and community organization leaders and for students themselves, but the lynchpin of the initiative is the network of collaborative efforts that have linked thousands of K-12 students from groups underrepresented in higher education with campuses across New Hampshire.

back to contents

Through CCNH's sub-grants, campuses collaborate with schools and community organizations serving low-income, immigrant, minority and other populations to introduce students to the idea of attending college and provide hands-on assistance in getting there. The vast majority of students participating in grant-funded activities are from low-income families (i.e., qualifying for free or reduced-rate lunches) and identify themselves as being the first in their families to consider attending college.

Many programs incorporate campus tours in response to research showing that giving K-12 students the opportunity to see a college campus first hand is one of the best ways to promote college aspirations and to give students a better understanding of what it takes to be college ready. Other programs assist students with areas such as tutoring, test preparation and/or transportation, English language learning, scholarships, and the admissions process. Still others offer mentoring, after-school enrichment, special panels for veterans and other groups, and activities showcasing academic, cultural, and campus life.

Following are some of the programs that received College Access Challenge grants during 2010–2013. Descriptions are drawn from final reports of the grant recipients. They represent a sampling of models rather than a comprehensive list of programs funded. Some schools used the grants to expand or enhance existing partnership and programs; others initiated new programs. In many cases, grants were awarded over multiple years, allowing additional program development. Nearly all grant recipients noted that they planned to continue their programs beyond the grant period, having established the infrastructure and experience to sustain the grant-funded work.

"The mini grant allowed us to build extremely important infrastructure that will allow us to continue to grow the program."

—SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE UNIVERSITY

# Dartmouth College (SEAD Internship Program)

Dartmouth College partnered with Raymond High School to add an intern model to their existing partnership, in which high school students attend the college's academic preparedness program, Summer Enrichment at Dartmouth (SEAD).

Through the grant-funded program, an intern from Dartmouth worked directly with SEAD students and was available to the high school's full student body to help with college applications, essays, SAT preparation, and general organization for college readiness.

The program received two years of funding through the College Access Challenge, for the 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 academic years. Based on the success of this partnership over that time and the effectiveness of the internship program in influencing the college-going culture of the school, Dartmouth decided to continue to send SEAD interns to the school during the 2013–2014 school year and to renew the partnership for at least an additional four years.

back to contents

The vast majority of students participating in grant-funded activities are from low-income families.

## PROJECT GOALS

The overarching goal of the SEAD internship program is to increase college awareness and preparedness among students who otherwise might not have the resources to guide them toward a future in college. Specific goals of the program are twofold:

1) *Individual guidance.* Interns help to maintain contact between Dartmouth's on-campus summer program and the SEAD students, their parents/guardians, and their school advisors. The SEAD intern sustains the enthusiasm of the program participants, encourages academic success and community involvement, helps students prepare for the college application process, and pursues the shared goal of a college education.

2) *Help for the student body at large.* In addition to working with SEAD students, the intern helps to increase college awareness in the school's general population by organizing college visits, presenting about the college experience, bringing admissions counselors to the high school, facilitating SAT workshops, and providing tutoring.

## OUTCOMES

This program reached 850 high school students (freshmen through seniors) during the 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 academic years; 80% of these students would be the first in their families to go to college.

The grant made it possible for the SEAD program to maintain an intern presence at Raymond High School in the fall, winter, and

spring terms, ensuring 30 weeks each year of ongoing support for SEAD students and the larger school population. The school has started a small working group that will, in part, explore further ways to develop internal programs focused on early college awareness to take even better advantage of the opportunities afforded by having an intern present year-round.

> Dartmouth's SEAD program reached 850 high school students, 80% of whom would be the first in their families to go to college.

For the seniors in the program, having a SEAD intern available to work with them individually as they made their college decisions and finalized financial aid packages was crucial in their successful completion of this process. For juniors, having a SEAD intern available to work with them individually and as a group on the college search process was important in preparing them for the more intensive work completed later on college applications. Additionally, the SEAD intern was able to work extensively with rising sophomores to orient them to the program. The intern met with them on multiple occasions individually and as a group and also organized an informational night for families outlining the expectations of the SEAD program.

back to contents

## Dartmouth College (Native American College Access Program)

In a separate program, Dartmouth College partnered with the nonprofit Amherst College Reader-to-Reader Program to create a curriculum for a Native American College Access Digital Media Mentorship program.

The focus was on creating a culturally competent curriculum designed specifically to meet the needs of the participating Native American middle and high school students by engaging college peers.

### PROJECT GOALS

The goal of this project was to create a curriculum for a digital media peer-mentoring program to facilitate effective communication among college mentors and middle/high school students. The program is designed to connect Native American students at Dartmouth College with younger peers to guide them in accessing higher education.

### OUTCOMES

Using research and the expertise of faculty and staff at Dartmouth College, coupled with the successful Reader-to-Reader mentorship model and an established relationship with St. Michael Indian School on the Navajo Nation, this program utilized video webisodes and electronic communication tools as aids in

delivering an effective college access curriculum. Students at St. Michael developed relationships with Dartmouth College Native American students via videos filmed by the college, email, and Skype communication.

Grant funding also helped sponsor a trip for 10 Native American Dartmouth College mentors and a VISTA who served as a filmmaker to different types of New Hampshire colleges and universities to film various learning environments and options. The footage from this trip was used to create nine videos that were screened during class for students at St. Michael Indian School. This approach illustrated the college experience for middle and high school students who lack exposure to information on college access while giving the Dartmouth students valuable film production experience that will improve their post-graduate opportunities.

