



# Northeast Region

## Special Interest Articles:

Building a Career Pathways System: Promising Practices in Community College-Centered Workforce Development

## Individual Highlights:

- Issues & Trends 1
- Conference Update 1
- Special Interest Article 2

## Contacting Us:

- Newsletter submission 3
- Northeast's Officers 3

## Issues & Trends

Summer has arrived and with it brings heat waves, suntan, sunburns, and for some a renew perspective on life. With the economy and gas prices pressing down on us, the decision to return to school will be a daunting choice for those that have been on a long hiatus. This is a period for many educators to prep-up and ready themselves for the new

school year. Are institutions prepared for the problems associated with the angst that will accompany returning students? While learning is an invaluable tool to the future, so too is the ability to cope and manage the stresses of life. But, there are those who will neither have the ability to cope and/or manage their lives in a constructive way that

will enable them to pursue their goals much less meet their most fundamental needs. While educators busy themselves with the upcoming school year, some will be dreading it, as it will mean treading uncharted territories.

## Spring Conference Update

A big thank you goes out to all the attendees and guest speakers! That made our spring conference a big success. The topics and interests generated from the break out sessions provided a clear indication of how our institutions are addressing the needs of today's adult learners and some interesting ideas on

how to improve in meeting the needs of incoming adult students.





Special Interest Article: By Sara Rab

Building a Career Pathways Systems: Promising Practices in Community College-Centered Workforce Development



*"Education is an ornament in prosperity and a refuge in adversity.*

– Aristotle



A recent report by the Workforce Strategy Center, based in New York and San Francisco, discusses strategies for building community college-centered career pathways systems that provide an effective framework for workforce development in information technology (IT) and other growth sectors. In the report, we describe some promising examples provided by community colleges, government, and nonprofit institutions that are changing and adapting their missions, organizations, practices and resources to begin to create these new systems. Our research shows that effective career pathways target regional labor markets, focus on employment sectors such as IT, and integrate education, training, and on-the-job learning. The report makes specific recommendations, based on our research, for how individual colleges, local and regional policymakers, and states can begin developing career pathways initiatives.

**The Research**

Over the past year, we looked closely at three states with innovative policies and/or programs—North Carolina, California, and Washington.

We interviewed state and local policymakers and visited 19 community colleges and related programs in these and other states.

The career pathways systems we visited addressed six basic steps in their models:

1. community outreach to disadvantaged adults;
2. basic skills coursework at community-based organizations that serve as branch campuses of community colleges;
3. entry-level training;
4. internship placement;
5. entry-level employment; and
6. upgrading training.

The majority of the career pathways we visited are organized around employment sectors that offer high-wage jobs and the opportunity for career progression, including information technology, manufacturing, and health careers. For example, we profile five community colleges that have recently established regional IT career pathways in the East bay, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

All of these career pathways are centered at community colleges, which offer low

tuition, a wide range of education and training, and a continuing funding base. Involvement in career pathways systems provides community colleges with increased enrollment, improved student retention and quality of education, access to new funding, higher visibility in the community, and stronger connections to business and government leaders. In order to implement effective pathways, individual colleges must form strategic partnerships with key local and regional institutions. Forming these partnerships increases both the potential reach of the pathway and the ability to attract and leverage stable, long-term funding. In addition, state support is needed to increase scale and create more comprehensive systems. A state career pathways model serves to address the needs of both employers and low-income workers, while leading to a more effective and efficient use of education and workforce development resources.

**To read full article go to <http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eqm03111.pdf>**



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**To submit information  
or an article to the  
newsletter, please  
contact:**

**Editor**

Alison Christopher

**Phone**

607-229-0356

**E-Mail**

Achristopher12@twcny.rr.com

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## Call for Newsletter articles

We welcome members to submit articles of interest for inclusion in the next issue of the Northeast newsletter. This is a wonderful way for our colleagues to pass on information about themselves, their organizations or other items of interests to regional members.

## Officers

Chair, Jane LeClair  
Excelsior College  
[jleclair@excelsior.edu](mailto:jleclair@excelsior.edu)

Vice Chair, Alison Christopher  
Tompkins Learning Partners  
[achristopher12@twcny.rr.com](mailto:achristopher12@twcny.rr.com)

Secretary, John Locke  
Keuka College  
[jlocke@mail.keuka.edu](mailto:jlocke@mail.keuka.edu)

Treasurer, Joseph Nairn  
Rochester Institute of  
Technology  
[joseph.nairn@rit.edu](mailto:joseph.nairn@rit.edu)

## Call for Presenters

Members and colleagues are, invited to submit proposals for our upcoming fall conference entitled Building Corporate and Community Partnerships. The conference is to be held at Elmira College on October 17, 2008.