

NEW ENGLAND BOARD
of HIGHER EDUCATION



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Our Mission

Higher education is New England's most critical sustainable resource. The region's governors knew that over 60 years ago when they founded the **New England Board of Higher Education** (NEBHE).

Today, **NEBHE promotes greater education opportunities and services** for the residents of New England and its more than 270 colleges and universities. It works across the six New England states to **help leaders assess, develop and implement sound education practices** and **policies of regional significance**; to promote regional cooperation and programs that **encourage the efficient use and sharing of educational resources**; and to **strengthen the relationship between higher education and the economic well-being and quality of life** in New England.

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NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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From the President



Against a backdrop of both challenge and opportunity, NEBHE has worked over the past year to play critical leadership roles to benefit leaders of higher education, government and business in the region.

Dear Colleagues:

Against a backdrop of both challenge and opportunity, NEBHE has worked over the past year to play critical leadership roles to benefit leaders of higher education, government and business in the region.

Specifically, we have worked with leaders and partners across the region to:

- Save more than 8,100 New England residents \$54 million on their tuition bills—\$7,900 per student on average through our Tuition Break program
- Develop new collaborative multistate programs to increase student transfer from two-year to four-year institutions and to bring greater transparency to postsecondary and other credentials—and how employers value them
- Support New England states and over 270 postsecondary institutions to expand their online learning delivery, as well as elevating standards for high-quality online learning and more effective consumer protection
- Convene leaders of New England's colleges and universities to address critical topics affecting students and institutions—including financial sustainability and strategic alliances
- Convene legislators from all New England states to share policy perspectives on timely topics impacting the region's institutions and students
- Identify and undertake four strategic priorities, including: expanding access for adult students, increasing cost savings for students and institutions, expanding links between K-12 and higher education, and better articulating the notable public value of postsecondary education.

NEBHE will continue to play these and other critical roles in the year to come.

Thank you for your support and contributions to these critical efforts, projects and leadership initiatives. We look forward to working with you in the coming year to provide the expertise, programs and resources that leaders and policymakers need to address the region's challenges and opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael K. Thomas." The signature is fluid and cursive.

Michael K. Thomas
President and CEO
New England Board of Higher Education

From the Chair

Dear Friends:

College access and success are essential for the economic health of New England. NEBHE is engaging key stakeholders to more effectively champion the significant public value of postsecondary education to New England and its residents through expanded advocacy and outreach. Seven of 10 future jobs will require a postsecondary credential. But the return on investment in higher education goes far beyond simple job earnings. Higher education expands people's horizons and contributes to a community's general well-being. NEBHE is working to document the return on individual and public investments in higher education in terms of income, reduced unemployment and poverty, and heightened civic engagement.

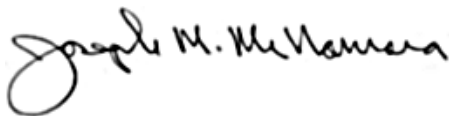
NEBHE supports efforts to increase access to higher education and make college more affordable, especially for underrepresented students. In addition to the millions of dollars saved annually by families and taxpayers through NEBHE's 60-year-old Tuition Break program, we offer a growing range of tools for institutions to operate more efficiently and sustainably.

For example, we are working to reduce the costs of delivering online learning via the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), which saves New England institutions millions of dollars in fees while helping create access for students to high-quality online programs to meet the needs of their busy lives. And through our initiative known as the New England Independent College Transfer Guarantee, NEBHE is laying the foundation for a systematic transfer pathway from community colleges to four-year independent colleges, opening up options for community college graduates to earn a bachelor's degree at an affordable price.

Furthermore, employers in our states are asking for more skilled employees. One way we're delivering on this is through NEBHE's High Value Credentials for New England initiative. This effort brings needed transparency to what certificates and degrees are of value in our state and region's economy and what pathways can lead individuals to good, satisfying jobs with family-supporting wages.

Please join us in ensuring that New England leads in the innovation economy.

Sincerely,



Joseph M. McNamara

Chair, Health, Education & Welfare Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives

Chair
New England Board of Higher Education



Higher education expands people's horizons and contributes to a community's general well-being. NEBHE plans to undertake work documenting the return on individual and public investments in higher education in terms of income, reduced unemployment and poverty, and heightened civic engagement.

Created for Leadership

Visionary governors and legislators created NEBHE to play unique leadership roles for the region. The founders' directives continue to drive NEBHE's work today, including:

- Publishing data reports, bulletins and other research related to education, higher education and the workforce in New England
- Continuously assessing the needs of higher education in New England and developing plans and programs to meet such challenges
- Sponsoring activities, programs and events that inform leaders' efforts to improve and expand higher education opportunities for the region's residents
- Providing capacity-building, cost-saving and performance-improving programs and services to the states, policymakers and higher education institutions—both public and independent
- Providing consulting and advisory services to the New England states, postsecondary institutions, higher education agencies and policymakers
- Acting as a sounding board and spokesperson on issues of concern to the higher education community in New England
- Developing cooperative and interstate agreements to achieve greater efficiency and better outcomes for institutions and students.



The Peterson Center, NEBHE's home in Boston, Mass.

Highlights from our History

Visit
nebhe.org/about

Presenting landmarks in NEBHE's work through the years on behalf of New England's educators, legislators, policymakers, students and parents.

1955 The **New England Board of Higher Education** is established to implement the New England Higher Education Compact, expand educational opportunity and foster cooperation among the region's colleges and universities.

1957 NEBHE establishes the **New England Regional Student Program**, enabling New England students to pay a lower tuition rate at out-of-state public land-grant universities within New England if they pursue certain academic programs that are not offered by their home state's public institutions. The RSP would invite community and technical colleges in 1967 and state colleges in 1972, and later transition to the name Tuition Break.

1986 NEBHE begins publishing its quarterly journal, *Connection: New England's Journal of Higher Education and Economic Development*. In 2007, the journal is rebranded as **The New England Journal of Higher Education**, and in 2010, moves entirely online at nebhe.org.

2003 NEBHE launches the **New England Higher Education Excellence Awards** to honor New England individuals and organizations who show exceptional leadership in behalf of higher education, public policy or the advancement of educational opportunity.

2015 NEBHE launches the New England component of the national **State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement**, or **SARA**, funded by grants from the Lumina Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Accredited degree-granting institutions in a SARA state that offer distance education courses can then seek approval from their state to participate in SARA. NEBHE now coordinates SARA for all six New England states, as well as New York and New Jersey.

2017 NEBHE launches the **Commission on Higher Education & Employability**. Chaired by Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo, the Commission brings together employers and higher education leaders, as well as policy leaders, to ramp up efforts aimed at bolstering the region's workforce future.

2019 Program offerings available through NEBHE's **Tuition Break** program expanded significantly in 2019 to a record high number of more than 1,200. Participation of four-year institutions in the program's new "flexible" policy option increased about 60%. The flexible policy allows participating institutions the option to offer any of their undergraduate or graduate programs to residents of the other five states.