In its first year, this program engaged 120 Native American students in grades 6–11, two thirds of whom would be the first in their family to go to college. Dartmouth College plans to extend this model to other underrepresented populations in future years.

## Great Bay Community College

back to contents

Great Bay Community College sought training to enhance its existing partnership between the college's Business and Training Center and a range of community and education groups—including Community Partners NH, One Sky Community Services, New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation (NH Department of Education), and Portsmouth Regional Hospital—on Project SEARCH Seacoast NH.

Project SEARCH helps young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities reach their career goals. The College Access Challenge grant supported this program by providing training and professional development for the college's Project SEARCH Coordinator and Instructor.

### PROJECT GOALS

Project SEARCH is a non-credit course offered through Great Bay Community College. Students receive nine months of group and individualized instruction as well as three internship experiences throughout Portsmouth Regional Hospital in order to develop transferable work skills. The goal of the program is for each student to obtain and maintain competitive employment at the conclusion of the program. Students continue to receive support after graduation from Project SEARCH in the areas of job development, job coaching, and transition support.

The grant was used to allow the Project SEARCH Coordinator and Instructor to register and attend the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) training offered in Concord, NH, over the course of 7 days during the summer of 2012. The goals of this training were to enhance the coordinator's skills in job development and to strengthen her ability to create curriculum and internship

experiences that match the needs of the local business community.

### OUTCOMES

Project SEARCH works to help students overcome disabilities and achieve success by preparing them to face barriers such as difficulty in obtaining/maintaining employment, lack of "soft" skills, disability disclosure, education deficits, and culture and transportation issues. The training funded by the grant has prompted program improvements such as:

Great Bay Community College's Project SEARCH works to help students overcome disabilities and achieve success.

- Implementing job development throughout the year,
- Layering skill development and utilizing detailed, data-driven tasks analysis,
- Seeking input from businesses to determine their needs,
- Encouraging all students to meet with a Social Security Counselor,
- Utilizing student networks,
- Making students more accountable for participating in the job search, and
- Preparing video resumes for students.

back to contents

## Keene State College

Keene State College and the New England Educational Opportunity Association, the University of New Hampshire's Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search programs, Keene State's Upward Bound program, and area high schools worked together to bring high school students to New England TRIO Days.

TRIO Day is part of the national TRIO program created to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds in their pursuit of a college degree.

### PROJECT GOALS

The goal of this program was to provide students with opportunities and support to prepare them for postsecondary education. The objectives were to have all participating students:

- Participate in the college fair and at least one college tour, academic success workshop, motivational talk, and cultural event;
- Complete a one-page reflection paper on their experience; and
- Receive technical assistance and support to better prepare them to attend and persist in college.

## OUTCOMES

This was the first statewide endeavor to connect and serve low-income and first-generation students. The funds allowed 12 high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in TRIO Days. They joined more than 600 high school students from across New England.

The results exceeded expectations. In their reflections, students called out virtually every aspect of the program as an asset, including presentations, college visits, the college fair, workshops, and making connections with other people. All students reported that after attending TRIO Days they felt motivated, equipped, and supported to pursue higher education. In addition, each had developed individual short-term goals to work on when they returned to their high schools.

Keene State's TRIO Days collaboration was the first statewide endeavor to connect and serve low-income and first-generation students.

back to contents

# Manchester Community College (Veterans' Program)

For this program, Manchester Community College (MCC) teamed with Manchester VA Medical Center, My HealtheVet, the Veterans Benefits Administration, the Vet Center, New Hampshire Army National Guard, the Easter Seals Deployment Cycle Support Care Coordination Program, the New Hampshire Transition Assistance Advisor, and Employment Support of the Guard and Reserve to create a Veteran's Day Celebration/Veteran's Fair honoring veterans' service and providing information on support available to student veterans.

## PROJECT GOALS

The major goals of this project were twofold: 1) to raise awareness among the campus community of the presence of veteran students and celebrate the contributions of our service member population; and 2) to disseminate valuable information to student veterans about further education opportunities and about benefits and support services offered in the community.

## OUTCOMES

The Veteran's Day Celebration/Veteran's Fair was a success by all measures. The college community came together in celebration and commemoration in an event that was both educational and ceremonial. More than 300

traditional college students, adult learners, and potential college students attended, in addition to college faculty and staff.

An opening ceremony offered presentations by the college president, several history professors, and the president of MCC Vets, who is an active member of the military. At the buffet lunch that followed, faculty, staff and students networked and shared their experience in the service. In attendance for the Veteran's Fair were representatives from nearly a dozen veterans' agencies.

MCC's Veteran's Fair embraced veterans as integral members of the campus community and introduced them to a plethora of services.

The event recognized veterans, embraced them as integral members of the campus community, and introduced them to a plethora of services in the community. Agencies participating at the Veteran's Fair were invited to partner with MCC in providing an expanding bridge for veterans transitioning from military to campus. The newly formed MCC Vets were able to take the lead in organizing the event, interacting with interested, appreciative attendees and solidifying their status as an active, contributing part of student life at MCC.

back to contents

## Manchester Community College (MCC PRIDE Program)

Manchester Community College (MCC) partnered with Manchester Outright (MO) to provide mentoring for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth in grades 8–12 and to help them become comfortable with the idea of college as an option.

