

Our Mission

The mission of NEOA is to advocate for access to and success in postsecondary education for low-income individuals, first generation college students, and students with disabilities and to develop the skills and knowledge of educational opportunity professionals working with this population.

Our Vision

NEOA will be the recognized leader and voice of expertise in educational opportunity for low-income individuals, first generation college students and persons with disabilities. NEOA will cultivate and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders who will build and strengthen the human and financial capital in support of NEOA's mission. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Alumni
- Elected Officials
- Educational Opportunity Programs and Professionals
- Funding sources-private and non-profit
- Participants, families and communities
- Schools and institutions
- State, regional and national organizations
- U.S. Department of Education/State Departments of Education

This vision will be pursued through professional learning opportunities, leadership and advocacy activities that are innovative, collaborative, flexible, proactive, future-oriented and directly impact student-learning.

NEOA Strategic Plan

The NEOA Strategic Plan is divided into five sections:

Goal 1: Strengthen and support state associations

1.1 Create regional structures to enhance coordination with states

- a. Support and attend annual state conferences.
- b. Support state level professional development activities, event planning and resource-sharing and communicate through NEOA resources i.e. website, Board meetings, online platforms, etc.
- c. Provide support for the state initiative grant process and the COE grant proposal process.
- d. Provide outreach materials and welcome packets to states for newly funded programs.
- e. Develop strategies to support states' ability to meet their individual goals and objectives.
- f. Assess state needs from NEOA via an annual survey.
- g. Help to coordinate information to state liaisons with asynchronous terms on NEOA Board.

1.2 Dedicate appropriate resources to strengthen and support state associations

- a. Strategically plan for a dedicated advocacy budget for state outreach to elected members of Congress.
- b. Strategically plan for a dedicated state initiative budget that addresses state needs and regional and state strategic plans.
- c. Coordinate information sharing for COE and NEOA (Clearinghouse, website) and policy-making organizations such as the New England Council.
- d. Consult/coordinate with Technology, Access and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Chairs to make sure specific audiences are considered.
- e. Coordinate technology needs of professional development activities in respective states as needed.
- f. Develop and provide Board trainings for state leaders; and, host a retreat annually.

1.3 Facilitate and support attendance of members and alumni at state and national advocacy events.

- a. Hold strategic advocacy events at the regional conference and throughout the year.
- b. Support states in scheduling meetings with elected officials, representatives and Congressional staff and provide Policy Seminar training for Board members and others, annually.
- c. Coordinate the publication of regional, state and national TRIO/GEAR UP events to elected legislative officials and staff in the respective states.

Goal 2: Provide Professional Learning Opportunities for Membership

2.1 Identify and assess professional learning needs of membership

- a. Summarize and share evaluations from annual conference with the Board.
- b. Collect, analyze and share information from program round tables with the Board.
- c. Survey members by program annually using accessible online tools.

2.2 Develop comprehensive professional development activities to meet member needs

- a. Establish vision for professional development.
- b. Consult and coordinate with Technology and DEI chairs to make sure specific audiences are considered.
- c. Provide outreach to states during the grant-writing period.

2.3 Provide professional development opportunities that are responsive to the needs of Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP)

- a. Implement professional development activities including annual conference, professional development days, and leadership institute.
- b. Coordinate with individuals willing to chair professional development events.
- c. Provide training to specific audiences such as veteran staff, new directors, and new members.

2.4 Maximize technology as a vehicle for information gathering and dissemination

- a. Send information to listserv and post on website and social media pages.
- b. Utilize technology to deliver professional development activities.
- c. Explore and expand technology to include webinars, podcasts, reading groups, etc.
- d. Work with Technology Committee to coordinate technology needs of professional development activities as needed.

2.5 Distribute membership materials to EOP and new hires

- a. Generate and distribute a list of all new programs in the region at conclusion of each program competition.
- b. Communicate with all new directors, new staff and new programs to provide information about NEOA and its professional development activities.