Tuition Break



"Tuition Break has afforded many students from neighboring states the ability to obtain a top-notch degree in their chosen fields of study. We are proud to participate in this program and thrilled to share this opportunity with our students as it helps us put the world in their hands."

Michael Belcher

Director of International, Regional & Multicultural Admissions, University of Massachusetts Lowell

Tuition Break, established by NEBHE in 1957 as the Regional Student Program, is a collaboration among the region's public colleges and universities to provide tuition reciprocity.

For more than 60 years, the region's public colleges and universities have collaborated through Tuition Break to offer degree programs at reduced out-of-state tuition for New England residents.

More than 1,200 undergraduate and graduate programs are offered through Tuition Break, including specialized degree programs that are not available in every New England state.

Tuition Break provided more than \$54 million in tuition savings to participating students in 2018-19, with a full-time student saving an average of \$7,900.

Meanwhile, New England public colleges and universities received more than \$98 million in tuition revenue from eligible students.

The degree programs offered through Tuition Break are in all areas of study and all degree levels, many of them in specialized, high-demand fields. **Associate programs** include animal science, equine management, food science, forestry, horticulture, landscape design, fiber optics and radiation therapy technology, plastics technology and railroad engineering technology. **Bachelor's programs** include cybersecurity, pharmacy, environmental engineering, atmospheric science, occupational therapy, data science, game design, justice studies, bioengineering, aviation, Russian and other languages. **Graduate programs** include advanced manufacturing, industrial and systems engineering, materials science, dental medicine, nursing and public health.

Expanding roster of programs

Programs offered through Tuition Break expanded considerably this year. The number of program offerings is the highest ever, and exceeds 1,200. About one-third of institutions are allowing additional eligibility through new "flexible" policies whereby students in some cases may be eligible for any or all programs at those institutions.

NEBHE conducts an annual review to determine institutional participation and eligible programs. Among the programs approved in the 2019-20 academic year

were 28 additional specialized programs including Advanced Manufacturing for Energy Systems, a unique master's degree program offered only by the University of Connecticut; bachelor's programs in Electromechanical Technology and Robotics at Plymouth State University, Forensic Psychology at Castleton University and Religion at the University of Vermont; and an associate program in Forestry at Vermont Technical College.

Tuition Break provides affordable out-of-state higher education options for New England residents, helps the public colleges and universities attract and retain out-of-state students, and prepares the region's workforce in high-demand fields.

New flexible policy expands opportunities and eligibility

Tuition Break is an increasingly important enrollment management tool for many New England public colleges and universities as they compete to attract and retain declining numbers of high school graduates.

A change in policies approved by NEBHE's Board of Delegates allowed participating institutions to expand their program offerings. Under a new flexible policy for four-year institutions, modeled after a policy already in effect for community colleges, four-year institutions gained the option to offer through Tuition Break any of their undergraduate or graduate programs to residents of the other five states. About one-third of participating four-year public institutions notified NEBHE that they would allow flexible eligibility for selected programs in 2019-20.

The upfront tuition discount provided through Tuition Break is an important factor for many students and families, for whom affordability is top of mind.

Promoting Tuition Break

NEBHE conducts outreach throughout the six-state region to promote opportunities through Tuition Break for prospective college students. In 2018-19, NEBHE staff participated in more than 90 college fairs and conferences, provided state and district information to key legislators in every state and made user-friendly enhancements to nebhe.org/tuitionbreak, including supplying key information in Spanish for the first time.

Visit
nebhe.org/tuitionbreak



"Tuition Break is now available to UConn students during every single year of their journey toward a Pharm.D. degree. The cost savings over the course of the program, from a BS in Pharmacy Studies transitioning to a Pharm.D. degree, is significant and helps ease the financial commitment that goes along with earning a professional doctorate degree and becoming a licensed, practicing pharmacist. We are fortunate to be able to offer this program to New England students."

Philip Hritcko
*Interim Dean and
Associate Clinical
Professor, University of
Connecticut School of
Pharmacy*

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)



"The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) has been a critical component of UNH Online's success. We are able to pay a minimal annual membership fee at the state and national level to extend the high-quality programs available at the University of New Hampshire beyond our state borders with confidence. Since becoming a SARA member institution in 2016, our out-of-state student online enrollment has grown from less than 10% in 2015 to 33% in 2018."

James W. Dean Jr.
*President, University of
New Hampshire*

NEBHE provides the New England states and their higher education institutions the ability to broaden distance education access by enrolling students across 52 U.S. states, districts and territories through the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA).

SARA membership enables institutions to more effectively serve student populations in states where authorization may have been cost-prohibitive or too laborious prior to participating in SARA. Prior to SARA, federal regulations required colleges and universities to be authorized in every state to which they delivered online programs; this resulted in an inconsistent, complicated and expensive maze of regulatory processes and fees.

In 2014, a partnership with the National Council of State Authorization of Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and the four regional higher education compacts (including NEBHE) created a framework which provides quality assurance and streamlined operations to alleviate much of the burden in overseeing traditional state authorization. By becoming SARA members, states enable qualifying institutions to more effectively serve student populations in locations where authorization may have been cost-prohibitive or too laborious due to traditional state authorization.

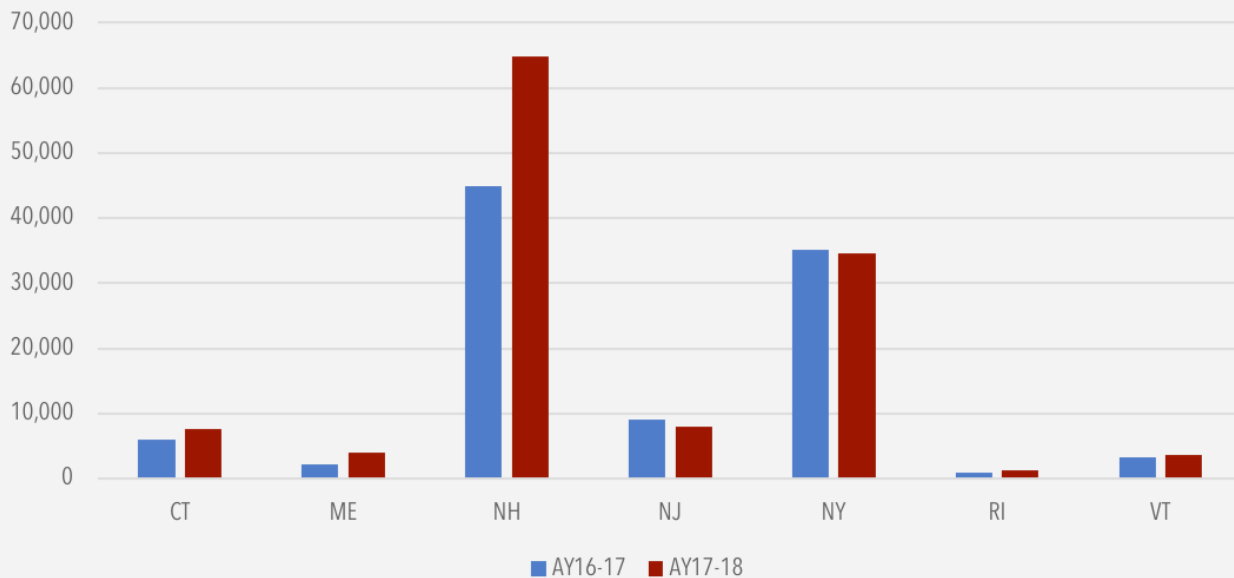
Through NEBHE, institutions located in all six New England states, along with New York and New Jersey, are able to benefit from SARA participation.