### PROJECT GOALS

Goals of the program were to:

- Develop an alliance between MCC and MO, a social and support group for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, allies, and intersex youths.
- Train students who are part of the MCC campus group PRIDE (People Respecting Intimacy and Diversity Everywhere) to serve as mentors for the younger students.
- Provide social time between the groups to develop trust.
- Bring MO students for a visit to MCC to begin to feel comfortable at college.

## OUTCOMES

MCC PRIDE students were trained in both mentoring and bullying response. Once trained, the mentors began to attend MO meetings to get to know the younger students. After some trust was established, the MO students began to travel to MCC on Friday nights for games, food, and fun. They had a Cinco de Mayo party, movie night, dinners, and time just to hang out. The mentors reported feeling connected to their mentees and wish to continue the connection.

The students in MO are urban youths from Manchester. Many come from generational poverty and face difficult issues at home. Compounding that, LGBT youth often feel isolated. Like members of other minority populations, these students need support in gaining access to college. This partnership went a long way toward providing needed support for the middle and high school students who participated, while giving college students valuable leadership experience.

# MA College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University (Middle School Partnership)

back to contents

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) University in Manchester worked with the McLaughlin Middle School to bring middle school students to the university to learn about higher education options, and in particular health sciences disciplines.

Students toured the university, participated in hands-on activities (e.g., making lozenges in the pharmacy lab, doing physical assessment activities such as testing blood pressure and reflexes), and spoke with current MCPHS students about their experiences.

## PROJECT GOALS

Goals for the program were to:

- Introduce underrepresented middle school students to opportunities in higher education about which they may have limited knowledge.
- Educate students about higher education in general.
- Provide an introduction to health science careers to which students might not otherwise have been exposed.
- Encourage students to consider both college and health careers as viable choices and aspire to these choices as they continue through middle and high school.

MCPHS provided hands-on activities to help middle school students see themselves in a health-related course of study.

## OUTCOMES

The program brought 40 students in grade 7 to MCPHS, most of them from low-income families. The hands-on activities and opportunity to interact with current college students gave the seventh graders insight into college life and the ability to visualize themselves in a health-related course of study. In addition, the diversity of the MCPHS student body allowed the middle school students to identify with successful college students from backgrounds similar to their own.

Follow-up conversations found that the McLaughlin students were motivated and excited to think and talk about college. They were most enthusiastic about the time they spent with the MCPHS students, confirming that talking with current college students is an effective way to engage younger students in thinking about higher education as a real option. Starting the conversation early is an important step for youths who may not have thought about college or who may think of college as unattainable.

# MA College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University (CAST Partnership)

back to contents

Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) University partnered with the Community Action for Safe Teens (CAST) committee of the Boys & Girls Club of Souhegan Valley to educate at-risk youths about the impact of substance abuse on health and on education achievement.

Pharmacy students from MCPHS traveled to the Boys & Girls Club to meet with teens in grades 6–12, take them through various role-playing scenarios, and discuss the teens' experiences, concerns, and questions.

## PROJECT GOALS

Goals of this program were to:

- Inform teens about the dangers and consequences associated with use/abuse of alcohol and drugs and provide them with the tools necessary to make healthy choices.
- Educate students about higher learning after high school and career choices available at MCPHS.
- Engage teens in a discussion on how higher learning can be affected by drug and alcohol use/abuse.

## OUTCOMES

The project engaged 51 teens from the Boys & Girls Club and 10 student pharmacists from MCPHS. The student pharmacists prepared role-play scenarios involving alcohol/drug abuse to help students deal with difficult social situations and demonstrate how these situations could affect their health and future aspirations. The MCPHS students also provided information about higher learning in a health-related field, including the education required, descriptions of career options, and guidance on the necessary preparatory work in secondary school.

The teens were extremely engaged during the breakout discussions, where they were able to discuss consequences related to drug and alcohol abuse. They also displayed a keen interest in the experiences of the college students and asked detailed questions about acquiring a college education and about career choices available in health-related fields.

Both the Boys & Girls Club teens and the student pharmacists who facilitated the activity reported tremendous satisfaction with the program. Having college students with relatable experiences organize the session encouraged the teens to feel comfortable asking questions and sharing their own experiences. Interactions were honest, open, and educational for all involved.

## New England College

New England College (NEC) partnered with NH Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) at Memorial High School, JAG at West High School, the Boys & Girls Club of Manchester, Lutheran Social Services of Concord, and the International Institute of NH on the CAMP NEC program to guide underrepresented students through the college planning and application processes.

back to contents

### PROJECT GOALS

The overall goal for CAMP NEC's first semester of programming was to establish mentoring relationships that would introduce students from underserved backgrounds to the college planning and application processes.

A related goal was to train mentors to coach and support younger students and to understand and convey information on topics such as career planning, degree types, majors, local institutions, and financing options. Additionally, mentors were expected to develop their communication skills to encompass multicultural dimensions.

New England College offered mentoring to guide underrepresented students through the college planning and application processes.

### OUTCOMES

Mentors with the CAMP NEC program met with students at preselected programs over a three-month period and provided one-on-one and group sessions looking at all phases of college planning and application. In all, 86 high school students in grades 9–12 participated; of those, 95% were low-income and 93% would be the first in their family to attend college.

The mentors met with students at JAG Programs in Manchester every three weeks; with the International Institute's homework help program every Monday; once

a month with Lutheran Social Services; and twice with the Boys & Girls Club. A culminating "College Day" event on campus brought the mentors and their mentees to the NEC campus to provide a day of college planning, tours, and workshops.

