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Annual Report

Strategic Plan to Ensure Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Connecticut Public Higher Education 2011

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2011 ANNUAL REPORT

**STRATEGIC PLAN TO ENSURE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN
CONNECTICUT PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION**

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Executive Summary

Increasing the participation of minority groups at public colleges and universities is a longstanding goal of the Board of Governors for Higher Education, as first outlined in its 1983 *Strategic Plan to Ensure Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Connecticut Public Higher Education*. The minority groups defined by the plan are: Hispanic/Latino, African American, Asian American and Native American - listed in order of their current proportional presence in the state's population. Subsequently, the Board's *Strategic Plan* was enacted by the state legislature, which since 1986 has provided the Board with an annual allocation to promote achievement of the plan's student diversity goals. Although the plan mandates no numeric goals, it holds campuses to the ideal that the racial and ethnic make-up of their students and graduates should reflect the diversity of the state's residents.

Typically this report declares that since enactment of the *Strategic Plan*, students attending and graduating from Connecticut's public colleges and universities have become more racially and ethnically diverse and the report period continues a historic trend of year-to-year incremental progress. However, the new racial/ethnic designations established by the U.S. Census Bureau and utilized by the state's institutions of higher education in the fall of 2010 preclude comparative analysis with previous report periods. Although the number of minority students enrolled in the state's public institutions in the fall of 2010 at 31,654 exceed the 28,483 enrolled in the fall of 2009, the differences in how students declared their racial and ethnic backgrounds does not allow for a statistically valid comparison.

The public institutions actually experienced a slight decline in the number of minority students receiving undergraduate degrees (associate and bachelor's degrees) from 2,865 during the 2009-10 academic year from a record high figure of 2,907 during the 2008-09 academic year. It is undeterminable as to whether or not the changes in racial/ethnic designations had any impact upon reports regarding the conferring of undergraduate degrees for the 2009-10 academic year.

In any event, the data from this report period will be utilized as baseline data for comparative analyses hereafter regarding the diversity of students enrolled and graduated from the state's public colleges and universities. This year will also be a transitional year for the Department of Higher Education's programmatic initiatives undertaken to advance attainment of the state's student diversity goals. The **Connecticut College Access and Success (ConnCAS) Program**, which provides performance-based grants to the public institutions in support of outreach, admission and retention activities in the implementations of their respective *Strategic Plan to Promote the College Access and Success of Underrepresented Minority Students*, will be changed to two distinct grant programs to become better strategically aligned with the needs of the public universities and the state's community colleges, respectively. Adjustments in the **Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation (ConnCAP) Program** will allow for structural collaboration with the federally-funded **GEAR UP Program** which has a similar mission.

Background of the Strategic Plan

Creation of a *Strategic Plan to Ensure Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Connecticut Public Higher Education* was among the original statutory mandates assigned to the Board of Governors of Higher Education by its 1982 enabling legislation. As stated in statute, the purpose of the plan is to “ensure that students, faculty, administrators and staff at each public institution are representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the total population of the state.”

Adopted in 1983 and modified in 1996, the Board’s *Strategic Plan* requires each public college and university to develop and submit five-year plans known as the institution’s *Strategic Plan to Promote the College Access and Success of Underrepresented Minority Students* to the Department’s Office of Educational Opportunity. The state’s public institutions of higher education include 12 two-year colleges (collectively known as the Connecticut Community College system) and 6 four-year institutions (the University of Connecticut, the four campuses of the Connecticut State University system and Charter Oak State College). These plans present each institution’s approach to achieve and/or maintain student diversity per the following goals:

- **to enroll** African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American and Native American students in proportions that reflect each group’s representation in the state or in the college’s service area
- **to retain** African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American and Native American students in proportions equal to the rate achieved by the college’s student body as a whole
- **to graduate** African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American and Native American students in proportions that reflect each group’s representation in the state or in the college’s service area

In constructing its plan, each public college and university is required to specify:

- **measurable objectives** consistent with diversity goals and strategies to achieve them,
- **an action plan** for systemic implementation of strategies to attain goals, and
- **an evaluation plan** to document progress toward meeting objectives and to inform decision-making about needed alterations and/or new directions.

