About Connect

Connect is a partnership of public higher education institutions in Southeastern Massachusetts – Bridgewater State College, Bristol Community College, Cape Cod Community College, Massasoit Community College and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Established in January 2003, Connect has two basic goals: to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of higher education; and to advance the economic, educational and cultural life of Southeastern Massachusetts.
Dear colleague,

It is with great pleasure and pride that we present you with a copy of *A Vision for Public Higher Education in Southeastern Massachusetts*, a joint project among the five Connect institutions and various leaders, employers and citizens of our region.

This report marks the beginning of what we hope will be a continuing engagement among our public higher education institutions and all those who have a stake in the economic and social development of Southeastern Massachusetts.

Against the backdrop of tremendous change – both within the region and throughout the commonwealth’s system of public higher education – we have marshaled our collective resources to articulate a new agenda for Southeastern Massachusetts. All of us feel strongly that this region is poised to exploit fully the advantages of the new economy and that we can do so while preserving the essence of what makes our corner of the world so unique and attractive.

We welcome your ideas and recommendations regarding not only the material in this report but also any matter for which our joint concerns and interests can positively impact the communities in which we live and work. Working together, we can ensure that the old adage of “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts” perfectly describes Southeastern Massachusetts for years to come.

Sincerely,

Dana Mohler-Faria
President
Bridgewater State College

John Sbrega
President
Bristol Community College

Kathleen Schatzberg
President
Cape Cod Community College

Charles Wall
President
Massasoit Community College

Jean MacCormack
Chancellor
UMass Dartmouth
In January 2003, the leaders of five public post-secondary institutions in Southeastern Massachusetts – Bridgewater State College, Bristol Community College, Cape Cod Community College, Massasoit Community College and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth – came together to form the Connect Partnership, a first-of-its-kind collaborative effort among all three sectors of the state’s system of public higher education. Motivated primarily by our commitment to help the region seize its growing number of exciting opportunities for economic development, social progress and cultural advancement, and secondarily by our need to maximize increasingly scarce resources, we put aside our natural competitive differences to focus on inventive ways to channel our collective energies.

Since its inception, Connect has initiated a number of ground-breaking projects to enhance academic programs, streamline student transfer, foster regional economic development, promote shared learning and cultural activities, and improve the quality of our workforce. Scores of political, civic and business leaders have lauded Connect for its ability to develop and grow in a way that is without parallel in higher education across the commonwealth, and have taken note of the extraordinary level of trust and cooperation that the five institutions share. Though this vote of confidence has been much appreciated, far more important is the fact that these initiatives have benefited hundreds of students and citizens in Southeastern Massachusetts and already saved more than $100,000 of public money.

Earlier this year, Connect embarked upon its most ambitious effort to date – the articulation of a comprehensive regional vision for public higher education. Rather than think of ourselves as five isolated institutions dealing with a range of disparate issues in the communities we serve, we chose to examine Southeastern Massachusetts in its totality and to discuss the different ways that we, as a regional network of public higher education institutions, could produce positive change.

Given that this had never been done before in our commonwealth, it came as no surprise that there were no off-the-shelf models to emulate. Thus, the pages that follow may resemble part strategic plan, part needs assessment and part economic impact report. They attempt to convey the current economic and social conditions of the region and views of key leaders on what must be done to anticipate and respond efficiently to our rapidly changing environment.
Summary

On June 6, 2005, Connect convened its first Regional Leaders Summit that brought together more than 130 representatives of business and industry, government, the artistic and cultural community, health and human service agencies, and PreK-12 education to participate in a series of targeted focus groups on the future of Southeastern Massachusetts. Data gathered at this historic summit comprised one of four principal sets of research underlying this report. The other sets took the form of: in-depth interviews with the five Connect chief executives; one-on-one telephone consultations with more than two dozen influential “change agents” residing in the region; and a thorough review of primary and secondary information sources compiled by the federal government, state agencies and local think tanks.

This document is divided into seven sections:

• A discussion of higher education’s growing place as a prerequisite to economic success and a high quality of life;
• A review of the challenges facing Massachusetts’ public higher education system – the main point of access to post-secondary education for the majority of its citizens;
• A synopsis of Connect’s history, impact and principal motivations;
• An assessment of the various commonalities – values, assets, challenges – shared by the five public higher education institutions in Southeastern Massachusetts;
• An evaluation of the region’s socioeconomic strengths and deficiencies;
• A recap of the insights and perspectives of regional leaders;
• The articulation of a regional vision for public higher education.