For many participating high school students, CAMP NEC provided their first meaningful experience with college planning. Surveys and administrative feedback showed that the experience advanced students' knowledge of and interest in college. The mentors reported establishing meaningful relationships with their mentees over the course of the semester, which was beneficial to both groups.

## NHTI – Concord's Community College (College Tours)

NHTI partnered with Laconia High School, Franklin High School, Pittsfield High School, and Project Lead the Way to bring underrepresented middle and high school students to campus to learn about how to prepare for, plan, apply, and pay for college.

back to contents

### PROJECT GOALS

The goals for the project were to inform middle and high school students about the transition process for college and to bring low-income students to NHTI to provide a direct pathway to higher education.

### OUTCOMES

The program brought 160 middle and high school students to campus. These students went on campus tours, attended a student panel where they were able to hear presentations and ask questions, learned about different ways to finance college, and had the opportunity to connect with current college students on the NHTI campus.

The NHTI students were selected from trained campus leaders who were willing to connect with younger students and help them with the college process. Several veteran students presented on college options and other information for those who were interested in joining the armed forces. In addition to the trip to NHTI, students were given materials to bring home to help them and their families with the college process.

From this program students gained an understanding of different options for college, the application process, and how to finance college. One other outcome was that by connecting with current NHTI students, the high school students were able to gain contacts for future questions and guidance with the college process.

This access to information and to peers who came from similar backgrounds not only made the college application process easier to understand but also helped students see college as a real option.

# NHTI – Concord's Community College (STEM Program)

NHTI worked with the New Hampshire Department of Education's Career Development Bureau, the Community College System of New Hampshire, TD Bank, and various school districts to provide mentoring, guidance, and hands-on experience in STEM fields for female students.

The program engaged students in grades 8–10 in a day of learning and hands-on activities in STEM technologies, including computer forensics, cyber security, VEX robotics, mobile applications, game development, 3D modeling, and computer programming.

back to contents

## PROJECT GOALS

In New Hampshire, fewer than 12% students in engineering, computer science, and technology classes are women. The hope of this partnership is to bring together secondary schools, higher education, and industry to increase that figure in the future. The program targets students in grades 8–10 because these are pivotal years for students in thinking about and preparing for their course of study and careers.

Specific goals for this program were for participating students to:

- Interact with each other, mentors, and faculty in project-based group work within various STEM technologies,
- Receive guidance and encouragement in selecting future secondary and postsecondary courses and programs in STEM, and
- Gain exposure to the possibilities of careers in STEM fields that are nontraditional for their gender.

NHTI's STEM program engaged nearly 150 female middle and high school students in activities to encourage the study of STEM fields.

## OUTCOMES

The program engaged 147 female students in grades 8–10—the maximum number that could be accommodated. From the essays and surveys that were collected, doing hands-on activities in STEM fields made a huge difference in changing students' perceptions about their ability to study and work in a STEM-related field.

Many started by thinking that the activities would be too hard for them, but once they started they realized that they not only could do the work, but do it well. Students came away with the knowledge that they had the ability to accomplish more than they realized.

The program was so popular that the organizers had to turn away almost 100 students, as there was not space to accommodate them. The hope is to hold the event in a larger space in future years to be able to allow more students to participate.

## Saint Anselm College

Saint Anselm College's Meelia Center for Community Engagement established the College Access Program in partnership with Career Dimension Inc. and West High School in Manchester, NH.

back to contents

The program was designed to help underrepresented students gain a thorough understanding of the college preparation, planning, financing, and admissions processes through a series of weekly classes facilitated by current Saint Anselm College students. In addition to student-led classes, the program includes presentations from college Admissions and Financial Aid professionals and student panels.

> Saint Anselm College provided classes to help underrepresented students understand the college preparation, financing, and admissions processes.

### PROJECT GOALS

The goal of the College Access Program is to support the higher education aspirations of refugee, immigrant, and other underrepresented students through a series of weekly class sessions focusing on college preparation and admissions, with both general information and individual support for each student. The specific goals of the class sessions were to equip refugee, immigrant, and underrepresented students at West High with the knowledge and skills critical to managing college selection, career exploration, financing, and admission.

### OUTCOMES

All of the high school students received accurate and timely information about college, as well as individual support with their own college admissions process. One unexpected outcome was that because the program coordinator at West High School had to take a medical leave of absence, the program relied more on the student leaders at Saint Anselm and West High, giving both groups greater leadership experience and ownership of the program. In addition, the program forged a strong connection with the Extended Learning Opportunity coordinator at West High, which enabled most of the participants to earn high school credit for participating.

These developments strengthened the future of the College Access Program, which has been extended to future years. Saint Anselm

plans to expand the number of college students involved and establish mentoring groups for West High School students who are at different points along the path of their college access work.

## Southern New Hampshire University

The Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) Center for Service and Community Involvement partnered with Manchester High School Central and Career Dimension Inc. on a multiyear College Access Program.

The program offered weekly class sessions at the high school for students from underrepresented groups to provide key information and guidance for college preparation, as well as trips to the university.

back to contents

### PROJECT GOALS

The goals of the College Access Program were to support the higher education aspirations of refugee, immigrant, minority, and first-generation students through weekly class sessions facilitated by current college students. Classes included a hands-on curriculum, guest speakers, and field trips to SNHU. The goals of the class sessions overall were to equip Manchester High School Central students with the knowledge and skills critical to college selection, career exploration, financing, and admission.