185 New England institutions enrolled more than 140,000 students in 100% online programs.

On average, institutions enrolled students in 26 states at the streamlined cost of simple annual fees paid to the National Council and a SARA member state.

Nationally, more than 1,700 institutions enrolled 1.2 million students in distance education programs.

Online Student Enrollments via SARA from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017



Distance education enrollment data collected by NC-SARA provides a significant advance in the national collection and reporting of such information. NC-SARA's data provide greater transparency about which institutions are enrolling online students and where those students are located.

Note: Updated data, including information from Massachusetts, will be released in October 2019.

At right: NC-SARA's 2018 Enrollment Report, available at www.nc-sara.org/data



Cost Savings for Institutions

Our cost-savings programs leverage group purchasing power to reduce the burden of sourcing solutions so higher education institutions can do what they do best: serve their students.

NEBHE offers a range of tools for institutions to operate more efficiently and sustainably. Working with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), our cost-saving programs offer cost-containment strategies, in addition to efficiencies, market influence, and solution accessibility in technology goods and services as well as insurance coverage. All contracts can be used by higher education institutions, and many can also be leveraged by K-12, states and local governments in the six New England states.

NEBHE continues to work with partners to identify additional opportunities to help institutions lower operating costs.

Technology Solutions Program

Technology agreements aggregate volume purchases to lower product and services costs and reduce the time institutions must spend developing and conducting an RFP process and reviewing bids. Public and private higher education institutions and organizations can purchase the goods or services knowing that the due diligence in selecting the vendor has been accomplished.

Collaboration between recognized education leaders ensures that vendor offerings are kept current and new features are added as the market demands. Contracts include:

- Computers, hardware and software: desktop & laptop computers, printers, software licensing
- Security and support: security information and event management solutions, mobile device management, technology support services
- Network and cloud: data and voice networking, e-transcripts, cloud services.

New contracts are constantly in development, so institutions can look forward to a steady stream of added market technology solutions.

Cyber Insurance Program

NEBHE's cyber insurance program, offered through MHEC and Marsh Insurance, is tailored to deliver the right mix of risk transfer and advisory solutions for institutions to assess, manage and respond to their risk.

As a market leader higher education marketplace, Marsh's cyber insurance specialists understand the unique risk factors of higher education and are well positioned to:

- Assess and analyze: understand attack scenarios and risk profile when addressing cyber risks
- Secure and insure: managing cyber risks means preparing institutions for the inevitable event. Marsh's cyber team will work with institutions to optimize the security controls that protect and detect threats, and transfer exposures off the institution's balance sheet
- Respond and recover: quick, effective response to a cyber event is crucial for business. Marsh's cyber team will guide and support institutions through the event and enhance protection moving forward.

MHECare Student Insurance Solutions

NEBHE's comprehensive insurance solutions through MHECare respond to increasing costs and concern for student health. Benefits and services include coverage for a wide array of student groups, as well as a commitment to promote the value of student health and student insurance to higher education institutions. The program offers a contract with a national underwriter, United Healthcare Student Resources.

Master Property Program (MPP)

The Master Property Program is a regional collaborative venture that provides comprehensive property coverage, specifically tailored to the needs of today's college campuses, while reducing insurance costs and improving asset protection. More than \$142 million in savings has been realized for its participating institutions since its inception. More than 160 campuses across the country participate with total insured values of over \$81 billion.

Lexington (AIG) and Zurich Insurance currently underwrite the program, which is administered by Marsh USA Inc. and supported by Captive Resources Inc. under the direction of a leadership committee representative of the insured institutions.

Transfer Initiatives

Visit
nebhe.org/transfer

NEBHE's Transfer Initiatives support public and private institutions throughout the region by promoting and reporting on effective transfer policies and practices.

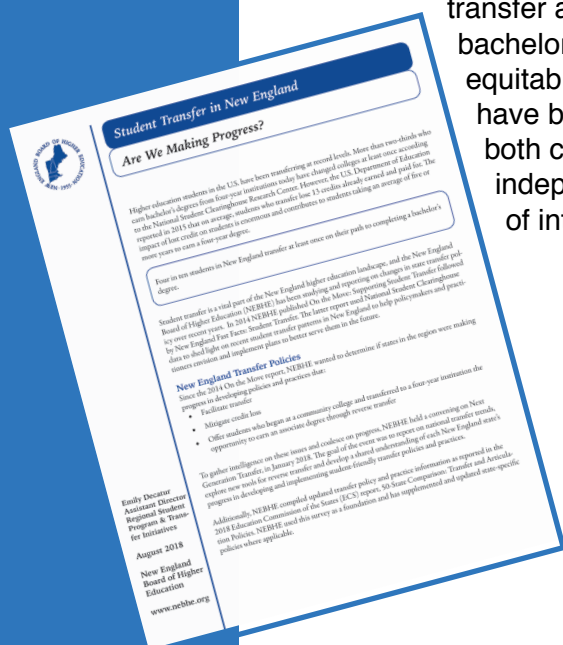
Transfer initiative work includes policy briefs, convenings, workshops and project development. The initiatives promote seamless transfer and collaboration in New England, with the goal of strengthening transfer efforts in the region by providing various avenues of support to our member states and higher education institutions.

New England Independent College Transfer Guarantee

Supported by a seven-month planning grant from the Teagle Foundation, NEBHE is laying the groundwork for the development of system-level transfer pathways for community college graduates into independent institutions in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, with a focus on the liberal arts.

NEBHE is partnering with the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges, the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts, and the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Rhode Island and community colleges in the three states to begin establishing an admission transfer guarantee, to be known as the New England Independent College Transfer Guarantee.

The aim of this initiative is to ensure acceptance at an independent nonprofit four-year institution for students graduating from a community college with an associate degree. Students who meet eligibility criteria under the Guarantee will be able to transfer as juniors and be fully prepared to successfully complete a bachelor's degree. The overarching goal of this project is to focus on equitable participation. Preliminary convenings on the Guarantee have been held in all three states, and have garnered support from both community colleges and independent institutions. Currently, 57 independent institutions and community colleges have signed letters of intent to participate in the planning phase of the Guarantee.



NEBHE's Student Transfer in New England: Are We Making Progress? report, available at nebhe.org/policy/reports

NEBHE-Chinese Government Scholarship

NEBHE's Chinese Government Scholarship enables New England students to pursue undergraduate and graduate programs, both short- and long-term, at a wide range of Chinese colleges and universities.