The final section contains 13 focused, strategic recommendations as to how Connect can best operate to ensure that Southeastern Massachusetts reaches its potential. The first four concern the steps that Connect must take to institutionalize itself, complete its maturing process and become a full partner in regional development. The remaining nine are concrete proposals for regional activities grouped around three core functions: increasing capacity for teaching and learning in critical areas; serving as a communication link through which regional leaders can articulate and refine their agendas for public higher education and regional development; and training and empowering a new cadre of leadership within the region.

Inherent, too, is a sense that while this endeavor represents a bold step forward for the region and its partnership with public higher education, it is just that – a single step. A region as complex and dynamic as ours will undoubtedly require many more steps in years to come. By taking action now, we will be well positioned to take those steps when the time comes.
Never before in our history have the benefits – both concrete and intangible – of higher education been more pronounced, and never before have they created such disparities. As the Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth (MassINC) remarked about our state in the mid-1990s, “Increasingly, the broad middle class is divided into two distinct groups with very different profiles and prospects for long-term success – and education lies at the fault line between the groups. One group, primarily those with college degrees or postgraduate educations, is moving ahead in the new economy. While higher education levels have not guaranteed economic progress, many of these families have actually moved from the middle to the top income group. The second group, primarily those with a high school degree or less, is falling behind in today’s economic world. Their wages and incomes are falling, their career job prospects are decreasing and the unions that used to protect their wages and working conditions are vanishing. A growing number of these families are sliding out of the middle class – and face an uphill battle to return to their former economic level.”

Such disparity is not unique to Massachusetts but rather represents a growing trend throughout the nation, if not the whole of the industrialized world. Increasingly, the global economy is fueled by knowledge. Those who possess it enjoy higher standards of living, experience more rapid income gains and find themselves less likely to be unemployed for any significant length of time. Consider the following:

- An individual with an associate’s degree typically earns 22 percent more than a high school graduate and 64 percent more than someone without a high school diploma;
- Those with bachelor’s degrees take home 62 percent more income than high school graduates and more than twice that of dropouts;
- Possession of a master’s degree, on average, translates into a 93 percent annual income premium over those holding a high school diploma and a whopping 159 percent premium over those who have no diploma at all.
Economic Chasm

The innovation and success of the Massachusetts economy – particularly as it pertains to the expansion of its high-technology industries – has unquestionably been bolstered by the fact that the state has the highest concentration of adults with bachelor’s degrees (34 percent of the 25+ population) as well as the third highest concentration of advanced degree recipients (13 percent).

If the growth of our biotech, engineering, financial services, marine sciences and information management industries give us reason for celebration, however, let us not forget all of those developments that give us cause for concern as the economic chasm widens:

- Two decades ago, Massachusetts families headed by a college graduate earned 2.2 times that of a high school dropout. Today, that factor is 3.1;
- Massachusetts ranked 25th in income disparity in 1989. By 1999, it ranked fifth;
- Over the past 20 years, Massachusetts families headed by high school dropouts have seen their incomes decline by 21 percent. Even those headed by high school graduates experienced a loss of 1 percent. In contrast, bachelor’s degree families earned 11 percent more and master’s degree families 30 percent more.
- From 1979 to 2000, the only workers who improved their real earnings were in positions with professional, technical and service industries. The vast majority of these positions required a post-secondary degree;
- Recent polling suggests that half of all Massachusetts citizens with college degrees report their quality of life as very good or excellent, a number that drops to 43 percent for those with some college education and 31 percent for those with none;
- Through 2008, half of all new jobs in the commonwealth – and most in Southeastern Massachusetts – will require a bachelor’s degree or higher.
The problem of a widening economic chasm in Massachusetts is exacerbated by what can only be described as anemic levels of state support for public higher education over the past two decades with reduced access for important segments of the population.

In FY05, Massachusetts ranked 49th in the nation in terms of state spending on public higher education per $1,000 of state income, and 47th in the nation as measured by per capita spending. The commonwealth posted the sharpest decrease (33 percent, adjusted for inflation) in state funding for public higher education between 2001 and 2004, and was the only state in the nation investing less on its institutions in 2005 than it was a decade earlier.