The public colleges and universities are required to set and strive to achieve 12 prescribed student diversity goals at one of three measurable levels. The optional goal attainment levels are:

- (1) maintaining a representative level of goal attainment,
- (2) reaching its representative level of goal attainment, or
- (3) closing by one-half the existing gap between the representative level of goal attainment and the college’s current level of goal attainment.

As specified by legislative statute, in each biennium, the state's governor and legislature set a line item budget - Minority Advancement Program (MAP) - within the total budget for the Department of Higher Education, to advance achievement of the *Strategic Plan's* goals. Portions of the MAP funds are distributed to reward and support public institutions for their efforts to meet their goals. In fact, the MAP component known as the Connecticut College Access and Success (ConnCAS) Program is Connecticut's only performance-based grant program within budgeting for public higher education. Approximately two-thirds of MAP funds are utilized to fund the pre-college component of MAP known as the Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation (ConnCAP) Program. During the 2009-10 program year, ConnCAS programs are implementing Year 3 of their most recent five-year institutional strategic plans. Although the institutional plan period will continue for another two years, the accompanying grant program – ConnCAS will end June 30, 2011 to allow for the establishment of two district grant programs more strategically aligned with the respective needs of the public universities and the state's community colleges. The ConnCAP programs are in Year 5 of a five-year funding cycle. Grant competitions will be held for the three components of MAP during 2010-11 program year.

Success in Achieving Student Diversity Goals

In fall 2010, the state's public colleges and universities enrolled 112,534 undergraduate students of whom 31,654 identified themselves as were members of the four underrepresented minority groups. Minus the students who were non-resident aliens, those not specifying their race/ethnicity and those identifying more than one race, the adjusted number becomes 99,137. Of the adjusted number, the minority students comprised 31.9 percent of all enrolled students. The fall 2010 data is disaggregated by minority group below in Table 1.

During the 2009-10 academic year, the state's public colleges and universities awarded 14,483 undergraduate degrees. Undergraduate degrees include both associate and bachelor's degrees. Minus the graduates who were non-resident aliens, the minority students comprised 20.0 percent of all undergraduate degree recipients. The 2009-10 academic year data is disaggregated by minority group below in Table 2.

The adjusted numbers calculated above were constructed to facilitate statistically valid comparisons of minority groups' representative parity – the relationship between enrolled or graduated students with racial/ethnic proportions of the state's population. (See Table 3 below) Of course, not all of the enrolled and graduated students are state residents. Until the state establishes a longitudinal student data collection system, these approximations are the best representations of student diversity discernible. The numbers and percentages from this report period will be utilized as baseline data for comparisons of annual change in the near future.

**Table 1: Undergraduate Student Enrollment
in Public Higher Education by Racial/Ethnic Group**

(percentages are rounded to nearest tenth)

RACE / ETHNICITY GROUPING	NUMBER OF ADJUSTED STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF ADJUSTED STUDENTS
Hispanic/Latino	13,982	14.1
African American	12,958	13.1
Asian American	4,447	4.5
Native American	267	0.3
<i>All Minorities</i>	<i>31,654</i>	<i>31.9</i>
ALL STUDENTS	99,137	100.0

SOURCE: Department of Higher Education - Fall 2010 Enrollment Report

**Table 2: Undergraduate Degree Recipients
in Public Higher Education by Racial/Ethnic Group**

(percentages are rounded to nearest tenth)

RACE / ETHNICITY GROUPING	NUMBER OF ADJUSTED STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF ADJUSTED STUDENTS
Hispanic/Latino	1,112	7.8
African American	1,069	7.5
Asian American	636	4.4
Native American	48	0.3
<i>All Minorities</i>	<i>2,865</i>	<i>20.0</i>
ALL STUDENTS	14,303	100.0

SOURCE: Department of Higher Education - 2009-10 Graduation Report

As illustrated in Table 3 below, Asian American and Native American students have achieved representative parity in both their enrollment and graduation levels in public higher education as a whole. Additionally, Native Americans have done so at each of the state's higher education systems. Were it not for their consistent and large overrepresentation at the University of Connecticut in both enrollment and graduation, it is believed that Asian American students would more than likely achieve parity in their enrollment and graduation at the other systems of public higher education as well.