After a competitive review process, three New England students have officially been awarded the NEBHE-Chinese Government Scholarship. The students have received full scholarships for master's degree programs in international relations, international studies and international politics. Recipients have been awarded enrollment at East China Normal University, Renmin University, and Beijing Language and Culture University.

The program also offers qualified New England students the opportunity to study at Chinese universities with a full scholarship.

This scholarship covers tuition, fees and accommodations and supports study at hundreds of universities across China. Scholarships are awarded for both short-term or long-term study. Short-term scholarships fund one to two years of study and long-term scholarships allow students to pursue full undergraduate, master's or doctoral degree programs. Scholarship awardees begin their studies in China at the beginning of September.

NEBHE congratulates this year's recipients of the NEBHE-Chinese Government Scholarship and thanks the Chinese government for funding this valuable opportunity for New England students.

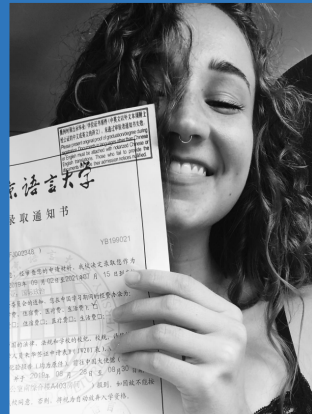
"Without [the] NEBHE-CGS partnership, I would not have the incredible opportunity to continue my education in a field that I have a passion for," said Dustin Lewis, Castleton University alumnus, who in September will obtain a master's degree in International Studies at Renmin University, Beijing.

Gordon College alumna Winifred Penkethman added, "I am certain my experience studying at Beijing Language and Culture University will be one that alters the course of my life for the better, and I feel so blessed to be awarded with this incredible opportunity. I hope to continue to improve my understanding of Mandarin and find my place in the community around me. I am looking forward to this new chapter of life in terms of broadening my understanding of the world at large, and embracing the uncomfortable moments knowing that it is in those times of discomfort where growth truly happens."

Institutions and prospective students can find more information at nebhe.org/china.

Visit

nebhe.org/china



"I am certain my experience studying at Beijing Language and Culture University will be one that alters the course of my life for the better, and I feel so blessed to be awarded with this incredible opportunity."

Winnie Penkethman
Alumna, Gordon College

Policy & Research



"By participating in HVCNE, the UMaine System hopes to gain tools to help students understand the breadth of credential programs available to them and how they connect along an education and career pathway. It is a perfect opportunity for us to participate in a new and evolving national initiative and to learn about how best to represent the credentialing opportunities throughout our system with input from colleagues across the country on how they are doing the same."

Rosa Redonnett
Chief Student Affairs
Officer, University of
Maine System

Policy & Research develops and promotes innovative collaborations, convenings and initiatives to advance best practices in postsecondary education—and to meet the region's workforce needs.

NEBHE's Board of Delegates plays a key role in informing the Policy & Research agenda and in this capacity, identified four guiding strategic priorities for 2019-20:

- Enhance and expand postsecondary opportunities for adult learners through increased access, affordability and targeted programs to promote successful completion
- Advance PreK-16+ alignment to promote college- and career-readiness and the successful transition from PreK-12 to postsecondary opportunities and success
- Develop new models for cost-saving collaboration to help institutions change business practices, lower operating costs and contain student tuition and fees
- Demonstrate the value of postsecondary education to New England and its residents through expanded advocacy and outreach to key stakeholders.

Disseminating Original Data & Insights

The Policy & Research (P&R) team seeks to provide timely, original research and analysis on higher education issues that are relevant to decision-makers and the public in New England. Policy & Research is committed to developing and disseminating data and insights that advance the region's understanding of critical topics, such as equity in college readiness and access, the value of a higher education credential and tuition and fee trends. The research and analysis undertaken by the team is in direct response to issues of the day in statehouses, public discourse and on campus. Read them and more at nebhe.org/policy/reports.

Closing the FAFSA Gap: FAFSA Completion Rates Among New England's Low-Income Students

Through June 29 of the 2018-19 FAFSA cycle, New England states had an average FAFSA completion rate of 62%—five percentage points higher than the national average. However, gaps between student groups by poverty level exist. The estimated relationship between poverty levels and FAFSA completion rates reveal that a 10-percentage point increase in district poverty levels affects state FAFSA completion levels in the following ways: a 5% decline in Connecticut, a 0.3% decline in Maine, a 0.4% decline in Massachusetts, a 1.1% decline in New Hampshire, a 0.8% increase in Rhode Island, and a 0.9% decline in Vermont. In New England, increased FAFSA completion rates of low-income students will help sustain HEIs current and future enrollment and strengthen the higher education pipeline.

The Price of Public Colleges in New England, 2017-18

Visit
nebhe.org/policy

Before factoring in financial aid, in-state tuition and required fees cost New England students an annual average of \$5,193 at two-year public institutions and \$11,596 at four-year public institutions. Since academic year 2016-17, average tuition and fees have increased by 3% (\$164) at two-year public colleges and by 1% (\$196) at four-year public colleges. In the past five years, tuition and fees have increased by 16% (\$734) at two-year colleges and 13% (\$1,001) at four-year colleges.

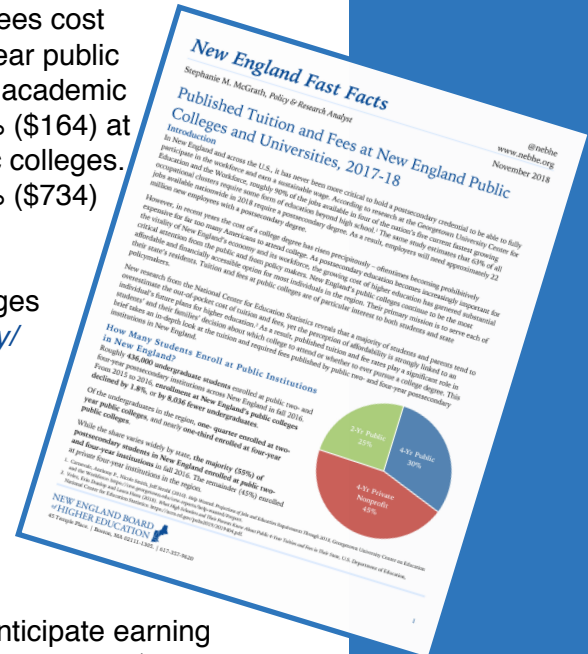
NEBHE's New England Fast Facts: The Price of Public Colleges in New England, 2017-18 report, available at nebhe.org/policy/reports

What's the Value of Higher Education in New England? Insights for State and Institutional Leaders

The average bachelor's degree holder in New England can anticipate earning \$14,194 (38%) more annually than someone with an associate degree, \$19,589 (62%) more per year than someone with only a high school diploma, and \$27,529 (116%) more annually than someone who has not earned a high school diploma. Across the region, approximately 2.5 million individuals between ages 25 and 64 do not have any postsecondary experience (some college/associate degree or higher). This number reflects a "sunk cost" in terms of lost wages. If just half of these individuals (1.25 million) earned an associate degree, this would mean an additional \$6.7 billion annually in taxable wages in New England. If the same number earned a bachelor's degree, it would amount to an added \$17.7 billion annually in taxable wages.

