

Membership Newsletter
Winter 2020



NEOA CONFERENCE 2020

“Preserving the Past, Motivating the Present, Empowering the Future”
April 1-3, 2020 Heritage Hotel, Golf, Spa, & Conference Center
Southbury, Connecticut.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. CHRIS KUKK, Founding Director of the Center for Compassion, Creativity and Innovation. Pick up the book, The Compassionate Achiever, and become familiar with Dr.Kukk’s message.

Alumni Breakfast ~

Wednesday, April 1, 8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Invite your program alumni for a networking opportunity like no other! Alumni must be pre-registered to attend. So, look at your alumni rosters and get connected! This is a wonderful time to honor and network with so many wonderful successful alumni!



NEOA Business Meeting ~ Thursday, April 2

Elections: The NEOA membership will vote for and elect a President-Elect, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and State Liaisons from each of the New England State Associations. Seriously consider the benefits of running for any of these positions. Rewarding beyond belief!!!

By-Laws Amendments: The NEOA membership will vote on revisions of the Association’s By-Laws, specifically the language on membership: affiliate and institutional memberships. This will be a very important vote and will change the way we could potentially pay for our membership. Please plan to attend the Business Meeting!



“This just in! American Student Assistance (ASA) with a \$10,000 donation is a Master’s Level Sponsor for NEOA’s 2020 activities! We thank ASA for their strong support of equal educational opportunity throughout New England!”

Trump Administration Fiscal Year 2021 Budget

In February, President Trump's administration released the 2021 Fiscal Year's Budget to Congress. Part of the proposed budget is an overall cut of **8%** (\$5.6 Billion!) to the Department of Education. Furthermore, President Trump again made a proposal to consolidate TRIO and GEAR UP into a single state formula grant program, *slashing overall funding for the programs by 13%*! However, unlike past years, this proposal would put an additional squeeze on funds available for TRIO by consolidating TRIO with GEAR UP and CAMP (College Access Migrant Program).

Although the President proposes the budget, Congress maintains the "power of the purse" to set federal spending levels each year. The most effective way to stop these cuts is to meet with your Members of Congress face to face and let them know precisely how TRIO has impacted students and families in your community. Please consider attending COE's **2020 Policy Seminar** which happens March 22-25, 2020, in Washington, D.C.!



COE Policy Seminar
March 23-25th, 2020
Washington, D.C.



Now is the time to rally!

Give to **Fair Share**. The Fair Share contribution supports the COE efforts on our behalf to assure that our programs can continue to provide the quality services so seriously needed by our nation's most deserving and least supported college-bound students.

Need help sorting out how to give to Fair Share? Stephanie Cruz, our NEOA Fair Share Coordinator, has some great suggestions. Read on.....

You: How can I give?

Me: Glad you asked! There are several campaigns for personal contributions. You can [make a onetime donation here](#)

Choose the amount you wish to give.

You: I have never given before. Is it tax deductible?

Me: Why yes, it is!

You: I really can't give much right now. Maybe I should wait.

Me: No amount is small. In fact, there is a \$19.65 campaign going on right now. Click here to [make a onetime donation here](#) (<http://bit.ly/1965GivingCampaign>) and indicate \$19.65. This amount is significant because it recognizes the signing of the Higher Education Act in 1965. For those who have already given, consider another \$19.65 to make a statement.

You: Oh wait! I just filed my taxes; I am expecting a nice refund maybe I can set aside a little more to give.

Me: Give what you are comfortable with but know that if you contribute \$100, \$500, \$1,000 or more, additional recognition for your donation level is given, and you could help your state earn a free Policy Seminar registration. **Note:** You can also pair up with someone to reach a higher donation level.

You: I would love to do more but not at once.

Me: Great news! COE has a 10 for 10 campaign. \$10 a month for 10 months. Impact is much easier to bear when it boils down to a couple of fancy Lattes. You can get started at: [https://access.coenet.org/COE/My-Account-COE/Donate to COE/COE/OnlineDonationMember.aspx](https://access.coenet.org/COE/My-Account-COE/Donate%20to%20COE/COE/OnlineDonationMember.aspx)

You can also set the amount for whatever dollar figure you choose. Just set it and forget it!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE REGION

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Worcester, Massachusetts

November 7-8, 2019

NEOA members comprised of advisors, counselors and directors met in Worcester, Massachusetts for the annual EOC conference. Day One was highlighted by a thoughtful discussion on the art of educational advising, learning about the perspective of loan providers, and being made aware of agencies to help our student population find employment. The group shared dinner in downtown Worcester, concluding a productive day with a bit of fun. On Day Two everyone met at the Worcester Educational Opportunity Center for an office tour, followed by a CSS profile training and wrap up discussion of the F.A.C.T. tool. The group reviewed this expense calculator for college students that depicts 'the bigger picture' as far as expenses and financial aid. Overall, the crew was upbeat and insightful. The content was relevant and helpful. But most importantly, the conference highlighted the importance of seeing people with like views, sharing helpful stories, and inspiring excellence in a field that we all care about.