Goal 3: Foster Leadership within NEOA

3.1 Define and publicize various leadership opportunities within NEOA

- a. Provide information on leadership opportunities and benefits at each professional development day and state conference.
- b. Discuss opportunities for leadership as part of soliciting nominations for officer positions.
- c. Promote leadership positions in newsletters and list serve.
- d. Engage members in committee work.
- e. Engage in conversations and programing promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.

3.2 Encourage board members to identify, recruit and mentor individuals for Board leadership roles

- a. Provide shadowing opportunities for each Board position.
- b. Provide leadership workshops at NEOA annual and state conferences.
- c. Promote leadership opportunities at Conference Newcomer's Reception.
- d. Provide a training/ team building/getting to know you session with Board members

3.3 Encourage the involvement of Arnold Mitchem Leadership Institute (AMLI) alumni with NEOA

- a. Create and maintain a database of AMLI alumni.
- b. Inform and encourage AMLI participants and alumni to make a commitment to serve.

3.4 Engage or re-engage veteran staff

- a. Provide monthly Director Meetings for each program.
- b. Maintain an NEOA directory including veteran staff identification.
- c. Engage veteran staff in recruitment for state and regional Board positions.

3.5 Develop and promote leadership opportunities for state and regional board positions

- a. Promote COE Emerging Leaders Institute as a leadership opportunity.
- b. Promote the AMLI Leadership Institute at the NEOA and state conferences.
- c. Conduct the NEOA AMLI alternating years.
- d. Reach out to non-members with information and opportunities to engage.
- e. Provide orientation as well as training and support for all Board positions.

Goal 4: Build and strengthen NEOA's Financial & Organizational Resources

4.1 Create and maintain a financial management plan

- a. Establish an annual budget reflecting goals and priorities.
- b. Analyze annual budget and calculate amount of reserve needed.
- c. Monitor, reconcile and report fiscal status on a quarterly basis.
- d. Conduct monetary transactions, i.e. opening certificates of deposit and other forms of investment.
- e. Investigate investment options for reserve funds.
- f. Create and maintain a reserve equal to one-half of annual expenses Establish annual budget reflecting goals and priorities.
- g. Prepare, file and submit state and federal forms by due dates.

4.2 Create an annual development plan to support NEOA activities each year

- a. Establish annual development goal.
- b. Represent Association in public arena to potential funders to identify and cultivate contacts.
- c. Generate and update a list of partners and supporters for the development plan.
- d. Expand Professional Development Committee to include a point person for each program as members of the Development Committee.

4.3 Develop and implement a marketing plan for NEOA

- a. Review and update existing marketing materials and media to support development plan.
- b. Identify target audiences including new directors, membership, funders and elected officials.
- c. Develop customized messages to reach target audiences.
- d. Evaluate plan effectiveness and results.

Goal 5: Strengthen NEOA's capacity to advocate on behalf of EOP students

5.1 Ensure strong advocacy efforts

- a. Develop advocacy goals.
- b. Charge committees to address advocacy goals.
- c. Establish a plan for outreach to members of Congress.

5.2 Provide information and training to promote connection between state and national advocacy issues

- a. States identify advocacy needs and write State Initiative grant applications to address those needs.
- b. Provide advocacy training on pertinent political issues.
- c. Provide advocacy training prior to Policy Seminar for state leaders.
- d. Provide information and training on COE's Fair Share initiatives.

5.3 Expand TRIO/GEAR UP alumni presence in NEOA to assist advocacy efforts

- a. Recognize success of EOP alumni e.g. NEOA Achievers, NEOA Alumni List Serve, and COE/NEOA's TRIO Alumni Online Network.
- b. Engage alumni through alumni database, social media and at Policy Seminar.
- c. Secure alumni presence at conference and Policy Seminar.
- d. Provide advocacy training prior to Policy Seminar for state leaders.