Student Transfer in New England: Are We Making Progress?

Higher education students in the U.S. have been transferring at record levels. More than two-thirds who earn bachelor's degrees from four-year institutions today have changed colleges at least once according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. However, the U.S. Department of Education recently reported that on average, students who transfer lose 13 credits already earned and paid for. The impact of lost credit on students is enormous and contributes to students taking an average of five or more years to earn a four-year degree. This brief explores if states in the region are making progress in developing policies and practices that: Facilitate transfer; Mitigate credit loss; Offer students who began at a community college and transferred to a four-year institution the opportunity to earn an associate degree through reverse transfer; Offer students who began at a community college and transferred to a four-year institution the opportunity to earn an associate degree through reverse transfer.



High Impact Presentations & Convenings

Chief among the Policy & Research team's roles is to act as a convener of higher education, business and policy leaders to advance best practices, promising policies and innovative approaches across the region. Examples of the P&R team's presentations and outreach include:

The Value of Higher Education and its Contributions to the Regional Economy

June 11, 2019

Connecticut Council of Independent Colleges Annual Member Forum
Quinnipiac University, North Haven Campus

Increasing Access, Affordability and Equity in Higher Education: State and Regional Efforts

February 26, 2019

Massachusetts State House Briefing

Innovations in New England's Credentialing Landscape

January 29, 2019

College Board New England Forum, Boston, Mass.

Student Transfer in New England: Are We Making Progress?

December 7, 2018

New England Transfer Association (NETA)
Fitchburg State University

Complete College America New England Institute

December 4, 2018

Complete College America (CCA). Chicago, Ill.

The New England Enrollment "Perfect Storm": National and Regional Demographic

November 8, 2018

New England Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (NEACRAO), Newport, R.I.

The New England Employability Imperative

November 8, 2018

New England Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers (NEACRAO), Newport, R.I.

High Value Credentials For New England: Bringing Transparency to the Region's Credential Marketplace

October 24, 2018

UPCEA New England, Providence, R.I.

Initiatives Driving Innovation, Transparency and Student Success

Policy & Research seeks to act on the strategic priorities adopted by NEBHE's Board of Delegates in part through attracting grants that promote the execution of first-of-a-kind initiatives. In addition to bringing new resources to its constituent states, Policy & Research provides technical assistance to boost the capacity of state agencies and higher education institutions to deliver on shared postsecondary success and workforce development goals.

Examples of grant-funded programs and initiatives include:

Upskilling New England: Bridging the Gap Between Educators & Employers

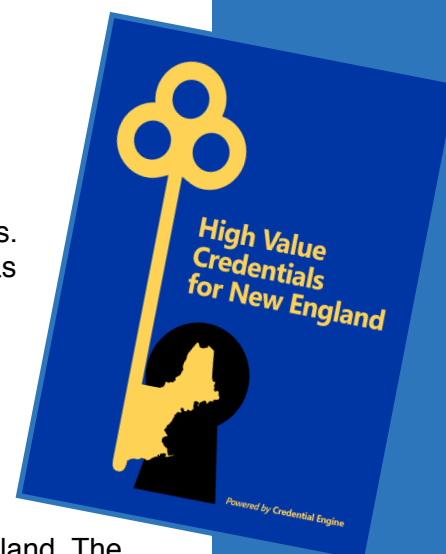
Unemployment in New England is at or near record low rates exacerbating a persistent skill shortage reported by employers across the region. In a recent McKinsey & Co. survey, executives increasingly see investing in retraining and “upskilling” existing workers as an urgent business priority. New England has a high share of fast-growing, high-skill industries wherein available jobs largely require a postsecondary credential. For this reason, upskilling is an essential tool that nearly all businesses need to employ to ensure a greater skills match while improving employee retention and work product. Strada Education Network's Consumer Insights data indicates that adults in New England with no college experience are most likely to feel as if they need additional education to advance in the workforce.

For successful implementation of upskilling programs, collaboration and alignment between New England's educators and employers is imperative. As a first step to addressing these issues, NEBHE is convening a regional thinkers' meeting and subsequently producing a white paper that will serve as the basis for state level briefings to generate momentum around creating and developing successful upskilling programs and policies. This initiative is sponsored with support from Strada Education Network.

High Value Credentials for New England

Access to and completion of an affordable credential of value is the key to our region's ability to adapt to changing workforce needs, attract and retain workers, and provide pathways to growth-oriented, high-wage jobs. However, the proliferation of multiple types and sources of credentials, as well as questions around the value of credentials, is creating a complex environment for individuals, institutions and employers to navigate.

NEBHE received grant support from the Lumina Foundation in May 2018 to launch High Value Credentials for New England (HVCNE). In the year since, NEBHE has convened a regional advisory committee and provides ongoing technical assistance to higher education systems and institutions in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. The



region stands to realize considerable progress in mapping higher education and workforce training opportunities that lead to well-paying jobs in in-demand industries.

The HVCNE advisory committee—composed of higher education leaders, employers and workforce development specialists—undertook crafting a working definition of a “high value credential.” At the core, the group determined, a credential’s value lies in how well it is perceived by employers to be a marker of preparedness and if it leads to a well-paying job. Additionally, a credential can be determined “high value” if it:

- Represents an individual’s first step along a pathway that leads to a satisfying career with family-sustaining wages (for example, a Certified Nursing Assistant license may pave the way to a career as a Licensed Practice Nurse or a Registered Nurse)
- Fills a community need (such as teachers, healthcare professionals, police officers, etc.)
- Is portable across state lines
- Is affordable due to the availability of institutional, employer, state or federal financial support
- Offers valuable types of learning opportunities, including work- or competency-based education.



Range of credentials.

NEBHE applies these insights in its technical assistance to develop cross-state education pathways in economically important industries. Participating systems and institutions in the four states are working to publish credentials to a cloud-based registry—developed by Credential Engine—in four industries: life and bioscience, healthcare, business and information technology. NEBHE expects that all target badges, certificates and degrees awarded by public institutions in the four participating states will be uploaded to the registry by spring 2020.

Mapping Regional Education and Workforce Pipelines

By making credential program information available on Credential Engine's Registry, colleges and universities are closing persistent information gaps that perpetuate stop-out rates, poor labor market outcomes and inequalities. The Registry enables the collection, connection and comparison of credentials through the machine readable taxonomy known as Credential Transparency Description Language (CTDL), which allows for disparate data sources to be integrated in new app development and the creation of open-source tools. NEBHE is not only promoting the use of the Registry widely but is also building on the capabilities of the CTDL to create a regional platform that links credential data from the Registry with real-time labor market insights, including job openings, wages and in-demand skills. In doing so, prospective students, counselors and advisors, curriculum designers and others will be able to determine high-value credential pathways with only a few clicks of a mouse.