Though the state’s economy remains healthy, a number of warning signs have begun to appear:

- During the 1980s, Massachusetts ranked first in the nation for increasing the percentage of adults with a bachelor’s degree. By the late 1990s, the state had fallen to 31st nationally;
- In the mid-1980s, the typical Bay State household earned 25 percent more than the average household in the rest of the nation. By 1999, that number had shrunk to under 9 percent;
- The Massachusetts labor force grew by only 1.5 percent during the 1990s, compared with 11 percent nationwide. In addition, the state has begun to experience a net outward migration of knowledge workers and an influx of relatively uneducated immigrants;
- Real median household income in Massachusetts fell by 10 percent in the 1990s.
Taking this turn of events as an omen, the state’s Senate Task Force on Public Higher Education, in March 2005, recommended bold new action to enhance quality, build capacity, expand access and restore stability. Based on the findings of the task force’s in-depth report, the commonwealth’s institutions of higher education, when compared with similar institutions in competing states, had amassed a $400 million operational funding gap, as well as a $3 billion shortfall for capital projects.

The “down payment” of the legislature’s renewed commitment to public higher education came in the form of $41 million of additional funding for FY06. In addition, Governor Romney has proposed $400 million of new capital spending as part of his supplementary budget. At the time of this printing, the legislature was reviewing that proposal.

Each of the Connect institutions has already begun to benefit from these new resources. We’ve hired new faculty, expanded our program offerings, and bolstered our efforts to keep student tuition and fees stable.

And though we’re understandably pleased about the somewhat brighter future that now appears to await us, we also do not hesitate to recognize at least one positive that emerged from these difficult times. In weathering this ferocious storm, the Connect institutions learned the value of putting parochial interests aside and of coming together to forge a new partnership in our commonwealth.

State Senator
Robert O’Leary
Cape Cod and the Islands

“Not that long ago, higher education was a discretionary choice. People could choose to do it or choose not to do it. We all know, both as educators and as parents, that this is no longer the case. Public higher education is as central to a person’s development as K-12 education, and we need to step up and accept the responsibility.”
By their very nature, public higher education institutions in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts do not exist in a vacuum. Each is committed to the historic mission of providing citizens with an affordable, accessible, high-quality education, but all 29 community colleges, state colleges and university campuses in Massachusetts are also keenly focused on the need to be the agents of positive economic, social and cultural change in their respective regions.

At the same time, it can also be said that the three segments of public higher education are not monolithic. Each functions to serve particular constituencies of people, and each strives to energize unique forces of growth.

- The community colleges are open-enrollment institutions that award associate degrees in transfer and career-oriented programs and have special responsibility for workforce development. Through their partnerships with business and industry, these institutions offer job training, retraining, certification and skills enhancement. Closely tied to their communities, these institutions offer a wide range of credit and noncredit instruction, including rigorous academic courses, as well as training for business and industry, adult basic education, ESL and literacy services.

- The state colleges are comprehensive, teaching-focused institutions which foster students’ intellectual, social and ethical development by emphasizing the importance of critical thinking, communication skills, technological aptitude, and an appreciation for arts and culture. Many of the state colleges in Massachusetts began as teacher-training schools, and they continue to be among the largest producers of new K-12 teachers in the commonwealth. The state colleges offer bachelor’s degrees and applied professional master’s degrees in areas of greatest need to their respective regions.

- The university campuses are catalysts for the advancement of research and scholarship within a large number of academic and professional disciplines through the doctoral level. In addition to being innovative in the classroom, the university also directs its efforts externally by promoting corporate ventures, generating scientific collaborations, offering strategic expertise and providing incubation for new business start-ups.

Though the three segments are considerably different in terms of their operations, priorities and measurements of success, each is motivated principally by the public’s commitment to invest – and to continually reinvest – in its own future. Given that this is the case, one fact is simply undeniable:

Public higher education in Southeastern Massachusetts operates most effectively and serves the greatest number of citizens when the three segments collaborate and work for the betterment of the region’s future.
Pieces Together to Public Higher Education

This is the essence of the Connect Partnership. At a time when state resources for public higher education in Massachusetts continue to be scarce, the five institutions collectively constitute a regional powerhouse. Together, we:

- Enroll more than 36,000 students, 83 percent of whom reside in Southeastern Massachusetts and 94 percent live within the state;
- Annually award 4,400 associate-, bachelor-, master- and doctoral-level degrees;
- Inspire 85 percent of alumni to remain in Massachusetts and 65 percent to settle in the region;
- Employ 9,600 people, the majority of whom reside in Southeastern Massachusetts;
- Spend more than $180 million annually on goods and services in the region;
- Receive $114 million in state appropriation in FY05, with each $1 of public investment generating an additional $3.60 of statewide economic activity;
- Account for $750 million of economic activity within the region and commonwealth.