> SNHU's multiyear program equipped refugee, immigrant, minority, and first-generation students with the skills critical for college and career planning.

### OUTCOMES

The grant funded the program over two years, 2011–2012 and 2012–2013. Both years focused on providing intensive instruction and support for a small number of students (9 each year). In the first year, students' success varied depending on their attendance. Students who attended each weekly session and completed the homework assignments graduated from the program, received high school credit, and developed strong college plans. Some students who attended less regularly were not able to complete all of the assignments and meet all of the program goals in one semester, but were able to complete enough to be able to be accepted into college and make plans for that transition.

In the second year, students had near-perfect attendance, with only one student missing one class all session. At the end of the term, each student filled out an anonymous evaluation that asked a series of questions on their knowledge gained and satisfaction with the class. Students overwhelmingly reported they felt much more prepared and ready for col-

lege than before the class. In addition, all nine reported that the class was too short!

Success was due in large part to the students who participated. The high school guidance department organized recruitment in order to target the most appropriate students. Another success factor was the partnership with Career Dimensions Inc., which was beneficial to both students and staff. Students used the online resources provided by Career Dimensions to better identify their personal strengths and interests. The company also aided students in researching colleges and majors.

The university plans to continue this successful program, including partnering with both the high school and Career Dimensions Inc. Future terms will incorporate student feedback, including making the class longer.

## University of New Hampshire

The University of New Hampshire (UNH) used the College Access Challenge grant to partner with Merrimack High School and Hopkinton High School in bringing high school students to the annual Service Organizations Advisors' Resource (SOAR) Conference.

back to contents

### PROJECT GOALS

The goals of the project were to bring teachers and students from area high schools to the SOAR Conference in order to meet with their peers, network, and learn from each other. The foundational belief of the conference is that high school clubs and organizations that are involved in doing community work can benefit from sharing their experiences, wisdom, and resources.

> UNH brought 110 high school students to the annual SOAR conference to support student service work.

### OUTCOMES

UNH brought 110 students to the SOAR conference. Based on the evaluations completed following the conference, both the teachers and the students who attended felt that they learned a great deal and made many new and valuable contacts. The participants were unanimous in saying that the conference was worthwhile and that they would like to attend again.

A major benefit of connecting student service leaders was the opportunity to disseminate information about specific student-developed service projects, which allowed attendees to share models, exchange ideas, and even generate financial support. For example, one student from Merrimack High School was able to generate significant support for an annual event she created called Race 2 Lace, which benefits the people of Haiti.

# University of New Hampshire at Manchester (EXCELL Science Program)

The University of New Hampshire at Manchester (UNH–Manchester) partnered with the Manchester School District to bring English language learners on a science enrichment field trip to Seacoast Science Center at Odiorne Point.

Students in both the university's summer Educational Excellence for English Language Learners (EXCELL) program and students in the school district's English Language Learning (ELL) program participated.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goals of the program were to provide education enrichment in science for English language learners in grades 6-9 and to teach students about scientific pursuits and careers. An additional goal was to introduce the EXCELL program to district students as an incentive to enhance their college preparedness by improving their English language skills.

UNH–Manchester's EXCELL science program introduced English language learners to hands-on scientific inquiry activities.

## OUTCOMES

Through this program, 60 students were introduced to hands-on scientific inquiry activities in a marine biology setting. EXCELL students applied principles of observation and data analysis from their program's science curriculum. Post-testing of these students showed that the program enhanced their comfort level with scientific practices. District students learned about scientific inquiry processes and the possibilities of interesting and challenging EXCELL activities as an incentive to improve their English over future summers. Both groups gained insight into possible courses of study and careers in science.

All participants from both the EXCELL and district programs were middle school students (grades 6–8) or rising high school students (grade 9). This age is a critical period for achieving gains in English competence for future academic purposes as well as a positive orientation to further studies, especially in STEM subjects. Partnerships between secondary schools—especially middle schools—and colleges is essential to maximizing student potential during this critical period.

back to contents

# University of New Hampshire at Manchester (Elementary School Program)

UNH–Manchester brought students from nearby Parker Varney Elementary School to campus for a "Day in College."

Students learned about college life and courses while participating in hands-on activities in areas such as science and technology, art, history, animal tracking, and puppetry.

## PROJECT GOALS

The overarching program goal is for students to see college as an option from as early as elementary school. The location of UNH–Manchester, which is down the street from Parker Varney, gives the university a unique opportunity to make young students feel at home with the idea of getting a college degree.

back to contents

In addition, through fun, discipline-based activities, the program seeks to instill a desire for lifelong learning, to open minds and tempt curiosity, and to expose students to the opportunities that higher education offers.

## OUTCOMES

The Day in College engaged 65 fifth graders from Parker Varney Elementary, most of them from low-income families. Students had a chance to learn and have fun in a controlled setting and to see that learning doesn't have to stop after high school.

By making the interactions with the university fun as well as educational, the program was able to counter the mind frame that college is scary. Students were able to learn about college programs and life, gain attainable expectations, and understand that they have many viable options, including within walking distance of where they live.

Faculty and staff who taught the courses benefited by participating in hands-on learning experiences with enthusiastic youngsters, which served to reinforce their love of teaching and remind them why they became educators in the first place. Finally, the program allowed the university to engage with members of the community, both in the school and beyond.

# University of New Hampshire at Manchester (Voices of the (603))

For this program, UNH–Manchester brings together a broad coalition of middle and high schools, musical groups, arts advocacy organizations, and business and communication partners for Voices of the (603), an annual day-long festival that celebrates a cappella music.

