

In This Issue:

TRiO Day Update
NEOA Conference Update
Message from NEOA President
NEOA's Growth Initiative
Johnson State College SSS
TECH Blurb Program

Volume 2 Issue 1

December, 2008



Greetings to all in NEOA Land!

I've just completed a three month marathon including attending two COE board meetings, two NEOA board meetings, six state conferences, the annual COE conference, one additional training and the New England College Readiness Forum.

While I am looking forward to catching up on emails, I am also invigorated by what I have seen and learned. Our state regions are uniquely different and wonderful, and we have much to learn from each other—from conference formats, to fundraising, to having profitable and fun times together.

With the elections now over, we have a prime opportunity to let our collective and individual voices be heard in relation to changes in educational policies in this country. The Council for Opportunity in Education has already been invited to brief President Elect's transition team on the need to expand our best practices rather than to create brand new initiatives. As you can imagine, the administration is looking to adopt policies that will have far reaching impact on the issues that we face locally and nationally. Thus, it is imperative that we stand ready to engage in creative thinking and to be ready to share the best practices that have produced significant results thus far.

For example, there will be opportunities for projects to give input regarding the changes legislated by the newly reauthorized HEOA. SSS projects have already been asked to weigh in concerning language regarding "different campuses" and "different populations". Talent Search and EOCs will then be asked to conceive of workable initiatives to introduce more "rigor" into the projects for at least a select percentage of participants. I urge all projects to begin brainstorming ideas to contribute to the national discussion. I realize that more is being asked of us but legislators have been pushing the notion of a more rigorous curriculum for all education projects. This is in direct response to a need for more underrepresented students to gain skills that would allow them to qualify for Academic Competitive Grants (ACGs) and/or to consider and qualify for incentives available for those interested in pursuing STEM (Science, Technology, Education, & Mathematics). Let's be proactive in these discussions rather than wait for someone else to tell us what will be expected of us. Stay tuned for more details and opportunities in these rapidly changing times.

Finally, you should know that a sister region (ASPIRE) has offered us a former challenge and would like to unseat our perennial rank as the number one region for Fairshare. We actually don't have to do much except for two critical areas: **1)** we need a massive number of individual contributors as they will now be counting this. The amount does not matter. We just need more to engage as this has been an area that we have not yet excelled in and **2)** we also need more "champions", who are those individuals that have given \$1,000. I am not concerned by this recent challenge as we in New England have a culture of giving that is foreign to most regions in the country, even when they have more money than we do in their associations (and their paychecks in some cases). I urge you to begin thinking now on how we can generate more participation overall in order to preserve our long-standing number one status and respect in the country. Stay tuned for more details.

Finally, I wish you all a joyous and restful break during this wonderful holiday season. May the true blessings of joy, hope and peace be yours now and in the days ahead.

Donna Thompson
NEOA President

Program Overview

*Johnson State College - SSS
Director- Karen F. Madden, Ph.D.*

Academic Support Services offers a range of support to JSC students as they progress through their college careers. Our goal is to provide support that empowers students to successfully complete their college education and prepares them for further education and employment.

Services include:

- Advising
- Services for students with disabilities
- Individual and group tutoring
- Non-traditional student services
- Career development and graduate school counseling to TRiO students
- Academic skills advising
- Mentoring to TRiO students
- Transition Year Experience

The JSC SSS program has a history of successful students, most recently with a persistence rate (Year 1 to Year 2) of 80%, 88% good academic standing rate, and a 62% graduation rate. Academic Support Services is funded 75% (\$394,245 annually) from a U.S. Department of Education TRiO Grant and 25% (\$131,001 annually) by Johnson State College.

Jennifer K. Jones
State Liason, VT

*Happy Holidays
And
Happy New Year*



TRiO Day Newsflash

Things are heating up in Maine for TRiO Day 2009 (*we use the term "heating up" very loosely here in Maine*). Make the trip to Maine for two days of celebration, reflection and action around increased access to higher education for our students.

TRiO Day is a time to **CELEBRATE** the positive impact of federal TRIO Programs in our communities throughout New England and the nation. **REFLECT** on the importance of educational opportunity programs in creating a fairer society for all Americans. **ACT** to protect and create further access to higher education for low-income and first-generation students.

Join us in Maine for TRiO Day 2009 and **REPRESENT** your project!

