

NEOA MEMBERSHIP

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 to 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 and Education Concerns; Alumni; 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 chairperson, or Executive Committee at-large member on the Board of Directors.



PROMOTING
EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY IN
NEW ENGLAND

A NEW ENGLAND RESOURCE FOR ACCESS AND SUCCESS

NEOA is the primary professional association in New England dedicated to ensuring equal access to higher education. Founded in 1972, NEOA has membership of over 300 educators from throughout the six New England states.

Over 100 federally, state and locally funded educational opportunity programs assisting approximately 50,000 middle school, high school, and college students and adults are supported by NEOA members in both urban and rural communities throughout the region. Combined, these programs receive over \$20 million a year to promote access to and success in higher education, particularly for low-income, potential first-generation college students and students with disabilities.

NEOA also serves as a resource for elected officials, community leaders, and educational professionals throughout the New England region on issues relating to educational access.

We invite you to read the enclosed information, share it with your staff and colleagues to better understand how NEOA can be a resource for you. We also encourage each of you to consider contacting us to explore how we can work together to help assure that the opportunity to complete a higher education becomes a reality for all.

NEOA'S MISSION

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

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.

NEOA provides:

- Expertise in issues relating to low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities
- Data relating to college access and underserved populations
- A directory of programs by region, state, Congressional District, or city
- Connection to state associations and local programs
- Forums for access to underserved students and their families
- Information about regional and local conferences and events

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.

Approximately 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.

STATE PARTNERS

CAEOP: Connecticut Association of Educational Opportunity Programs

MEEOA: Maine Educational Opportunity Association

MEOA: Massachusetts Educational Opportunity Association

NHEOA: New Hampshire Educational Opportunity Association

RIEOA: Rhode Island Educational Opportunity Association

VEOP: Vermont Educational Opportunity Partners

WHAT WE DO

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.

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 post-secondary 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 among 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.

STATE ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

NEOA works actively to enhance and strengthen state educational opportunity associations throughout New England and their local activities that are 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.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Convening an annual regional conference and 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 about secondary and postsecondary educational opportunity programs.

STUDENT SERVICES

Students served by NEOA professionals generally participate in federally-funded programs collectively known as TRIO and GEAR UP. Created in 1965, TRIO was 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. GEAR UP, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, was created in 1998 as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

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 including visiting colleges and attending educational and college-prep workshops.
- 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.

NATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

NEOA is one of ten organizations across the US 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 US. 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.