The day includes concert performances, clinics, and instruction as well as an introduction to music on campus as an option for students in any course of study.

Partners included West High School, Berlin High School, Winnacunnet High School, Prospect Mountain High School, Lisbon Regional High School, Kingswood Middle School, West Running Brook Middle School, Woodsville High School, UNH Maiden Harmony, Nashua Granite Statesmen, Kimball Union Academy , Merrimack Middle School, Alvirne High School, Milford High School, Littleton High School, Moultonborough Academy, Kennett High School, Bedford High School,  Rhythm of New Hampshire Show Chorus, Snowday, WZID, New Hampshire Citizens for the Arts, McIntyre Ski Area, and NHPTV.

back to contents

The grant funded transportation, clinician, and other key costs for 2012.

### PROJECT GOALS

Goals for Voices of the (603) are to:

- Raise funds for local nonprofits advocating for the arts with funding raised through concert ticket sales;
- Raise awareness of vocal and a cappella music in the state;
- Connect and showcase the talented musicians throughout the state; and
- Provide alternative ways to foster a lifelong passion in music without necessarily majoring in music.

### OUTCOMES

More than 160 middle and high school students participated in Voices of the (603) in 2012. By engaging so many students from across the state, this program was able to demonstrate that both music and education remain important beyond high school.

For students who are passionate about music and the arts, the program also demonstrates a connection between their studies and accomplishments in high school and their future education.

Through the work of the program's community partners, including arts advocacy groups as well as radio and TV stations that provided coverage, students were also able to see that music and other arts are important both within and outside of the school setting.

Students left the day feeling accomplished and excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. Partnerships with the schools and their teachers have continued, and this annual event attracts more schools and students every year.

## Dover High School

Dover High School teamed with Plymouth State University, Lakes Region Community College, Rivier University, and Nashua Community College to bring high school students to campus to learn about college options and opportunities.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goal of this program was to expose students of underrepresented populations to various colleges and universities in New Hampshire through bus tours to visit campuses and interaction with college students and administrators.

## OUTCOMES

The Dover High School Guidance Department organized two separate college bus tours. The first tour visited Plymouth State University and Lakes Region Community College, with 47 students in grades 10–12 participating. The second tour visited Rivier University and Nashua Community College, with 30 students traveling. Among students who participated, 50% indicated they would not have had the chance to visit a college campus without the field trip.

To ensure that students who would most benefit from this program have an opportunity to participate, the school keeps up-to-date list of students identified as first-time college goers or as coming from an underrepresented population and reaches out to those students with opportunities like this one.

The college visits were promoted by mailing home permission slips to students on this list. The school also made the trip available to students in the Career Technical Center programs that match those offered at the campuses to be visited. Any remaining spots were offered to the rest of the school population on a first-come first-served basis.

back to contents

# Kearsarge Regional High School

Kearsarge Regional High School partnered with Southern New Hampshire University and NHTI – Concord's Community College to create higher education opportunities for students with learning disabilities by providing academic and testing support as well as campus tours.

The school brought students to campus to learn about academic options and college life and had them take PSATs as a prelude to future testing.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goals of this program were to expose students with an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan to standardized testing, post-secondary academic support, and the college environment as part of the high school's work to develop strong transition plans for students with learning disabilities.

Many students with learning disabilities have begun college search activities after receiving academic and testing support.

## OUTCOMES

Students with learning disabilities are often fearful of standardized tests like the SAT and ACT and may refuse to take them, thinking that college is not an

option for them in any case. Having the students participate in this program as a group helped make the experience less intimidating.

Of the high school juniors who hold an IEP or 504 Plan, 92% participated in the PSATs. Taking the PSAT helped them see where their strengths and weaknesses are with regard to standardized tests. Although many students found the process difficult, they understood that this was an important step in preparing for future standardized tests. Their results will help them with SAT preparation as well as course and college selection.

The feedback from students with regard to the college tours was very positive. For most of them, this was the first campus tour they had experienced. Students learned a great deal about post-secondary education and were able to see how they might fit in at a college. Many of these students have begun college search activities.

## Laconia High School

In a campus visit program that received funding for two years, Laconia High School brought students from underrepresented groups on campus visits to NHTI – Concord's Community College, Plymouth State University, and Keene State College.

back to contents

### PROJECT GOALS

The goals of this program were to expose international, refugee, and low-income students to two- and four-year college campuses and to the college possibilities and support available to them.

### OUTCOMES

In the first year of the program, 18 high school students toured NHTI and Plymouth State University. Of these, all were low-income students, and all but one would be the first in the family to attend college. In addition to the tours, students attended panels with international students at both institutions and heard a presentation by the Cross-Cultural Department at NHTI. Plymouth State also provided lunch and sweatshirts, both of which were a hit with students. As a follow-up, NHTI made plans to visit the high school to assist this population of students and invited students back to campus for a multicultural event.

In the second year of the program, 30 low-income students spent the day at Keene State College. They participated in a campus tour, attended student panels, heard an admissions presentation, and enjoyed a free lunch. The focus was on helping them learn about the admissions process, academic options, and college life. Having current Keene State students provide most of the information gave the high school students a first-hand perspective from peers and allowed them to ask questions and learn more about how current students at Keene State made attending college possible.

"Thank you for this opportunity. Our students were able to envision themselves on a campus in N.H. and pursuing a college education."