WHEN: Thursday and Friday, February 19 – February 20, 2009

WHERE: Portland Marriott in beautiful South Portland, Maine

Don't miss it! Check the NEOA website for more details and registration information. If you have any questions, please contact me at anne.st.pierre@umit.maine.edu.

Anne St. Pierre
TRiO Day Chair

NEOA Annual Conference Update

Join us in beautiful Newcastle, NH: Monday, March 30 through Thursday, April 2, 2009!

Creating New Visions: Opportunities for Learning



Our conference theme was inspired by this mural designed by UNH students under the direction of Richard Haynes. The mural portrays the personal significance of diversity. NEOA's message, "*Creating New Visions: Opportunities for Learning*" captures the spirit of the students' image. As professionals dedicated to opportunity and change, we embrace the idea that our individual and collective work makes a difference. As the nation stands poised at a historical moment that *signifies* the success of access and opportunity, we invite you to imagine and share ways we can embrace the beauty and strength of diversity. Just as these students brought their vision to life and shared it with the campus community, we invite you to share your wisdom at this year's conference.

The conference committee is busy at work to create a dynamic program that will inspire your work and create new opportunities for learning. Please visit www.neoaonline.org for conference updates. The call for proposal has been posted; we encourage you and your colleagues to consider sharing your expertise by designing a conference workshop and submitting a proposal or two!

You can also check out the fabulous Wentworth by the Sea Hotel and Resort at www.wentworth.com. This AAA Four Diamond Marriott Hotel & Spa overlooks Little Harbor and the Atlantic Ocean in New Castle, New Hampshire. Since 1874, the Wentworth by the Sea has stood as a landmark hotel commanding postcard-perfect views of the waterfront. Reopened in 2003, after a spectacular renovation and expansion, the hotel is once again an East Coast Grand Destinations. Guests enjoy being an hour north of Boston and five minutes from downtown Portsmouth which features wonderful shopping, dining and historic charm. Moments from seacoast attractions and sparkling beaches, Wentworth by the Sea will surpass your highest expectations. Hotel reservation information will be posted soon and on-line registration for the conference will be available in late January.

We look forward to seeing you at the NEOA Annual Conference in late March!

Dani Adler, VP of NEOA, Conference Co-chair and Maria Dintino, Conference Co-chair

TECH Blurb

TRiO Day and NEOA Conference Registrations

This year NEOA is pleased to offer online registration for TRIO Day. Project directors can go to the TRIO Day section of the NEOA website and register up to 20 participants for TRIO Day.



We are also pleased to report that we are accepting credit card payments for TRIO Day and the 2009 annual conference. We have partnered with PayPal to bring you this service.

- You will be able to pay your registration fee online at a secure PayPal web page using your credit card, debit card, or purchasing card.
- You do not need a PayPal account in order to use the online credit card payment system.
- If you do not have a credit card, or do not wish to pay online, we will continue to accept other forms of payment, such as a check or purchase order.

Casey Henderson

Chair, Technology Committee

NEOA Board Implements Three Strategic Growth Initiatives

At the November NEOA Board meeting in Vermont, three major new initiatives were launched to promote the organization's growth. Board members were split into three distinct 'task forces', each with an assigned target market and specific goals to accomplish relating to that market. NEOA's previously identified strategic markets are membership, elected public officials, and potential funding sources.

- **The membership task force** has established a goal of increasing the attendance of new members at the annual conference in New Hampshire this spring. Under a theme of 'strong professionals, strong association' letters and membership brochures will be sent to program directors throughout the region encouraging memberships for all of their staff members. Incentives, online mentoring programs, and special activities for new members who attend the conference are all being discussed.
- **The 'funding' task force** identified three potential sources for conference sponsorship from throughout the region. Letters and follow-up contacts are being planned as part of the campaign. The task force also plans to encourage the involvement of state teams to pursue additional sources. NEOA offers training, advising and publications to support state efforts.
- **The task force targeting elected officials** is launching an initiative to contact each new member of Congress from New England and to set up a personal visit. Packets to accompany the already drafted cover letter will be prepared by the January Board meeting. State booklets were discussed and examples of what some states are currently doing with publications were shared.

Now is a great time to get involved with one of these initiatives at the local or regional level. The effort on your part will not be time consuming, yet it will offer some great professional development opportunity for each individual and will serve as preliminary exposure to potential future leadership opportunities within the association. Contact your state president, state liaison or any member of the NEOA Board for more information.

Paul Lynskey

Chair, Public Relations/Communications