For the second consecutive year, Hispanic/Latino joins the other minority groups with their enrollment level exceeding its population percentage for public higher education as a whole. Among all racial/ethnic groupings, Hispanic/Latino students have experienced the largest growth in both enrollment and graduation in Connecticut's public higher education over the course of the past ten years.

It is readily apparent from Table 3 that minority students, especially Hispanic/Latino and African American students are overrepresented at the state's community college system. This phenomenon is not surprising given the unique mission of community colleges and their open admission policies. Typically, across the nation, community colleges are the entry point to higher education for low-income, first generation college and minority students. On the other hand, despite impressive growth in recent years, there are relatively low levels of enrollment and graduation at the state's public universities for both Hispanic/Latino and African American students. This is particularly noteworthy since Hispanic/Latinos and African Americans are the state's largest minority groups, constituting 23 percent of the state's population and 85 percent of the state's minority population. It is also instructive to note that nearly two-thirds (62.1 percent in fall of 2010) of all Hispanic/Latino and African American students attending community college do so at four of the system's 12 institutions – Capital Community College, Gateway Community College, Housatonic Community College and Norwalk Community College – all situated within or near urban cities with large low-income and minority populations. These institutions also awarded more than two-thirds (68.9 percent) of the associate degrees conferred to Hispanic/Latino and African American students by the community colleges during the 2009-10 academic year.

What is troubling and of paramount concern to the Department is the fact that insufficient numbers of Hispanic/Latino and African American students in the state of Connecticut are enrolling and graduating from its public universities at the baccalaureate level. It is clear that aspiration to obtain a college education is not a significant factor in the disparities among students attending and graduating from the state's public colleges and universities, based upon its collection and analysis of data. Surveys and other measures demonstrate that Hispanic/Latino and African American students aspire to higher education at levels comparable to those of white students. In fact, if the Hispanic/Latino and African American students enrolled in the fall 2010 at the public institutions were redistributed to the various campuses per their representation in the state's population, each campus and higher education system would achieve representative parity.

**Table 3: Representative Parity
Minority Undergraduate Enrollment and Degree Recipients
Connecticut Public Higher Education**

(percentages are rounded to nearest tenth)

RACE / ETHNICITY GROUPING	POPULATION PERCENTAGE*	FALL 2010 ENROLLMENT PERCENTAGE	2009-10 ACADEMIC YEAR DEGREE RECIPIENT PERCENTAGE
By Minority Group			
Hispanic/Latino	13.4	14.1	7.8
African American	9.4	13.1	7.5
Asian American	3.8	4.5	4.4
Native American	0.2	0.3	0.3
ALL MINORITIES	26.7	31.9	20.0
By Public Higher Education System			
University of Connecticut			
Hispanic/Latino	13.4	8.8	6.2
African American	9.4	7.0	5.0
Asian American	3.8	9.7	7.5
Native American	0.2	0.3	0.3
ALL MINORITIES	26.7	25.7	18.9
Connecticut State University			
Hispanic/Latino	13.4	8.5	6.0
African American	9.4	10.2	7.4
Asian American	3.8	3.0	3.4
Native American	0.2	0.3	0.4
ALL MINORITIES	26.7	21.9	17.1
Connecticut Community Colleges			
Hispanic/Latino	13.4	19.1	11.8
African American	9.4	16.6	10.1
Asian American	3.8	3.5	2.7
Native American	0.2	0.2	0.2
ALL MINORITIES	26.7	39.5	24.8

NOTE: highlighted data indicates representative parity has been achieved

* **SOURCE:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census
2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Tables, P1, P2, P3, P4, H1.