—LACONIA HIGH SCHOOL

# Lin-Wood High School

Lin-Wood High School arranged campus tours at a range of New Hampshire private and public colleges and universities.

## PROJECT GOALS

This project was designed to get juniors to start thinking seriously about college options and to raise awareness of the different types of colleges available within the state. Through this opportunity, students were able to tour institutions and gain insight about the different programs available to them and the different campus styles. This allowed students to make direct comparisons among campuses of varying sizes, types, and locations and with a wide range of programs.

back to contents

## OUTCOMES

The high school made this opportunity available to all juniors, and all but four attended. Only one of the juniors had toured a college campus prior to the grant-funded tours. Students had the opportunity to see most or all of the facilities at each campus. In some cases they were able to see dorm rooms, visit an active classroom, and even have a snack in the cafeteria. Each campus was unique, and the students were able to identify aspects of each school that were particularly appealing.

Students reported coming away from the tour with a greater understanding of what they want from a college. The experience also stimulated their interest in attending a college or university. Those who were on the fence started talking about applying to college, and those who thought they had everything figured out began to rethink their previous plans on the basis of more solid knowledge.

# Nashua High School North

Nashua High School North partnered with Plymouth State University to bring high school students from underrepresented groups to campus to learn about the college experience and to see college as a viable course of action after graduation.

Student groups targeted for participation were those identified as multicultural, first in their family to graduate from high school, first in their family to consider college, and/or economically disadvantaged.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goals of the project were twofold: 1) to bring students from underrepresented populations on a college visit to learn about the various aspects of university and academic life; and 2) to familiarize students with the college application process and the requirements for pursuing postsecondary education in order to get them excited about their possibilities beyond high school. Both of these goals support the district and school objective of increasing

the number of students pursuing postsecondary options.

### OUTCOMES

A total of 73 students in grades 9-12 were able to tour the campus, speak directly with an admission representative, and talk with current college students. Those participating were predominantly low-income, first-generation college goers and were from racially diverse backgrounds or were English language learners. Plymouth State University was chosen through an existing relationship with the admission staff as an appropriate target school for these students on the basis of proximity, cost, and entrance requirements.

back to contents

On post-trip surveys, students indicated that the college trip was both informative and inspiring. A significant number of the students had never been on a college campus before, and some had never been north of Manchester, NH. Students noted in particular that it was beneficial to see the campus firsthand and to ask questions in person about admissions and majors. They also enjoyed the campus tours, especially seeing actual dorm rooms and being treated to lunch in the dining hall. High school teaching staff noted that the students were treated like guests and made to feel important—something that is difficult to measure but that had a clear impact on their ability to envision themselves as future college students.

> Campus visits had a clear impact on the students' ability to envision themselves as future college students.

One measure of success for the goal of getting students excited about the possibility of college is the number of students who routinely check in at the Guidance office to see about future trips and to refer other students. Nashua North has seen an increase each year in the number of students pursuing postsecondary options, which can be attributed in part to an increase in the number of students from underrepresented populations applying for such programs because of activities like these campus tours.

## Nashua High School North and South

Nashua High School North and South partnered with Nashua Community College (NCC) to serve students taking College Ready Math, a district-wide remedial math course designed to prepare high school seniors for college-level classes.

Students traveled to NCC for a campus tour and took the Accuplacer test, an exam administered by the College Board to help students assess their knowledge in different subject areas as they prepare to enroll in college-level courses.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goal was to work with students in College Ready Math to visit NCC and to take the Accuplacer test throughout the course. The Accuplacer final score would be used for any students enrolling in NCC.

## OUTCOMES

The program engaged 120 high school seniors, 80% of whom would be the first in their family to attend college. Program organizers report that students who put forth the effort were successful, seeing the relevance of match achievement and recognizing if they worked hard they would not need to lose credits and opportunities in other courses by having to take remedial math in college.

Although the high school faced difficulty ordering the Accuplacer exams, which resulted in fewer opportunities to gauge students' success over time on standardized measures, students were able to gain firsthand experience with placement exams and to learn about pathways to college and about college life. For nearly all of the high school students, the trip to NCC was the first time they had been on a college campus.

# Raymond High School

back to contents

Raymond High School partnered with NHTI – Concord's Community College and Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) to bring students to campus to learn about college as an option and to explore different higher education models.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goal for this project was to enable high school juniors to visit college campuses that represented different types of settings in order to encourage them to consider college a practical option and to give them a better idea of what direction to take with their postsecondary education.

## OUTCOMES

The announcement of the campus trips generated a great deal of interest, and more than 100 juniors from Raymond High School went on the tours. Students were actively engaged and asked many questions. During the tours of the college campuses it was obvious that they were interested in gaining firsthand knowledge of what life was like at different types of institutions and in particular how community colleges and small private universities compare.

Raymond's existing partnerships with local postsecondary institutions made a huge difference in the program's success, as students and staff at NHTI and SNHU understood the needs of the high school students and provided valuable information in a way that resonated with students who attended. The campus representatives were also very welcoming, which helped the high school students feel comfortable and enabled them to see themselves in a college setting.

# Souhegan High School

Souhegan High School brought students to NHTI – Concord's Community College, Nashua Community College, Manchester Community College (MCC), and Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) to expose students to different types of campuses in New Hampshire and to provide information and encouragement for pursuing higher education.

