

New England



Educational Opportunity Association
www.neoaonline.org

President's Welcome

Hello NEOA friends and colleagues! I am excited and humbled to serve as NEOA President this year! I know I am walking in the shoes of great leaders who have come before me! NEOA is a rich and vibrant organization and is committed to:

- Promoting educational opportunity
- Being a part of a larger network
- Coordinating with organizations with similar purposes
- Providing professional development
- Disseminating information
- Promoting communication and action

As President, I have set three goals for this year:

1. Get more people involved! There are so many ways that you can be involved that will not take a large commitment of effort or time. Please check out https://www.neoaonline.org/pdf/b_descriptions.pdf to see the position descriptions! Perhaps you would be willing to run for a board position or participate on a committee that would involve about one virtual meeting per month. Maybe you have some expertise or passion that you would be willing to share. Please consider how you can help out NEOA and get involved! We need you!

What's In This Issue:

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- Important Dates
- Full List of Board Members
- State Conference Updates
- COE Update
- NEOA Updates
- News Bites
- Save the Dates

President's Welcome cont'd

2. Be more environmentally conscious. In 2010, NEOA made this commitment and I am re-committing to this goal. Here are the details: https://www.neoaonline.org/n_green.php
Please let me know if you have any thoughts or suggestions to make all NEOA events greener and more sustainable!

3. Share our knowledge with other organizations and learn from others to make our organization stronger. NEOA EOP Professionals are the true experts in our mission to support low income, first-generation students and adults and students with disabilities through the higher education pipeline. If you would like to be a representative to the College Board, NACAC, NEACAC, NASFAA, NACADA or other organizations with similar goals, please let me know. We will pay for your membership for you to represent NEOA and report back to keep us informed.

All members are welcome to attend Board meetings. The dates are listed below and, on our website, <https://www.neoaonline.org/upcoming.php>. You can visit to see how we function and what we accomplish. You are also invited to shadow someone in a current position.

Our next Board meeting is November 18-19 at UMass Lowell Conference Center.

Please let me know if you would like to attend. You can attend remotely as well!

News to Report:

- NEOA recently adopted a new Strategic Plan for 2021-2026. Check it out here <https://www.neoaonline.org/pdf/Strategic%20Plan%202016-2021.pdf> At each Board meeting we will review the plan to ensure that we are fulfilling the goals and objectives.
- COE is celebrating their 40th Anniversary! When you donate to Fairshare this year, you can support this celebration by donating in increments of \$40. It can be \$40, \$140, \$540, \$1040! Whatever fits within your budget. Also take a look at this great video which outlines the development of COE https://coenet.org/40th_anniversary.shtml
- **The next COE event is National First-Generation Day on November 8th.** Please take this opportunity to celebrate first generation students in your programs.

And..... **Please make sure that you renew your membership!** Your contributions help to sustain the important work that NEOA does to support you, your programs and participants! Looking forward to working together!

Best wishes!

Debbie McCann, NEOA President

dmcann@unh.edu

2021-2022 Important Dates

November 18-19 NEOA Board Meeting Lowell, MA

January 5-7 MEEOA Annual Conference (Maine) Virtual

January 27-28 NEOA Board Meeting South Burlington, VT

February 17-18 TRIO Day Burlington, VT

March 20-23 Policy Seminar Washington, D.C.

April 12 NEOA Board Meeting Portsmouth, NH

April 13-15 NEOA Annual Conference Portsmouth, NH

June 2-3 NEOA Board Meeting Location: TBD

VEOP Annual Conference (Vermont) Date & Location TBD

CAEOP Annual Conference (Connecticut) Date & Location TBD (Spring 2022)

COE Update

Recently on October 18th, the Senate LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee released its proposed funding bill for FY 2022. In this bill, TRIO would receive an increase of \$185.8 million, or a 17% increase, for a total appropriation of \$1.28 billion for FY 2022. This is a great down payment on COE's goal of doubling TRIO in the next four years! This will provide a boost for the upcoming Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math-Science, Veterans Upward Bound, and the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate programs to expand the number and size of the awards. The legislation also directs the Department of Education to use part of the allocation to fund high-scoring applications in the FY21 Talent Search and Educational Opportunity Centers and FY20 Student Support Services competitions. This will clearly have implications in the NEOA region to possibly fund additional awards! This proposed Senate also would increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$400 to \$6,895 and provide a \$32 million increase or 9% increase for GEAR UP, for a total appropriation of \$400 million.

Overall great news coming out of D.C. for low-income, first-generation students...**but we still need the powers that be to push it over the finish line!**

-Submitted by Brian Post



COUNCIL *for* OPPORTUNITY *in* EDUCATION

NEOA Board of Directors

2021-2022

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State Liaison, MA

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Past President,
Chair - Nominations/Elections

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Mary Sinclair
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Linda Shiller
Co-Chair, Newsletter

State Conference Updates

The Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association (MEOA) hosted its 37th Annual Conference "Wellness in the COVID Era" on October 15. More than 100 members of the state association joined virtual conference which featured Alex Sheen telling his story

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Educational
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and challenging the membership to make and keep promises worth keeping. Sheen shared personal stories of his father and the founding of his nonprofit, inspiring attendees. MEOA President Debbie McCann and COE representative Kimberly Jones provided insights into the regional and national scenes. Attendees also were provided with options for concurrent sessions focusing on wellness for students and professionals alike. Presentations on leading through yoga and using art to promote wellness were featured. The annual conference concluded with the presentation of six scholarships to students nominated by MEOA members. MEOA is now preparing for the 38th Annual Conference to be held in Devens, MA and is excited to welcome back the membership!