Hispanic/Latino and African American students are overrepresented among students enrolled at the state’s public community colleges where they gain access through open admission policies. This occurrence is problematic given the relatively low levels of graduation at community colleges on the part of Hispanic/Latino and African American students and their failure to achieve admission at the selective, public universities point to a dominant reason for the racial and ethnic disparities among students enrolling and graduating from the state’s public institutions of higher education, which was identified in previous editions of this report.

In Connecticut, the racial and ethnic disparities among students of institutions of higher education is a direct consequence of the academic achievement gaps between whites and the state’s two large minority groups – Hispanic/Latino and African Americans. The term “achievement gap” is commonly utilized to describes a number of disparate levels of academic achievement between white students and Hispanic/Latino and African American students at the PK -12 level. It is an indisputable fact that Hispanic/Latino and African American students do not possess adequate levels of academic preparations for the rigor of college-level work to the same degree as white students. There are a number of measurements of academic achievement that attests to the existence and extent of these achievement gaps. Various illustrations of the achievement gaps have been presented in earlier reports. Nevertheless, it is instructive to again report that in Connecticut the achievement gaps among high-achieving students is widening and is actually larger than the overall achievement gap. This observation is quite significant in that high-achieving students are far more likely to enroll and graduate from college at the baccalaureate level than low-achieving students.

The State of Connecticut is currently developing or implementing a number of initiatives to address the achievement gaps at elementary-secondary schools between Hispanic/Latino, African American and majority students. However, it will be some time before such efforts achieve their desired outcomes. In the meantime, measurements of the gaps and data such as that presented in Table 3 inform the redesign of programmatic initiatives undertaken in pursuit of the state’s student diversity goals. For instances, it is clear that there is no problem regarding access for minority students at the state’s community colleges; thus, the Department’s grant program designed to reward and support their diversity efforts will require that they focus solely upon the retention and graduation of targeted students.

Expanding the Education Pipeline

To help public colleges and universities meet statewide goals and bolster their own campus-led activities, the Department of Higher Education conducts the **Minority Advancement Plan (MAP)** which consists of three initiatives.

The first initiative - the **Connecticut College Access and Success (ConnCAS) Program** - provides incentive grants to public institutions of higher education to support outreach, admission and retention activities in the implementations of their respective *Strategic Plan to Promote the College Access and Success of Underrepresented Minority Students*. During the 2009-10 program year, the Department awarded more than \$760,000 in ConnCAS Grants to 17 public colleges and universities. The size of the institutional grants is based upon performance in the enrollment and graduation of underrepresented students. Seven of the grants were awarded to smaller institutions for general outreach and retention activities. The larger grants were

awarded to ten institutions with large underrepresented minority populations for specialized transitional and retention activities for specific students.

Students enrolled in ConnCAS-supported programs marginally meet the institutions' admission criteria. Providing such students with a transitional summer program affords them opportunities to become integrated into the social and academic life of the institution. Students in such programs typically take at least one credit-bearing, introductory college-level course. Combined with supportive services, including tutoring and counseling during the regular school year, these activities greatly increase the students' retention and the likelihood that they will graduate. These programs have proven to be very effective in retaining their students. For example, among the 574 students who participated in the summer of 2008 ConnCAS bridge programs, 383 or 66.7 percent were enrolled in the spring semester of 2010. However, when this data is disaggregated by the three public higher education systems, the number of participating students is fairly even but the retention rates vary – 46.8 percent at the community colleges, 73.2 percent at the Connecticut State University (CSU) campuses, and 79.3 percent at the main and branch campuses of the University of Connecticut (UConn). The graduation rates of ConnCAS students also vary at the three systems. For instance, the 3-year graduation rate of ConnCAS students from the 2006 cohort of summer program participants was 10.4 percent at the community colleges. The 6-year graduation rate of ConnCAS students from the 2003 cohort of summer program participants was 46.8 percent at the CSU campuses and 66.2 percent at UConn. This data is presented in Table 4.

