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Campus Compact for New Hampshire

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CCNH Opens Doors to Higher Education through College Access Challenge Program

New grants from Campus Compact for New Hampshire support pathways to college for underrepresented students.

Concord, NH, February 22, 2012—Grants from Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH) are funding initiatives designed to increase access to college among students who might think higher education is beyond their reach. The grants are part of CCNH's College Access Challenge Program, in which colleges and universities partner with local schools and community organizations to encourage students from underrepresented groups to explore higher education as a viable option. So far CCNH has awarded 16 grants, funding outreach initiatives for refugee and immigrant students, low-income students, young mothers, veterans, and minority students, among others.

"We're thrilled to provide funding for these innovative programs, which do everything from helping students improve their school performance to educating them about ways to finance college," says Debby Scire, executive director of CCNH. "As a statewide consortium of college and university presidents, it's a priority for us to ensure that students understand the doors that a college degree can open for them—and to let them know that the door to higher education is one they can walk through."

CCNH is providing grants of up to $1,500 to support partnerships geared toward increasing college access through academic preparedness, college counseling, and other means. Students at Saint Anselm College and Southern New Hampshire University will work with small groups of refugee, immigrant, minority, and first-generation students from West High School and Central High School, respectively, to define their college paths and explore ways to make college possible. Nashua High Schools North and South are partnering with Nashua Community College to fund College Ready Math Courses as well as transportation for students to take the College Board's Accuplacer test. The Manchester School District will send 15 students to UNH Manchester's Educational Excellence for English Language Learners (EXCELL) program. UNH Manchester is also bringing in students from across the state for a day of music workshops,

followed by a concert, to highlight ways to pursue music in college. The Virtual Learning Academy Charter School is partnering with Child and Family Services to provide transportation, childcare, and technology access for young mothers enrolled in a dual high school/associates' degree program.

Among the programs casting a wide net, Laconia, Lin-Wood Public, Raymond, Souhegan, and Winnisquam Regional High Schools will each bring dozens of students to area campuses—including Keene State College, Plymouth State University, the University of New Hampshire (UNH), Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), and NHTI, Concord's Community College—for educational sessions focusing on college as an achievable goal. Kearsarge Regional High School is partnering with SNHU and NHTI to fund PSAT tests, campus visits, and access to online college planning for students with learning disabilities. NHTI is also working with Pittsfield High School to bring low-income students to campus to discuss college financing and educational opportunities for veterans. Through its Summer Enrichment at Dartmouth (SEAD) program, created to open educational opportunities for youths from under-resourced backgrounds, Dartmouth College will support an intern who will provide college counseling to students at Raymond High School.

With the idea of starting younger students on the right path, Parker Varney Elementary School will send fifth graders to UNH Manchester for a day of mini-classes that promote furthering their education. Similarly, the Manchester campus of the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is partnering with McLaughlin Middle School to provide hands-on learning experiences in health sciences.

"The range and depth of these programs is exciting," notes Scire. "Our member campuses are committed to increasing college access and success among all students. These initiatives are just one small part of our larger statewide effort, but they represent a great step forward in achieving that goal."

CCNH will make additional grants available for the spring semester, with a submission deadline of May 15. Eligible applicants include K-12 schools, community-based organizations, and higher education institutions working to establish or enhance a partnership aimed at encouraging underrepresented students to access higher education.

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About Campus Compact for New Hampshire

Campus Compact for New Hampshire (CCNH) is a statewide consortium of college and university presidents and private-sector partners who are united in their commitment to the civic purposes of higher education. As part of a national coalition of college and university leaders, CCNH serves as a catalyst to integrate community service and civic responsibility throughout academic and student life. CCNH is part of the national Campus Compact organization, which encompasses more than 1,100 college and university presidents representing some 6 million students. For more information, see http://www.compactnh.org/.

About the College Access Challenge Program

Grants for CCNH's College Access Challenge Program are funded in part under a sub-grant from the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), a United States Department of Education grant administered by the New Hampshire Department of Education. For more information, see http://www.compactnh.org/college-access-mini-grants-available/.