Since its inception, Connect has initiated a number of groundbreaking projects benefiting hundreds of students and saving more than $100,000 of public money. Examples include:

- Completing the first comprehensive economic impact report of public higher education in Southeastern Massachusetts;
- Introducing cost-saving measures in the areas of joint banking services, facilities master planning and leadership training;
- Collectively revamping pedagogies concerning the teaching of writing across two- and four-year curricula, and streamlining course transferability among Connect partners;
- Improving transfer articulation and hiring transfer coordinators at BSC and UMD;
- Holding a joint distinguished speaker series in honor of Black History Month;
- Successfully seeking a significant public grant to enhance regional PreK-12 education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Dr. Dana Mohler-Faria
President
Bridgewater State College

“What we’ve been able to show over the past two-plus years is that our five institutions – particularly when we work together – can be a tremendous resource to this region. For Southeastern Massachusetts to live up to its extraordinary potential, we need to transform that resource into a strategic comparative advantage. We in public higher education should not – and quite frankly, cannot – do this on our own.”
Understanding

CONNECT Partner Profile: Bridgewater State College

Bridgewater State College's journey from 1840, when the school was founded with 27 students in a single room in the basement of Town Hall, to the 2005-2006 academic year, when it serves more than 9,600 full-time and part-time students on a 235-acre campus with 34 major buildings, has had a profound impact on the citizens of the region and the commonwealth.

While maintaining its historic focus on the preparation of teachers, Bridgewater State College today provides a broad range of baccalaureate and master's degree programs through its School of Arts and Sciences, its nationally recognized School of Education and Allied Studies, and its School of Management and Aviation Science.

All college buildings are wired for high-speed voice, video and data transmission, and a host of computer-based training programs are offered throughout the year. The college's notebook computer requirement, effective with freshmen entering in fall 2004, builds upon these strengths to enhance students' educational experiences at BSC and to help develop technology skills that are invaluable as students begin their careers after graduation.

The college's expertise in the field of instructional technology – launched almost a decade ago with the opening of the John Joseph Moakley Center for Technological Applications – is among BSC's most important resources, given society's ever-increasing dependence on advances in this field.

The growing number of innovative academic programs helps to ensure that Bridgewater State College students are prepared to think critically, communicate effectively and act responsibly within a context of personal and professional ethics. For example, BSC's Academic Achievement Center, and particularly its first-year advising program, is often cited as a model for other institutions to follow. At the same time, the Adrian Tinsley Program for Undergraduate Research represents an unparalleled opportunity for students to work closely with faculty mentors and to present research and creative work at regional and national conferences.

Under the leadership of Dr. Dana Mohler-Faria, the college's 11th president, Bridgewater State College has grown to become the largest state college in Massachusetts and the fifth largest of the state's 29 public colleges and universities. Bridgewater State College's 43,000 alumni, more than 80 percent of whom live and work in Massachusetts, are a vital part of every sector of the state's economy.

The process of articulating a comprehensive vision for public higher education in the region first demands an introspective assessment. Though our missions may differ from campus to campus, we each subscribe to a core set of values. As public institutions of higher learning, we are all committed to:

- Ensure access: Making a variety of educational and training programs available to people of different socioeconomic backgrounds, and particularly to those who have no other point of entry to higher education;

- Empower citizen self-sufficiency: Allowing citizens to discover, appreciate and maximize their unique talents; affording graduates every opportunity to bring those talents to the workforce as marketable skills;

- Promote equality: Creating truly diverse communities on our campuses; using the power of public higher education to narrow the economic chasm;

- Offer a valuable credential: Rewarding students for their accomplishments with a degree or certificate that is on par with those of any institution anywhere, essential for today's global job market;

- Improve the public's quality of life: Using our many resources to promote business ventures, stimulate innovation, facilitate social advances, generate new ideas, cultivate the arts and cultural awareness, and raise the region's aspirations;

- Prepare individuals to be responsible citizens and ethical professionals: Preparing informed citizens who make ethical decisions; setting the right example for the next generation.
Our Institutions

As we seek collectively to build upon these values, we do so with the knowledge that we gain tremendous strength from a number of institutional **assets**. These include:

- Steady enrollments and increasing numbers of students representing the hopes and dreams of Southeastern Massachusetts and the commonwealth; 94 percent of our students come from Massachusetts and 83 percent hail from this region; more than 85 percent of alumni remain in state;
- Faculties that pride themselves on the success of our students and are known for their abilities to be mentors;
- An impeccable reputation of high value;
- Entrepreneurial energy and a remarkable “can do” attitude shared by citizens of our region.