NH Educational Opportunity Association

NHEOA held their annual conference on Thursday, October 21st and were THRILLED to welcome many colleagues back to Keene State College. They offered a hybrid format, allowing members to join either in person in the lovely Norma Walker Hall in the Alumni Center, or virtually over zoom. It was a great day reconnecting and learning. Elyse Pratt-Ronco from UMF Upward Bound presented a fantastic workshop titled "Building Resilience in our Students: From Trauma Aware to Trauma Responsive." Everyone at the conference felt like they walked away with a lot of validating information and practical action steps that will support the changing needs of students. Additionally, there was a great COE update from Kimberly Jones and NHEOA update with Debbie McCann. At the business meeting, new NHEOA President, Adam Howard discussed goals for the year and launched some exploratory committees. There was a fun little Fair Share campaign at the conference to celebrate the proposed 17% TRIO funding increase. Each participant was asked to donate \$17!

NEOA Strategic Planning

The 2020 NEOA Board worked together to update our very strong Strategic plan. The entire board was able to review the SP in small committees and then make recommendations to our entire board for discussion. We are very fortunate that this board has historically had a commitment to our Strategic plan and has worked hard to meet our goals and objectives.

This year we have recommitted to looking closely at our work on the board to make sure we are recording our support for the SP. As in the past and as our NEOA President Deb McCann has said, a priority for this year is to get more members involved in board work. Please consider joining us for meetings, taking the opportunity to shadow a position that may interest you, or to get involved in committee work. Committee would not require for you to attend board meetings and would have a very specific focus. Both TRIO Day and our Annual Conference are always looking for input, support and/or energy for our events!

NEOA has been the best professional experience for many of our member – including me – and a great well to develop your leadership. But more importantly, it is also a great way to build relationships with other outstanding TRIO and EOP professionals. Reach out to President McCann or President Elect Rob Pote if you are interested in helping out!



NEOA News Bites

Upward Bound - SUNY Plattsburgh

Upward Bound at SUNY Plattsburgh participated in COE's Good Trouble Book Club during their summer program, reading the John Lewis' graphic novel series, March. All rising sophomores read the series and participated in group discussions facilitated by Brian Post and other local leaders who also read the series. Two of these were Christopher Rosenquest, mayor of the City of Plattsburgh, and Michael Cashman, Supervisor of the Town of Plattsburgh. Both are TRIO alumni, with Mr. Rosenquest participating in the Upward Bound Program at SUNY Plattsburgh, and Mr. Cashman participating in the Student Support Services Program, also at SUNY Plattsburgh. Participants were then joined by USDE Secretary Cardona for the final book discussion with other Upward Bound programs across the country. He discussed the John Lewis books, told his personal story, and took questions from the students...overall it was a great experience!



CCRI TRIO Programs

On Tuesday, October 12, 2021 U.S. Senator Jack Reed visited the Liston Campus in Providence to meet with CCRI students and alumni who have benefitted from the college's TRIO programs, which are federally-funded programs to help Rhode Islanders overcome barriers to starting and completing a post-secondary education.

The college recently received two five-year TRIO grants from the U.S. Department of Education totaling \$7.4 million to continue providing Rhode Island Educational Talent Search (RIETS) and Opportunity Center (RIEOC) services to more than 4,000 low-income and first-generation Rhode Islanders.

Sen. Reed, a strong advocate for TRIO and a member of the Appropriations Committee, spoke with 17 former and current CCRI students, each of whom shared their experiences working with advisors and counselors before, during, and even after college. From first-generation students who needed help filling out Financial Aid paperwork to those who required an additional push now and then to stay on track, each shared examples of how TRIO programs kept them engaged and focused on completing their educational journey. "Programs like this are necessary everywhere," said Marcin Pawlukiewicz of Cumberland, a Polish immigrant who enrolled in ESL courses upon moving to the United States and is now pursuing his bachelor's degree at the University of Rhode Island. **Continued on next page**

NEOA News Bites

Continued from previous page

"During my ESL courses, I met a lot of great people. Everyone had a unique background, many from different countries and cultures. As an immigrant, I felt a bond with all of those people. Many of them, including me, struggled financially, but most have great potential, and, if given the opportunity, they can achieve great things. That is why the program is so important."

"TRIO has helped me figure out a game plan to finish school and obtain a degree in an area that I am passionate about," said Zaire Lambright of Providence, who is on track to graduate CCRI in Fall 2022 and plans to transfer to Brown University to double major in Psychology and Sociology. "My advisor [April Donahue] has been a phenomenal asset and guide throughout this process. She has not only helped me figure out a game plan to finish and graduate, but has also given me a renewed sense of confidence in myself, and the potential I have to achieve greater things in the pursuit of my degree."