Legislative Advisory Committee



"As a freshman legislator on the House Education Committee, I was thrilled to be appointed to serve on the NEBHE Legislative Advisory Committee. While immersing myself in the important issues facing Vermont's students and schools, I'm also able to learn from colleagues in surrounding states. It's incredibly helpful to have this resource so readily available—to hear firsthand about the common challenges and most innovative solutions that our New England neighbors are exploring. LAC provides a fantastic opportunity for policymakers to collaborate, connect and make progress together."

Rep. Kathleen James

House Committee on Education, Vermont General Assembly

Since 2013, NEBHE's Legislative Advisory Committee (LAC) has served as a liaison to strengthen state higher education policymaking in New England, promote regional dialogue and interstate collaboration, and inform and advise NEBHE's policy analysis, research and program activities.

Recent LAC meetings have included discussions on remedial education reform, growing a smarter New England workforce by reconnecting with the adult learner, mitigating cost drivers in higher education, and student transfer policies and practices. Additionally, legislators benefit from sharing key issues raised each legislative session, as well as the opportunity to troubleshoot common challenges.

Members of the Legislative Advisory Committee have the opportunity to:

- Engage with other New England legislators in regular conversations regarding key legislative activities and agendas
- Exchange higher education policymaking perspectives in New England and support increased interstate collaboration among legislators
- Access timely research and information to participating members through presentations by state, regional and national policy experts
- Inform and advise NEBHE's policy research activities.

Committee members include legislative delegates to the NEBHE board as well as other sitting legislators from each state, including members serving on higher education committees, education committees and appropriations committees. Meeting twice a year, Committee members have opportunities to share current legislation and ideas across state lines and participate in shaping NEBHE's vision for higher education's role in New England's economic and social well-being.

The list of LAC members can be found on the inside back cover.





LAC members gathered at the Spring 2019 Board Meeting at Lasell University in March 2019. From left: Conn. state Senators **Mae Flexer** and **James Maroney**, Conn. state Rep. **Gregg Haddad**, Mass. state Rep. **Sean Garballey**, NEBHE Chair and R.I. state Rep. **Joseph M. McNamara**, R.I. state Rep. **William O'Brien**, Vt. state Reps. **Peter Conlon** and **Kathleen James**, N.H. state Sen. **David Watters**, Mass. state Rep. **Jeffrey Roy**, Mass. House Speaker Pro Tempore **Patricia Haddad**, and Conn. state Rep. **Gary Turco**.

Employability Programs

NEBHE partners with employers, institutions and workforce organizations to develop timely and innovative programs, training, curricula and other resources to address pressing talent needs in the region.

According to a June 2019 report from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the country has **6.7 million job openings** and **just 6.4 million available workers to fill them**. This is the first time in our history that there are **more jobs than people** to fill them.

Of the fastest growing occupations, 46% require some postsecondary, non-degreed credential or less. The second fastest growing group of occupations, at 18%, are those requiring an associate degree. These industries include healthcare, information technologies, manufacturing and others. Although industries need employees with technical skills, 57% of leaders report the most in-demand skills are soft skills, such as adaptability, analytical reasoning, critical thinking, problem solving and effective communication. Typical workforce development programs focus on the technical skills necessary to perform the duties of a specific job, ignoring the soft skills that most industry leaders demand.

Industry demand is requiring the reskilling of the unemployed and underemployed population. This population does not typically enroll in higher education institutions to gain the skills needed to become employable. These learners are nontraditional students who engage in workforce development programs through their local Workforce Investment Boards or WIOA youth programs. These programs become the bridge needed for this population to earn the credentials necessary to meet employers' needs and create a pathway to higher education degree programs.

To address the gap in the development of today's workforce skills, NEBHE has developed a comprehensive framework to develop jobseekers to become agents of their own employability.

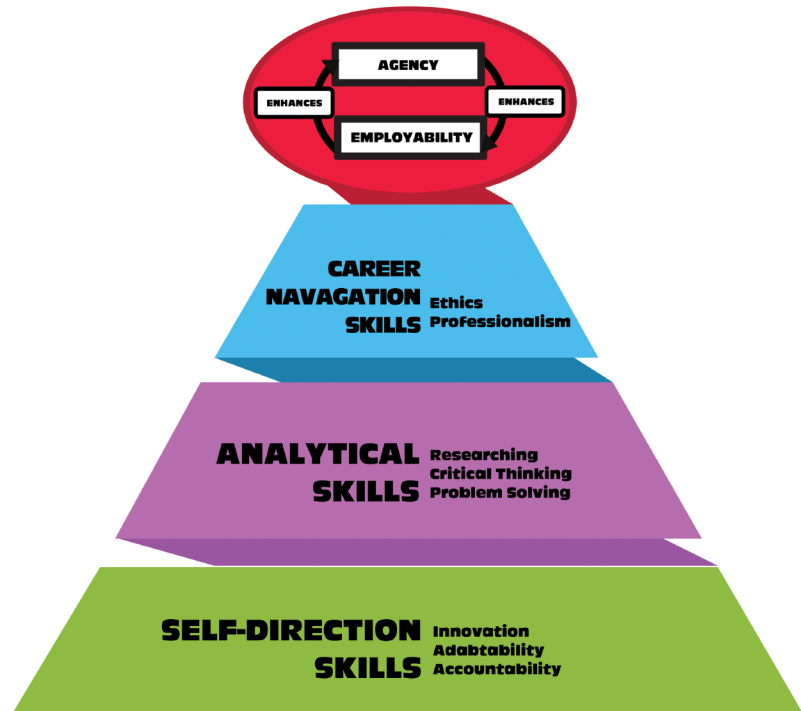
The figure at right depicts the self-direction skills, analytical skills and career-navigation skills that students require to face the dynamic challenges of the 21st century workplace. The framework uses required technical skills as activities to develop agency over employability skills.

Using this framework as a guide, NEBHE is in the position to work with Industry partners and Workforce Investment Boards in collaboration with higher education institutions to develop relevant curricula that addresses the needs of various industries. The benefits of such partnerships include:

- Students—including underemployed, unemployed, adult learners, and traditional—receive the education they need to be gainfully employed
- Employers receive the skilled workforce they seek
- Higher education institutions not only support their mission to serve the local community but also receive the economic benefits of enrollment in nontraditional programs.

Statistics taken from the U.S. Department of Labor and LinkedIn.

Building Blocks for Agency and Employability



The New England Journal of Higher Education



"With our sector undergoing significant transition, *The New England Journal of Higher Education* is an excellent source for staying informed on key issues like enrollment and demographic changes. Its coverage of topics like the future of work, food insecurity, financial sustainability and federal legislation make the journal relevant and timely. Its comparative data from other states and regional perspectives help us better understand trends and make informed decisions to address opportunities and challenges."