Not unlike any large organizations, we also face considerable **challenges** – both individually and collectively. These present themselves as:

- Uncertainty (at best) and erosion (at worst) with respect to our levels of public financial support;
- Misunderstandings concerning the worth of public higher education; overshadowing by elite private institutions;
- Lingering problems of inadequate learning space and deferred maintenance against the backdrop of rising demand;
- Constraints of geography and limiting transportation infrastructure;
- Inconsistent communications with regional business, civic and PreK-12 leaders; too slow a response time to needs;
- Growing needs for remedial education, adult basic education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programming.

Looking to the future, we anticipate that new **opportunities** for collaboration with the region will be found in:

- Specific critical and emerging regional industries, including biotechnology, marine science, specialized health care, nursing, social work, hospitality and culinary arts;
- The increasing regionalization of teacher-preparation and educational leadership programs;
- Flexible training offerings for evolving workforce needs;
- A growing emphasis on arts and culture.

"We as educators have the marvelous knack of dividing ourselves into PreK, K-6, middle school, high school, community college, baccalaureate institutions and research universities. A lot of our troubles would disappear if we looked at education in its totality – from PreK to graduate school. We need to begin talking about one world of education in Southeastern Massachusetts."
The Vision Statement of Bristol Community College calls for changing the world by changing lives, learner by learner. A two-year comprehensive community college serving southeastern Massachusetts and nearby Rhode Island, the college seeks to work closely with business, government and education leaders to provide a broad range of educational services, whether accessed on its campuses and satellite centers, via cyberspace with online credit and noncredit programs, or in various workplaces throughout the region.

The college offers more than 100 programs of study leading to degrees and certificates in health sciences, liberal arts and sciences, business and information management, engineering and technology, and human services and public safety. Learners also take advantage of the college's extensive literacy services offered both on and off campus, as well as noncredit courses for personal and professional enrichment.

Targeted academic programs offer students of all abilities the opportunity to thrive in our student-centered learning environment. High-achieving students can take advantage of the academic rigor and transferability of the Commonwealth Honors Program, and through the Presidential Scholars Program, they can work with advisers to choose courses for transfer to prestigious institutions. The flexible course offerings and affordable cost provide students from all economic levels the opportunity to fit college around family and work responsibilities. For students needing assistance to prepare for college-level work, the college's extensive array of developmental courses provides the academic background and support to succeed. Opportunities for practical learning abound as students use cooperative education, volunteer work and student leadership positions to enhance and expand their learning.

The college's learning opportunities extend beyond degrees and certificates. Working closely with local business, industry and government agencies, the college develops programs and training that strengthen the region's competitiveness. College officials collaborate with business and government to assess the region's workforce development needs and to design quickly appropriate ways to meet them.

The college opened its doors in 1966 for 356 students in borrowed facilities in downtown Fall River. It moved to four buildings on its current 100-acre campus four years later. The campus now boasts 10 modern classroom and technology buildings. Its Margaret L. Jackson Arts Center, the site of a 700-seat theater, regularly hosts productions of all types throughout the year, and the Grimshaw-Gudewicz Art Gallery displays rotating exhibits by nationally known artists. In 2001, BCC opened its downtown New Bedford Campus, which currently serves more than 1,000 students, and in 2004, BCC achieved a long-held dream of full service for the Greater Attleboro area with the opening of its Attleboro Learning Center, expected to serve 1,200 people in fall 2005. Bristol Community College also has satellite locations at the Taunton High School, Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School and downtown Fall River.

The clarity of our vision depends on a deep appreciation and understanding of all that is happening in Southeastern Massachusetts. Without question, our region is in the midst of an exciting – if daunting – period of great change and tremendous growth. As the Vision 2020 report noted, "We have consumed more land in the past 40 years than in the first 340 years since the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth in 1620, losing one-third of our open space and agricultural land in the past 30 years. From 1960 to 2000, the region grew by more than 10,000 people per year. The impact of 10,000 new people means an additional 3,500 housing units, 27,650 additional vehicle trips per day, 710,000 additional gallons of water consumed each day and 2,157 new students in the public schools each year."