## PROJECT GOALS

The school's goal was to expand its existing college visit program, through which all juniors visit a four-year college in the area. An additional goal was to target at-risk students in particular to give them the support they need to make college an option.

back to contents

The grant allowed the school to extend the program in two important respects: 1) adding trips to bring students to two-year as well as four-year colleges to ensure that they understand the full range of options available to them; and 2) including students from all grade levels (9–12), to guide them through the multiyear preparation process.

## OUTCOMES

Through this program, 61 students in grades 9–12 went on one or more campus trips during 2012. The addition of two-year colleges has helped Souhegan High build important relationships with these campuses.

The campus partnerships have all been strengthened, and the school was able to make connections with new staff. These stronger relationships have helped open college opportunities for students.

The trips themselves were extremely successful; both the high school students and college representatives gave highly positive feedback. The warm welcome the campuses offered helped the high school students visualize themselves in a college setting. Students appreciated both the exposure to college life and specific aspects of each campus.

Following are a few quotes from post-trip student surveys:

> "*My future isn't as scary as I thought it was.*"

> "*They have a great learning center. I really liked that.*"

> "*It got me thinking.*"

> "*It showed me that community colleges were a good choice for the first two years.*"

A key success factor was asking students to indicate a specific career interest or an interest in looking at alternatives to four-year colleges, which helped identify those to bring to the two-year colleges.

A lesson learned was to mix students from different grades on the trips. Trips that had a strong mix gave the younger students more confidence in asking questions and thinking about different options, as the upperclassmen provided positive models in these respects. The school plans to make additional field trips to all of these campuses in the future.

## Winnisquam Regional High School

Winnisquam Regional High School partnered with NHTI – Concord's Community College, Plymouth State University, Keene State College, and the University of New Hampshire. Through these partnerships, the high school brought students to each campus in order to learn about college and career planning, options, and accessibility.

back to contents

### PROJECT GOALS

The goal of this program is to show students who have the academic potential to excel but are limited by financial resources or other barriers (e.g., first generation to consider college) that it's possible for them to go to college.

### OUTCOMES

The high school brought 44 students on campus visits. Of these students, 80% were from low-income families and nearly all of them (42) would be the first in their family to attend college. Three-quarters of participants were freshmen; the rest were sophomores.

The school targeted this age group to help students begin to plan for college early on and to take advantage of students' openness to new ideas and ways of thinking.

> High school students were so excited by the prospect of the college visits that they requested to go to multiple campuses.

Initially the plan was to take different groups of high school students to each college, but students were so excited by the prospect of the visits that they requested to go to multiple campuses.

Students took tours and participated in college and career exploration activities at each campus. They were curious and engaged and came away with a much better understanding of the options that are open to them following high school graduation.

# Moving Forward

In addition to making an impact on thousands of students who are now better prepared to enroll and succeed in college, CCNH's College Access Challenge has helped campuses build both internal capacity and external relationships to meet continuing need. Colleges and universities throughout New Hampshire have established partnerships with dozens of K-12 schools, community organizations, and businesses to make higher education attainable for students who are most in need of support.

back to contents

These relationships exemplify one of the most important lessons learned over the course of this multiyear initiative: the power of collaboration. By bringing together different groups with parallel interests, the College Access Challenge has established a continuum of knowledge, with students in lower grades seeing higher education as attainable from an early age, older students understanding the college planning and admissions process, and school and campus administrators alike learning new strategies for helping students overcome barriers to higher education. In addition, all of these groups have gained awareness of the education requirements of today's businesses and tomorrow's careers.

> The College Access Challenge demonstrates that even a small investment can achieve impressive and long-lasting outcomes.

At the same time, current college students have been able to participate in ways that help them deepen their understanding of the economic and social issues facing their local communities. By serving as panelists, teachers, and mentors for at-risk and other students, they have provided a vital service to the community while learning new skills and coming into their own as engaged citizens.

As with many aspects of education, the College Access Challenge demonstrates that even a small investment can achieve impressive and long-lasting outcomes. The sub-grants spurred campuses and their partners to think strategically about how to develop effective programs by leveraging resources and establishing clear and measurable goals. Planned sustainability, along with a hugely positive response, has resulted in many ongoing programs, thus extending the reach of this initiative still further.

CCNH will continue to support campus collaborations as part of its larger effort to advance the role of higher education as a public good. Through programs, resources, training, and professional development ranging from the campus to the regional level, CCNH connects campuses and their communities in ways that benefit both.

# About CCNH

Founded in 1997, Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH) is a statewide consortium of college and university presidents and private sector partners who are united in their commitment to the civic purposes of higher education.

Our mission is to serve as a catalyst for integrating community service and civic responsibility throughout academic and student life. CCNH is part of the national Campus Compact organization, which encompasses more than 1,100 college and university presidents representing some 6 million students.

Our objectives:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout New Hampshire institutions of higher education.
- Provide leadership throughout the state and nation to reinvigorate the civic and moral leadership of higher education in ways that connect colleges and universities with the communities and constituencies they serve.
- Promote citizenship education by expanding higher education's role in educating students not only for careers and jobs but also for their roles as active and engaged community members.

CCNH works in close collaboration with the New Hampshire College & University Council, the New Hampshire Department of Education, Volunteer NH!, the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the national Campus Compact organization. CCNH is also sponsored by the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation.

**Learn more at www.compactnh.org.**

back to contents

# About This Report

The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from the United States Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474) [45 FR 22497, Apr. 3, 1980. Redesignated at 45 FR 77368, Nov. 21, 1980, as amended at 45 FR 86297, Dec. 30, 1980].)