Yves Salomon-Fernandez

President, Greenfield Community College

The New England Journal of Higher Education (NEJHE) offers cutting-edge commentary and expert analysis about New England higher education and its connections to the economy and quality of life.

NEJHE and related publications are completely online and easily accessible. *NEJHE* content informs and enhances NEBHE's broader information and communication outreach—in particular, NEBHE's growing presence on social media. Each piece we publish in the *Journal* and *Newslink* automatically goes out via Twitter and is covered in our weekly *NEJHE NewsBlast* emailed to thought leaders.

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted," goes the saying apparently misattributed to Albert Einstein. As such, *NEJHE* tells the stories and advances the ideas that put flesh on all that powerful data about the work of higher education.

Consider some of *NEJHE*'s recent Q&As and commentaries:

- **Andrew Delbanco**, Columbia University professor and Teagle Foundation president, explores the state of higher education and intellectual life.
- **Mary K. Grant**, president of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate, discusses civic skills and dispositions.
- **Nancy Thomas**, director of the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University's Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life, talks about issues in active citizenship, youth voting, red-blue divisions, the impact of social media on politics and the role of higher education.
- Talent guru **Michelle Weise** shares insights on connecting postsecondary education to the world of work.

In other *NEJHE* commentaries, **Ross E. O'Hara** of Persistence Plus explains how behavioral science can be leveraged to nudge more students to access the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), for which 3 million low-income students nationwide are eligible but nearly two-thirds do not access the benefits. After *NEJHE* published the piece, a bill was advanced in Congress to use just that remedy to relieve student hunger.

Northern Essex Community College chemistry professor **Mike Cross**, meanwhile, shares lessons he learned when he enrolled undercover as a student.

NEJHE Newslinks feature “Comings and Goings” of key people at New England campuses and in other relevant arenas, our “DC Shuttle” column on higher education news from the U.S. capital through a partnership with the New England Council, updates on state legislative sessions, as well as our “Data Connection” assortment of facts and figures and announcements of the hard-hitting reports of NEBHE’s Policy & Research team.

Visit
nebhe.org/nejhe



New England Higher Education Excellence Awards

Since 2003, NEBHE has presented Excellence Awards to individuals and organizations for exemplifying distinction in promoting sound education practices and policies, efficient sharing of education resources, and leadership to strengthen the relationship between higher education and the economic well-being of New England.

Connecticut

Recipient: **The Hartford Promise**

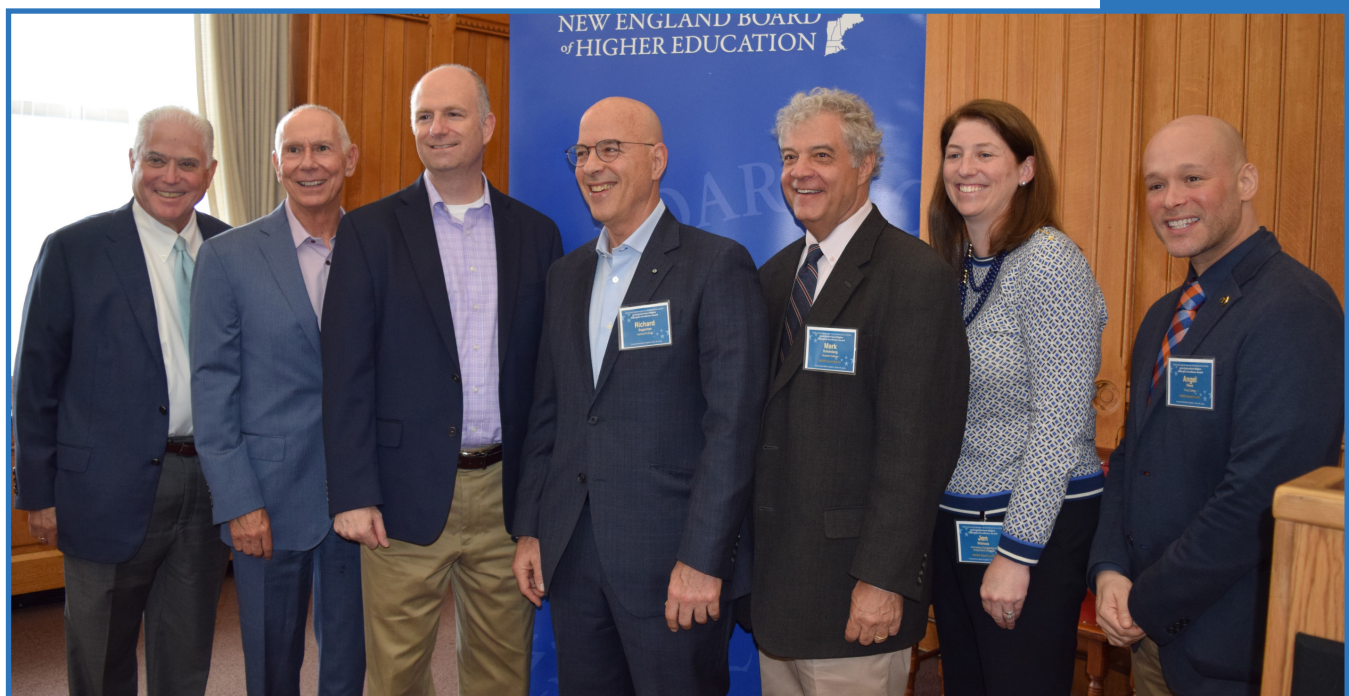
The presentation ceremony was held on June 18, 2019 at the Connecticut State Capitol.



*Hartford Promise President **Richard Sugarman** accepts the 2019 Connecticut Excellence Award. From left: NEBHE President & CEO **Michael K. Thomas**, Connecticut state Rep. **Matt Ritter**, **Sugarman**, NEBHE delegate and Goodwin College President **Mark Scheinberg**.*



From left: Hartford Promise Nearlies Program Director **Leslie Silvers**, Hartford Promise Director of College Partnerships **Melissa Paul**, Hartford Promise's **Yahaira Escribaro, Sugarman**, Hartford Promise Development & Grant Coordinator **Linda Merlin**, and Hartford Promise's **Mike Powell**.



From left: University of Hartford President Emeritus **Walter Harrison**, NEBHE delegate and Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) President **Mark Ojakian**, NEBHE delegate and Conn. state Rep. **Gregg Haddad**, **Sugarman**, **Scheinberg**, NEBHE delegate and Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges President **Jennifer Widness**, and NEBHE delegate and Trinity College Vice President of Enrollment and Student Success **Angel B. Pérez**.

Maine

Recipient: **Wendy L. Ault**, Executive Director, MELMAC Education Foundation

The presentation ceremony was held on June 20, 2019 at the Maine State House.