Our own assessment of the region can be expressed in five essential points:

- The region – and particularly Cape Cod – is the fastest-growing region in the state;
- Southeastern Massachusetts should not be thought of as homogeneous;
- Despite its successes, Southeastern Massachusetts has not kept pace with other parts of the commonwealth;
- Traditional industries continue to be vital to the region;
- Southeastern Massachusetts is poised to be a new-growth frontier, but demands on its educational resources will be considerable.

At the turn of the 20th century, roughly one in five residents of Massachusetts lived in our region. Today, that figure is nearly one in three. And though Norfolk County is essentially built-out, it is obvious from state projections that Southeastern Massachusetts will continue to grow more quickly than the rest of the state for the foreseeable future.

Coupled with the region’s population surge has been a significant increase in its minority populations, particularly Hispanics. Between 1990 and 2000, the minority population of Southeastern Massachusetts more than doubled while the Hispanic population grew by upwards of 35 percent. Though the region is less diverse than the state as a whole, that disparity is beginning to diminish. Today, ethnic minorities constitute 10 percent of the region’s residents (versus 15.5 percent in Massachusetts) and the Hispanic population amounts to 2.4 percent (versus 6.8 percent overall) and is noticeably higher in the urban centers of Bristol County.
Our Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2004 Population</th>
<th>Population Growth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1990-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol County</td>
<td>548,167</td>
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<td>Cape and Islands</td>
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<td>Norfolk County</td>
<td>653,617</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>6,416,505</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
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State Senator Marc Pacheco
First Plymouth and Bristol

"It's an exciting time for all of us who live and work in Southeastern Massachusetts. We live in a region that is among the fastest-growing in the entire northeastern United States. The challenges that face us are immense, but the opportunities are great. There have been many partnerships along the way, but what's been missing up until now is a cohesive working relationship with the institutions of public higher education. We now have the right formula to reshape Southeastern Massachusetts."
Understanding

Cape Cod Community College delivers educational programs and services to meet the diverse needs of the residents of Cape Cod, the Islands and adjacent areas of Southeastern Massachusetts. As the sole comprehensive college on Cape Cod, it provides the only access to higher education for many residents.

The college is a student-centered learning community that prepares students for a rapidly changing and socially diverse global economy. To this end, it provides degrees in the liberal arts and sciences, career and technical degrees and certificates, and workforce education.

Its career and technical programs support unique workforce and economic needs in such fields as the hospitality and tourism industry, health care, environmental technology and business, with particular emphasis on small business and information technology. These programs provide opportunities for immediate employment and for transfer to professional baccalaureate programs. In addition, Cape Cod Community College provides both credit courses and non-credit customized training to meet continuing education needs of employees and employers.

Cape Cod Community College was established in 1961, the second institution to open as part of what is now a 15-community-college system in Massachusetts that resulted from the persistent efforts of Sen. Edward Carleton Stone. Outgrowing its first home, in 1970, Cape Cod Community College moved to its current location on 116 acres in West Barnstable, making it the first community college in the state to build a new campus. Under the direction of its second president, E. Carleton Nickerson, the college moved into five of the eight buildings designated in the master plan for the new campus. With all eight buildings completed by 1974, the structural space on campus totaled 300,249 square feet. Today, the campus consists of 116 acres and nine buildings, totaling 305,494 square feet.

Cape Cod Community College broke ground in mid-June 2004 to begin construction on the first new building erected on campus since it opened in 1970. The Lyndon P. Lorusso Applied Technology Center was built during the 2004-2005 academic year, with occupancy expected by the end of 2005. This state-of-the-art facility is being built in keeping with the college’s commitment to environmental sustainability and is the state’s first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified “green-building” built with state dollars.

Southeastern Massachusetts may be best described as an amalgam of five distinct sub-regions – the 495/95 Corridor, the South Shore, Tri-Cities, the South Coast, and the Cape and Islands. Each faces its own unique set of challenges and opportunities.