CAEOP Annual Conference

**“Looking Beyond the Surface:
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”**

Central Connecticut State University

December 13, 2019

CAEOP held its annual conference at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) with over 60 educational opportunity professionals present.

CCSU's Vice President of Diversity,

Equity, and Inclusion, Dr. Nancy “Rusty” Barcelo, was the Keynote Speaker and Seanice Austin, a graduate of UConn's SSS Program, was honored as the CAEOP Achiever. An SSS grant writing workshop was led by Donna Thompson, along with other workshops in line with the theme of the conference. COE's, and Connecticut's own, Justis Lopez gave updates from Washington D.C, and shared upcoming COE events and initiatives.



NEOA TRIO SSS Grant Writing Workshop

York County Community College January 17, 2020

NEOA sponsored a very successful grant writing workshop for our colleagues. Donna Thompson, longtime TRIO director, now CEO of Thompson and Associates, Inc. of Middletown, CT, covered the immediate needs of participants in the last days before grant submission. The agenda included logic models, CPP's, [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) forms and dozens of tips and hints that were useful to everyone present. Attendees also participated in a peer-review process which was very helpful for reviewers and grant-writers alike. Twenty people attended representing Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont. Thanks to NEOA for sponsoring this event!



MEEOA Annual Conference “Seeing the Future in 20/20”

Bar Harbor, Maine January 9 -10, 2020

TRIO professionals from Maine and the surrounding region gathered together for the Maine Educational Opportunity Association's annual conference, at the Atlantic Oceanside Hotel in Bar Harbor, Maine. The conference began with a pre-conference, Night at the Museum at the College of the Atlantic's George B. Dorr Museum of Natural History on

January 8th. Attendees gathered for desserts, beverages, and were able to experience the museum's many displays as well as their touch tank of ocean critters. The conference officially kicked off on Thursday morning with the Keynote Address by Maine State Representative and University of Maine at Farmington Professor, Allison Hepler.

Representative Hepler gave a very informative history of TRIO programs. The Maine Commissioner of Education, Pender Makin, led a discussion on Understanding Disparities in Educational Opportunity in Maine. This discussion featured Maine TRIO alums telling their stories and brought stakeholders and policy makers together from around the state in order to discuss ideas for policy change at the state level. The MEEOA Rising Star and Achiever awards (always a highlight!) were given to four very worthy candidates who all are making changes in their home state of Maine. Other workshop topics included mental health, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities for low-income, first-generation students in Maine. The conference was a great success with lots of wonderful discussion and learning by all in attendance.

New England Students Celebrate National TRIO Day

More than 600 students from 46 different educational opportunity programs attended the 34th National TRIO Day Celebration in Framingham Massachusetts on February 20th- 21st . This gathering brought together more than 600 TRIO Upward Bound, Talent Search, VSAC and GEAR UP students from all over New England and New York. Students enjoyed inspirational keynote speakers, a regional College Fair, and attended workshops on financial aid and other college bound topics. The event was filled with unity, pride, purpose, and an underlying theme of self-empowerment.



The inspirational Keynote speaker was Dr. Arnold Mitchem, President Emeritus and founder of the non-profit organization the Council for Opportunity in Education in Washington, DC. Dr. Mitchem is an internationally recognized leader in advancing the cause of equal educational opportunity. Dr. Mitchem has spent his entire career advocating for equal access to postsecondary education and success of students in the United States—which he views as an extension of the Civil Rights Movement. He was the founder of the concept of “first-generation” students. This better described the students he sought to assist and moved access issues beyond racial boundaries to show that access was a more widespread problem. Dr. Mitchem talked to the students about the history and the events that led to a National TRIO Day Celebration and also commented that this is the biggest TRIO Day event in the country!

“Leadership? Me? Yes, You!” Read On.....

By Adam Hurwitz, Upward Bound, University of Vermont

I first attended a VEOP Board meeting 6 weeks after starting my job as Outreach Coordinator for UVM Upward Bound. At the time, I wondered how the topics related to my day-to-day work with students. Now I marvel at how much my involvement with my state organization, and now NEOA, has enhanced my work and expanded opportunity for our students. Early February I got an email saying that a grant proposal was approved to send 2 of our UB students to Uganda for 2 weeks this summer on a service-learning trip to help improve medical services and healthcare outcomes. I know - crazy right?! I still can't believe it. Here's the quick story of how it happened (hint: it's all because I decided to run for office in VEOP).



Spring 2017: I decide to put my hat in the ring

Speaking with VEOP Board members about open positions, and what being on the Board means, I am told that the only position with no candidates running was President-Elect.

Fall 2017: I sign our program up

As new President-Elect of VEOP, I attend COE's Executive Leadership Institute at Princeton University. There I meet University of Alaska Upward Bound Director John Monahan, who tells me about a new NSF EPSCoR grant called Teaching Through Technology that will provide 3 years of curriculum, supports, and materials to UB programs in low-populous states for the purpose of expanding access to STEM education..