*From left: NEBHE President & CEO **Michael K. Thomas**, NEBHE delegate and Maine Department of Education Commissioner **Pender Makin**, NEBHE delegate The Hon. **Joan M. Nass**, MELMAC Education Foundation Executive Director and 2019 Maine Excellence Award recipient **Wendy L. Ault**, former NEBHE delegate **Wanda L. Lincoln**, and NEBHE delegate **James C.Q. Weggler**.*



*U.S. Senator Susan Collins' staff assistant **Charles Mahaleris** poses with **Ault**.*

Massachusetts

Recipient: **Judith Block McLaughlin**, Senior Lecturer on Education & Educational Chair, Seminar for New Presidents, Harvard University

The presentation ceremony was held on Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at the Massachusetts State House.



From left: NEBHE delegate and Lasell University President **Michael B. Alexander**, NEBHE delegte and Mass. state Sen. **Marc Pacheco**, Harvard University Seminar for New Presidents Educational Chair and 2019 Massachusetts Excellence Award recipient **Judith Block McLaughlin** and NEBHE President & CEO **Michael K. Thomas**.

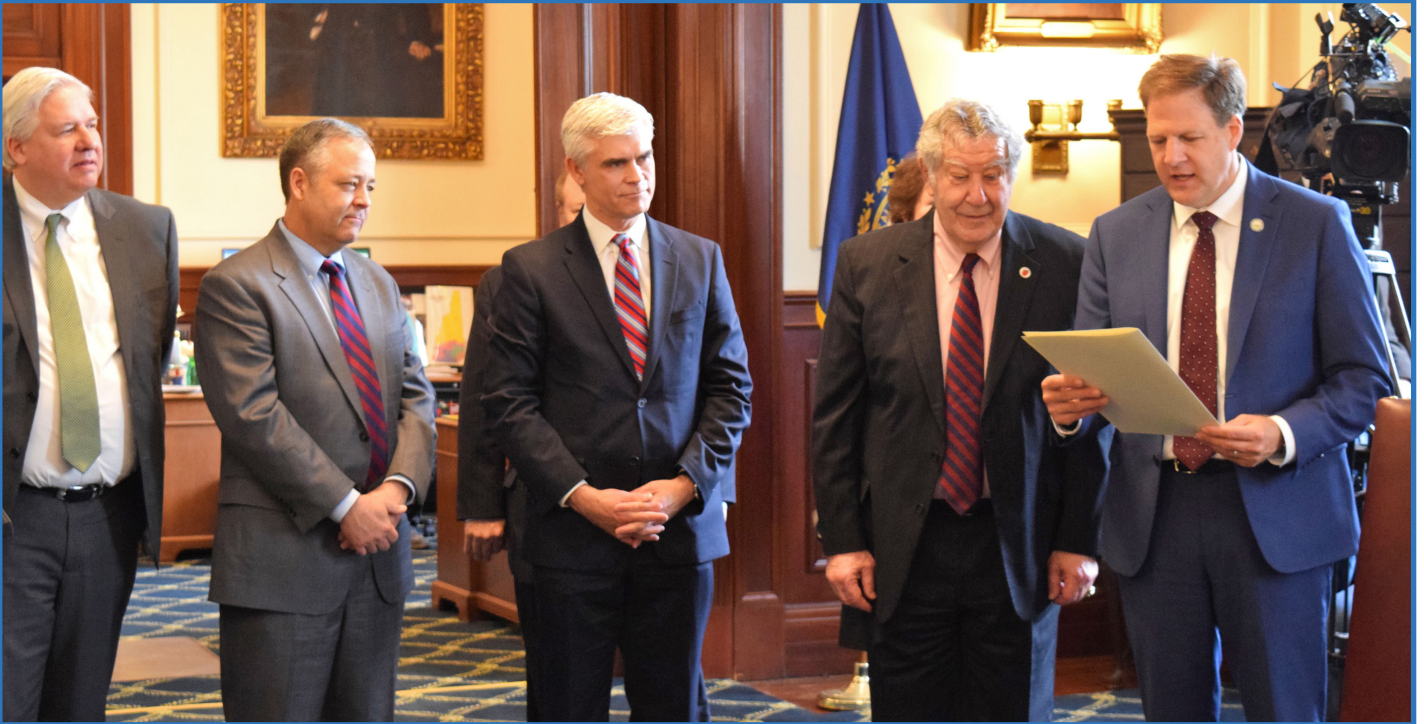


McLaughlin with Harvard University President **Lawrence S. Bacow**.

New Hampshire

Recipient: Fidelity Investments' **The UNIQUE College Investing Plan (NH)**

The presentation ceremony was held on May 15, 2019 at the New Hampshire State House.



*From left: Outgoing NEBHE Chair and University System of New Hampshire Chancellor **Todd J. Leach**, Fidelity Investments Vice President of Public Affairs **Joe Murray**, NEBHE President & CEO **Michael K. Thomas**, and former NEBHE Chair state Sen. **Lou D'Alessandro** listen to Gov. **Chris Sununu** as he reads the award proclamation.*



*From left: Community College System of New Hampshire Chancellor Emeritus and Southern New Hampshire University President Emeritus **Richard A. Gustafson**, College Tuition Savings Advisory Commission Chair and Former N.H. Division of Higher Education Director **Edward R. MacKay, Thomas** and former NEBHE delegate The Hon. **Jack Balcom** at the ceremony.*

Rhode Island

Recipient: The Rhode Island Promise Scholarship

The presentation ceremony was held on May 14, 2019 at the Rhode Island State House.



Four student recipients of the Rhode Island Promise Scholarship, all from the Community College of Rhode Island, accepted the award. From left: NEBHE Chair and R.I. House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare Chair Rep. **Joseph M. McNamara**, NEBHE delegate and state Sen. **Hanna M. Gallo**, state Senate President **Dominick J. Ruggerio**, Community College of Rhode Island President **Meghan Hughes**, Promise Scholars **Andrew Lee** and **Davila Jackley**, R.I. Gov. **Gina M. Raimondo**, and Promise Scholars **Cristina LaPaglia** and **Brian Imana**.



Gov. **Raimondo** congratulates R.I. Commissioner of Postsecondary Education **Brenda Dann-Messier** on her retirement at the award ceremony. From left: **McNamara**, **Gallo**, **Ruggerio**, **Hughes**, **Raimondo**, **Dann-Messier**, and NEBHE President and CEO **Michael K. Thomas**.

The presentation ceremony for the 2019 Vermont Excellence Award (honoring the late **Martha O'Connor**, former Chair of the Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees) and regional New England Excellence Award (honoring **The Governor's Institutes of Vermont**) will be held at the Woodstock Inn in Woodstock, Vt. on Sept. 26, 2019.

Our People

Board of Delegates

Connecticut Delegates: Representative **Gregg Haddad** *Connecticut General Assembly* • **Mark E. Ojakian** *President Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education* • **Angel B. Pérez** *Vice President of Enrollment and Student Success Trinity College* • **Mark Scheinberg** *President Goodwin College* • **John Volin** *Vice Provost of Academic Affairs University of Connecticut* • **Jennifer Widness** *President Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges*

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Vermont General Assembly: Representative **Peter Conlon** • Representative **Kathleen James** • Representative **Johannah Leddy Donovan**

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