This analysis indicated a need for and played an influential role in the Department's redesign of the ConnCAS initiative. The new initiatives – one for the community colleges and one for the public universities – will begin implementation in the summer or fall of 2011.

The second and largest state-funded component of MAP is the **Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation (ConnCAP) Program**. This program is designed to stimulate linkages between public and independent colleges and targeted school districts that will motivate and better prepare middle school and high school youths who are under-achievers and who come from low-income families and/or where neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The Department awards ConnCAP Grants to eligible partnerships on a competitive basis. The 2010-11 program year is Year 4 of a four-year funding cycle for ConnCAP programs. For Year 4, the Department awarded ConnCAP programs a total of more than \$1.5 million.

ConnCAP programs typically provide students with six weeks of summer intensive instruction in English, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences and foreign languages. Supplemental activities may include study and life skills and cultural activities. During the school year, ConnCAP helps students through tutoring, counseling and career exploration. High school seniors and parents receive special help with college and financial aid applications.

For the 2009-10 program year, the ConnCAP programs serve nearly 900 students. Among the 199 ConnCAP students who entered the 2009-10 school year as high school seniors, 192 or 96.5 percent graduated from high school in June 2009. A total of 176 or 91.7 percent of this ConnCAP cohort declared their intention to enter college. See Table 5. The individual programs and their service areas are listed thereafter:

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**Table 4: ConnCAS Student Outcomes
Connecticut College Access and Success Program
(2006 Cohort & 2003 Cohort for 3-Year and 6-Year Graduation Rates, Respectively)**

Institution¹	Graduated		Still Enrolled		Not Enrolled²		TOTAL
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Capital Community College	7	24.1%	2	6.9%	20	69.0%	29
Gateway Community College	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	20	90.9%	22
Manchester Community College	1	4.0%	7	28.0%	17	68.0%	25
TOTAL	8	10.5%	11	14.5%	57	75.0%	76
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Central Connecticut State University	3	23.1%	1	7.7%	9	69.2%	13
Eastern Connecticut State University	22	47.8%	2	4.3%	22	47.8%	46
Southern Connecticut State University	11	47.8%	2	8.7%	10	43.5%	23
Western Connecticut State University	8	66.7%	2	16.7%	2	16.7%	12
TOTAL	44	46.8%	7	7.4%	43	45.7%	94
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University of Connecticut	51	66.2%	1	1.3%	25	32.5%	77

NOTES:

1. The Housatonic Community College and Norwalk Community College programs were not operational in 2006
2. Includes drop outs, stop outs, dismissals and status unknown. Unverified transfers not considered in calculations

SOURCE: Institutional reports on student progress to Department of Higher Education's online reporting system

**Table 5: ConnCAP Student Outcomes
Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program
Graduating Class of 2010**

Program	Senior Students	Graduated High School	High School Graduation Rate	Accepted/Enrolled in College	College-Going Rate
Central Connecticut State University	21	21	100.0%	19	90.5%
Goodwin College	15	15	100.0%	13	86.7%
Naugatuck Valley Community College	26	22	84.6%	22	100.0%
Norwalk Community College	12	12	100.0%	21	91.7%
Southern Connecticut State University	26	26	100.0%	24	92.3%
University of Bridgeport	11	11	100.0%	9	81.8%
University of Connecticut	15	14	93.3%	14	100.0%
University of Connecticut Health Center	27	26	96.3%	25	96.2%
Wesleyan University	36	35	97.2%	29	82.9%
Western Connecticut State University	10	10	100.0%	10	100.0%
TOTAL	199	192	96.5%	176	91.7%

SOURCE: Program reports to the Department of Higher Education online reporting system

**Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program
(ConnCAP)**

Program Service Areas and Population

Organization	Service Area(s)
Central Connecticut State University	New Britain
Goodwin College	Hartford, East Hartford
Naugatuck Valley Community College	Waterbury
Norwalk Community College	Norwalk
Southern Connecticut State University	New Haven
University of Bridgeport	Bridgeport
University of Connecticut	Hartford
University of Connecticut Health Center	Statewide
Wesleyan University	Middletown, Meriden, Portland
Western Connecticut State University	Danbury

**Type of Programming
July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010**

General Programming –

Grantee implements Summer Program and Academic Year Program as prescribed in ConnCAP Program Guidelines. Curriculum and activities are generalized, stressing preparation for college.