Fall 2018: I call for collaboration

I arrange a press release to the UVM community announcing UVM Upward Bound's participation in Teaching Through Technology, as well as supplemental STEM funding from the U.S. D. E. I receive several emails back, one from the Chair of the UVM Radiology Department, Dr. Kristen DeStigter.

Summer 2019: UB students connect

Dr. DeStigter and several UVM Medical Center colleagues host a workshop with 20 Upward Bound students to discuss cutting edge healthcare and career pathways. Several students connect with Dr. DeStigter after the session to continue discussions.

Fall 2019: An international opportunity for service learning

Dr. DeStigter mentions an opportunity that a few UB students may be interested in: a service-learning trip to Uganda, where she takes high school students to help deliver medical supplies and support efforts to improve community health.

Spring 2020: Fully Funded!!

A first-generation college student who joined Dr. DeStigter's trip 3 years ago has a grant proposal approved to collaborate with UVM Upward Bound to send 2 students to Uganda -- fully funded!

So, there it is. I can safely say that the opportunities I've been able to find for UVM UB students are so much greater, and it is directly attributable to my involvement with my state organization, VEOP. Please consider getting involved with your state and regional organizations, you won't regret it!

Inclusive Language, An Introductory Guide

By Soren Dews, Talent Search Outreach Counselor

Language is one of the most important and impactful tools we have as human beings. While most of us would say we do our best to treat others with respect and dignity, language can inadvertently cause more harm than we realize because it is often infused with history and meaning stemming from discrimination. I gave a presentation on inclusive language at VEOP this past fall and I wanted to share some of my key takeaways and insights. I hope these help you to be a more informed user of language.



- Any conversation about equality and respect is hard. It is okay to make mistakes as long as you work to change your behavior next time.
- Language is messy and things you say regularly might have origins you did not know.
- Commonly used idioms often have racist and classist origins. For example: **“the peanut gallery”** (A peanut gallery was, in the days of vaudeville, a nickname for the cheapest and ostensibly rowdiest seats in the theater, the occupants of which were often known to heckle the performers. In this case, rowdiness and bad manners were associated with lower class status. [Wikipedia](#)) or **“it’ll be a piece of cake”** (The idea of cake being “easy” originated in the 1870’s when cakes were given out as prizes for winning competitions. In particular, there was a tradition in the US slavery states where slaves would circle around a cake at a gathering. The most “graceful” pair would win the cake in middle. This tradition was co-opted by slave owners who made slaves perform for them to win cake and eventually White people would wear blackface to mimic slaves at the event. [Google](#)).
- Simple changes can make a huge difference to people.
- “Hey folks” or “Welcome everyone” instead of “hey guys” or “welcome ladies and gents”.
- Insults often originated from slurs and putdowns: “Stupid” or “idiots” for example. Try “ridiculous” or “ignorant” instead.
- You don’t have to change your language overnight, or at all if you wish. However, being a more informed consumer of language will allow you to support and understand others better than before.
- Making a mistake is okay, everyone does it. Practice both external and internal reactions to mistakes. Several slides from my PowerPoint can help you practice for correcting mistakes.



When I Make Mistakes (External)

- ✓ **Apologize Briefly:** Don't make the person comfort you because you made a mistake
- ✓ **Use the correct word, term, name, or pronoun:** Repeat what you were saying with the correct language
- ✓ **Move on and use better language in the future:** Continue to work on your awareness and incorporation of inclusive language



When I Make Mistakes (Internal)

- ✓ **Take a breath.** Practice self-compassion. You are not the first person to make a mistake and you will not be the last.
- ✓ **Apologize.** Allow yourself to feel sorry and/or remorse for your mistake, and at the same time, remember that in this moment it is not about you.
- ✓ **Acknowledge the harm.** Understand your mistake. Being able to locate where, when, and how you messed up can help you know what needs to happen to make amends. It also shows the person that you care about their well-being.
- ✓ **Believe and receive.** Sometimes you won't realize you made a mistake until someone else lets you know. The best thing to do in this situation is simply to believe and receive this information. If you are still unclear how you messed up, you can ask for clarification or commit to doing further learning.

How Do I Correct Others

- ✓ **Respond with correct language:** i.e., "that's crazy" "yeah, it's hard to believe".
- ✓ **A gentle correction:** "Actually, Billy uses she/her pronouns" and then move on.
- ✓ **Ask them what they meant:** i.e. if someone says "so, gay", did they really mean that it was romantically and sexually attracted to someone of the same gender identity?
- ✓ **Be firmer when the person is not there:** When someone is not in the room, actively correct people when a mistake is made so they do not have to do that labor themselves.

NEOA **WANTS** YOUR IDEAS, YOUR SUGGESTIONS,
YOUR STORIES, AND YOUR PARTICIPATION!

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