



*Promoting Educational
Opportunity in
New England*

Formerly NEAEOPP

Who We Are

The New England Educational Opportunity Association, or NEOA (formerly NEAEOPP), is an organization of professionals who are actively interested in insuring equal educational opportunities in higher education. Founded in 1972, NEOA has membership of more than 300 educators throughout the six New England states: *Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.*

Almost 100 federally funded educational opportunity programs assisting almost 50,000 middle school, high school and college students are supported by NEOA members in both urban and rural communities throughout the region. Combined, these programs receive federal funding of over \$20 million a year to promote access to and success in higher education.

Prior to April 1999, NEOA's name was NEAEOPP, which stood for the New England Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel.

What We Do

The mission of NEOA is to advocate for access to and success in postsecondary

education for low-income individuals, first generation college students and college students with disabilities; and to develop the skills and knowledge of educational opportunity professionals working with this population.

Organizational Support

Providing the means for people working in educational programs to enhance their professional skills and improve program effectiveness is a major emphasis of NEOA's work. NEOA serves as a powerful regional voice for equal educational opportunity, providing a forum for the on-going discussion of vital issues and concerns. Diverse perspectives are encouraged, and help to insure that the regional foundation is both strong and secure.

NEOA's efforts encompass a broad range of activities that include:

See page 3 and back panel for more information on how you can participate in NEOA activities throughout the year!

Professional Services

- Convening an annual regional conference and periodic professional development workshops focusing on

issues of significant concern for people working in educational opportunity programs related to higher education.

- Promoting and sponsoring the development of leaders in the TRIO/educational opportunity community through the NEOA Leadership Institute, established in 1998.
- Publication of a quarterly newsletter with current information pertinent to educational opportunity programs on the secondary and postsecondary levels.

Advocacy Services

- Updating NEOA members and concerned individuals on legislation, funding sources, and government policies affecting educational opportunity programs and the students they serve.
- Providing legislators and other public leaders with current information on the needs of low income and minority students pursuing secondary and postsecondary education; and the effectiveness of special programs servicing such students.
- Developing and disseminating recommendations for colleges and universities, government and education agencies on the ways in which educational opportunity programs can be responsive to low-income students.
- Establishing and maintaining statewide networks to facilitate communication among educational professionals in New England regarding issues related to educational opportunity programs and first generation students that require immediate action.
- Furthering communications and cooperation amongst educational opportunity programs and personnel; and forming coalitions with organizations and individuals who have an interest in advancing educational opportunity.
- Furthering public awareness of the needs of low income students aspiring to pursue or enrolled in postsecondary education.

Student Services

Students served by NEOA professionals generally participate in federally funded programs collectively known as TRIO. Created in 1965, TRIO was so named because it was made up of three key programs: Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Student Support Services. Over the last 30 years, other programs have been added under the TRIO umbrella, such as Educational Opportunity Centers, McNair Scholars and Upward Bound Math/Science Centers.

Specific annual student activities supported by NEOA include:

- Recognizing the accomplishments of students through its annual awards for TRIO Achievers.
- Organizing an annual celebration on National TRIO Day which provides students with an opportunity to visit colleges and meet admissions staff, and attend educational and college-prep workshops and other related activities. Through this effort, students get involved with publicity and promotion for their program's efforts.
- Sponsoring attendance for alumni and state leaders each year at the annual Policy Institute in Washington D.C. (along with NEOA members) to meet with legislators on education issues and learn how the policy and legislative change process operates, and how to influence the development process to benefit student programs.

How We Are Organized

NEOA is comprised of talented and energetic individuals who possess a wide array of skills and competencies, and who have developed and implemented highly successful educational opportunity programs throughout New England. They have extensive experience improving services and activities for targeted constituencies, and are a resource which may be accessed by those who are interested in learning about what works well and how it may be adapted to one's own specific program.

NEOA can assist an educational opportunity program positively impact the mainstream of its host institution, and become an integral component of its outreach, access, and retention services.

Skills that exist within NEOA include:

- grant writing and development
- proposal review and evaluation
- project administration
- outreach strategies
- constituency advocacy
- techniques to improve access and retention

NEOA's activities are coordinated by a Board of Directors, made up of an Executive Committee (consisting of our elected officers), state presidents and liaisons, chairpersons of standing, and ad hoc committees in the following areas: Membership and Credentials; Research and Special Concerns; Legislative & Education Concerns; Professional Development; Technology; TRIO Achievers; Public Relations; and Publications.

NEOA members actively participate in the organization by:

- Working on one of the standing committees
- Contributing to the newsletter and annual report
- Participating on the planning committee of the annual conference
- Attending professional development workshops or the NEOA Leadership Institute
- Assisting with special events such as legislative workshops, college fairs and financial aid programs
- Serving as an officer, committee chair person or Executive Committee at-large member on the Board of Directors.

National Affiliations

NEOA is one of ten organizations across the U.S. that makes up the Council for Opportunity in Education, or the Council

(formerly NCEO). Through our participation on the Council we keep abreast of national developments affecting educational opportunity programs and bring attention to New England concerns. The Council maintains an office in Washington, D.C. for the purpose of gathering data and disseminating information on the experiences and successes of education opportunity programs in higher education throughout the U.S. This office also monitors federal appropriations for educational opportunity programs and provides information to Congressional representatives and staff on the needs of low income and minority students and ways in which educational opportunity programs meet these needs. Several of NEOA's board members and professional members sit on the Council board and committees at the national level.

State Association Support

NEOA works actively to enhance and strengthen state educational opportunity associations throughout New England and their local activities which is such an important force in the effort to expand the cause of educational equity.

NEOA can strengthen state associations by:

- Assisting with the development and implementation of effective and dynamic linkages with governmental education committees.
- Assisting with the development of public relations campaigns, including plans to market program and student successes.
- Assisting with the creation of position papers, newsletters, fundraising, etc.
- Assisting with leadership development.
- Sponsoring student and member activities with funding and organizational support.

NEOA's state partners include:

- Connecticut Association of Educational Opportunity Programs (CAEOP)

- Maine Educational Opportunity Association (MEEOA)
- Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association (MEOA)
- New Hampshire Educational Opportunity Association (NHEOA)
- Rhode Island Educational Opportunity Association (RIEOA), and
- Vermont Educational Opportunity Programs (VEOP).

For More Information

To learn more about becoming a NEOA member, or for general NEOA information, please call Sarah Morrell, President, at 508-678-2811 x2324 or email at smorrell@bristol.mass.edu



Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

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How You Can Join and Participate

You may become a member of NEOA in one of two categories:

1. If you are actively engaged in the operation of an educational opportunity program in New England and a significant portion of your work involves the concerns of first generation students, you qualify for Active Professional Membership.
2. Affiliate Membership is available to individuals who do not qualify as Active Professional Members, but are concerned about insuring equal educational opportunity in higher education.