- 1) Central Connecticut State University
- 2) Goodwin College
- 3) Naugatuck Valley Community College
- 4) Norwalk Community College
- 5) University of Connecticut
- 6) Wesleyan University
- 7) Western Connecticut State University

Special Emphasis Programming –

Grantee places a special emphasis upon a curriculum area(s) or preparation for a specific career area(s). Grantee does not implement both Summer Program and Academic Year Program as prescribed in ConnCAP Program Guidelines or does not do so for all participants.

University of Connecticut Health Center – Pre-Medical, Pre-Dental, Allied Health

General/Special Emphasis Programming –

Grantee places a special emphasis upon a curriculum area(s) or preparation for a specific career area(s). Grantee implements Summer Program and Academic Year Program as prescribed in ConnCAP Program Guidelines.

- 1) Southern Connecticut State University - Teacher Preparation
- 2) University of Bridgeport - Engineering, Math & Science

In August 2005, the Department of Higher Education received a six-year \$18 million from the U.S. Department of Education to continue implementation of its **Connecticut State GEAR UP Project**. Initially launched in September 1999, the GEAR UP Project is administered by the Department's Office of Educational Opportunity as the third component of the Minority Advancement Program.

GEAR UP is a federal discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP initiatives supplement school reform efforts, offer services that promote academic preparation and understanding of college costs, and provide professional development of teachers and administrators at high-poverty middle and high schools.

During its initial six-year funding cycle, from September 1999 to August 2005; the Connecticut State GEAR UP Project focused on mathematics, based on research showing that students who take upper level math courses in high school are better prepared and more likely to graduate from college. The Project's principle goal was to increase the number of 8th graders taking and successfully completing Algebra I, expecting that these students would subsequently take advanced math courses. Project outcomes included substantial curriculum change, including elimination of low-level math courses in both middle and high schools, and the establishment of new graduation requirements. During the second funding period – September 2005 to August 2011, the Project will continue to emphasize math but broader focus will be placed on academic rigor to improve student achievement. Research has identified the rigor of high school curriculum as the strongest factor associated with students enrolling and graduating from college.

The Project's staff, in partnership with school district and school staff will implement an array of student or parent activities and systemic change activities as elements the target schools' improvement plans. Increasing the number of students taking Advanced Placement, college courses for credit and other rigorous courses are among the Projects' objectives. It is expected that this partnership will further the development of a college-going culture at the target schools and have a positive, enduring influence upon students' academic performance and parental involvement.

Additionally, the Connecticut State GEAR UP Projects awards four-year college scholarships to low-income students in the target areas. The scholarship component is intended to wholly or partially fill the gap between financial aid packages and colleges costs. In some instances, the GEAR UP Connecticut College Scholarship displaces student loans. The Project's first cohort of students - who were 7th graders during the 1999-2000 school year - graduated in June 2005. A total of 241 members of the Project's Class of 2005 were awarded scholarships. Preliminary analysis of a graduation study indicates that 35 percent of these scholarship recipients who are known to have entered college have received an undergraduate degree and another 31 percent are currently enrolled in college, as of this date.

For the Project's Class of 2006, college scholarship funds were awarded to 63 participants. The recipients will share a pool of \$1M over a five-year period. Their scholarship awards are renewable for a total of four academic years. Likewise, the Project has awarded 100 college scholarships to each to its high school graduating classes of 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.

Through the fall of 2010, the Connecticut State GEAR UP Project has distributed more than \$7.0 million in college scholarships to the attending colleges of the six classes of GEAR UP graduates. Previously, from fall of 2000 through spring 2005, a total of 421 participants in ConnCAP, ConnCAS and other pre-college programs received \$4.3M in college scholarships from the Connecticut State GEAR UP Project.