You can read more about the impact of TRIO programs at CCRI online or check out our photo gallery from Tuesday's visit. Thank you to Senator Reed and all of the advisors and counselors who continue to advocate for our students!



NEOA News Bites

USM TRIO Students Win National Competition and attend Annual COE Conference

Four students in the TRIO College Programs at USM have won a national competition and traveled to Atlanta to present their work. Patty Herbert, Amber Veilleux, Koos Mohamed, and Raha Daud created a civic engagement project as part of a competition hosted by the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE).

The students were part of a COE-sponsored book club, where they read John Lewis' *Across That Bridge: A Vision for Change and the Future of America* and heard from local guest speakers. As part of the experience, COE challenged its book clubs across the country to design a civic engagement project for their communities.

Herbert, Veilleux, Mohamed, and Daud created the winner, a project designed to respond to today's social injustices by engaging with students at a local high school and developing a program that provides a safe, welcoming space for students to express their thoughts and listen to others. Part of the project included a poster inviting students to a dialogue series and encouraging them to "Master your voice, educate, and advocate for yourself."

As the winners, the four students attended the 40th Annual COE Conference in Atlanta in September, where they presented their poster and shared how they plan to implement this program. Four students in the TRIO College Programs at USM have won a national competition and will travel to Atlanta to present their work. Big congrats to these talented students and their advisors to the winning book club, Linda Freeman and Riko Bo. **Check it out!** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6aaAbILG44>



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NEOA News Bites

Marian Belgrave-Howard attends COE Conference

On June 7, 2021 I received the following in an email from dear friend and TRIO icon Marian Belgrave-Howard ... Will you be in Atlanta this year? I will!

In response to the 40th anniversary celebrations for the Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) at its annual conference in Atlanta on September 11-15, Marian was determined to attend and wanted me to know of her plans three months in advance! I was somewhat concerned about an 85-year-old legend traveling alone to a large city, but together with help from a nearby nephew we navigated registration, hotel accommodations, travel details, and additional last minute invitations to special events. Many thanks go to Jordana Adelman and Angelica Vialpando at COE for their huge support in supporting Marian's visit from their end.

COE President Maureen Hoyler hosted a 'legends of COE' dinner on Sept. 11 with many of the TRIO professionals who were instrumental in the founding of COE and its early development. "It was an absolutely wonderful dinner. I met old friends that I had not seen in decades," shared Marian. She added that, "Seeing all the younger TRIO professionals represented growth and commitment. The old and new leadership took up from where we started in the 1970's and they grew the organization."

Among many colleagues and collaborators, Maureen renewed her connection with Oscar Hernandez, the Director of Project Stay in San Antonio, Texas. In the late 1970's they were given a 24-hour notice to testify in Congress in support of the TRIO budget. Oscar testified before a House committee, Marian presented in the Senate, beginning a strong tradition of TRIO advocacy for our funding and legislation.

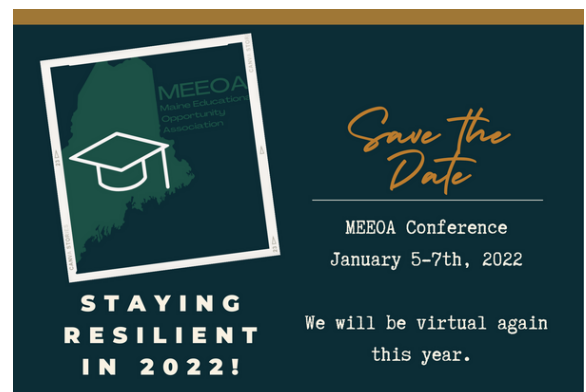
"The gracious treatment from COE was really appreciated," said Marian. "I enjoyed every minute of the Conference, it was a wonderful, wonderful experience. To see the diversity of this group was invigorating. Everything that I heard and saw ... it was the most memorable thing that has happened for me in recent years."

Marian wanted to share a final thought for current TRIO counselors and leaders, "The big thing is the BELIEF in what we do. The belief and the love."

For some images of Marian Belgrave-Howard at the COE Annual Conference 2021 see

<https://rocketman.smugmug.com/Marian1/>

Submitted by Randy Schroeder 26 October 2021



Save the Date

2022 NEOA
Alumni
Achiever
Nominations

February 1, 2022

We want to celebrate the
achievements of your alums.
Look for applications in early
December.

For more information contact:
elyse.pratt@maine.edu

**HAVE A NEWS BITE, ARTICLE, STUDENT
ARTWORK OR WRITING FOR THE
NEWSLETTER?
SEND IT ON!**

**PLEASE EMAIL LINDA AT:
shilcorm88@gmail.com**

Save the Date



February 16-18, 2022



NEOA TRIO Day Conference

**@ the DoubleTree, South Burlington, VT
(in-person & hybrid tbd)**

Questions?

Contact Adam Hurwitz
(University of VT UB) - or -
Julie Finnegan (Castleton
University UB)