**495/95 Corridor**
- Thriving technical and service sectors
- Highest educational and income levels
- Tied to Boston and Providence hubs
- Problem of build-out and stabilization

**South Shore**
- Highest journey-to-work times
- Expectation for moderate growth
- Increasing importance of tourism
- Relatively high incomes and educational levels

**Tri-Cities**
- Emphasis on more traditional industries
- Rising educational needs
- Increasingly diverse populations
- Relative affordability of labor and property

**South Coast**
- Lowest incomes and educational levels
- Strong entrepreneurial spirit
- Mix of diverse urban centers and wealthier coastal communities
- Increasing focus on emerging industries, but more support needed

**Cape Cod and the Islands**
- Relatively older/retiree population
- Importance of health care and tourism industries
- Most geographically isolated of the five sub-regions
- Need to balance economic and environmental concerns
Our Region  

The above chart depicts just some of the many degrees of economic and social variation found in the region. Though some parts of Southeastern Massachusetts are more directly tied to the prosperity of Metropolitan Boston than others, the most recent sustained economic expansion (1993-2000) saw regional wages grow by 5.5 percent, versus 14.4 percent statewide. With the exception of Norfolk County, average weekly wages in Southeastern Massachusetts are 13-30 percent lower than the state average. Moreover, three of the five workforce investment areas in our region (Bristol, Brockton and Greater New Bedford) consistently have unemployment rates higher than the state total.

The region also differs from the rest of the state in that 17.4 percent of its 60,900 employers are still involved in the production of goods rather than the provision of services. Plymouth (18.9 percent) and Bristol (19.7 percent) counties have the largest concentrations of goods-producing employers, and both counties are well above the state average of 15.2 percent. Bristol County, in particular, has strong historic ties to manufacturing, and nearly 19 percent of its workforce is still engaged in the production of durable and nondurable goods.

As Southeastern Massachusetts sustains the effort to grow and diversify its economy, one inescapable truth is that the demand for new educational services will strain the region’s collective resources. Based on recent school enrollment patterns, there are 72,000 more students in Southeastern Massachusetts at the PreK through middle school level than in high school and college – a difference of 35 percent (the comparative figure for the state as a whole is only 12 percent). Even taken by itself, this surge represents an enormous regional challenge. When one factors in an aging PreK-12 teaching population, the legacy of sustained cuts to public higher education, and the influx of foreign immigrants in need of adult basic education and English as a Second Language skills, the task becomes one of monumental proportions.

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**Table: MEDIAN AGE, MEDIAN HOUSING PRICE, MEDIAN HOUSING INCOME, % OF AGE 25+ POPULATION WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA, % OF AGE 25+ POPULATION WITH BACHELOR’S DEGREE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>MEDIAN AGE</th>
<th>MEDIAN HOUSING PRICE</th>
<th>MEDIAN HOUSING INCOME</th>
<th>% OF AGE 25+ POPULATION WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA</th>
<th>% OF AGE 25+ POPULATION WITH BACHELOR’S DEGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barnstable County</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>$178,800</td>
<td>$45,933</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol County</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>$151,500</td>
<td>$43,496</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dukes County</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>$304,000</td>
<td>$45,559</td>
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<td>Nantucket County</td>
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<td>$577,500</td>
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<td>$63,432</td>
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<td>Plymouth County</td>
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<td>$179,200</td>
<td>$55,615</td>
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<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<td>$185,700</td>
<td>$50,502</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
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Dr. Jean MacCormack  
Chancellor  
University of Massachusetts  
Dartmouth

“One of the things that happens when you first come to Southeastern Massachusetts – as I did five years ago – is you become captured by the community – a community that thinks of our institutions as a family. That community expects a great deal from us, and it contributes a great deal to us. More and more, we in public higher education need to think of ourselves as invested in business and industry, primary and secondary education, cultural industries, etc.”
Massasoit Community College takes pride in its tradition of excellence and in its historic mission of accepting all who desire to learn. The college is dedicated to creating a challenging and supportive environment where the members of its community can attain their educational and personal goals.

Massasoit Community College was founded in 1966, but its origin can be traced to a 1947 study by the State Board of Education which determined the need for a low-tuition, state-supported system. The study proposed that 12 community colleges be established, with one to serve the Greater Brockton, South Shore area. In 1961, a proposal was brought before the Brockton School Committee, and after a feasibility study, announcement of such a college was made in 1965.

In September 1966, Massasoit Community College, consisting of 358 students and 22 faculty, held its first classes in the Charles M. Frolio School in North Abington, and in June 1968, the first graduation was held for 137 students. Additional campuses were later established at the former Howard School in West Bridgewater and the Miramar School in Duxbury.

Groundbreaking for the first five buildings of the permanent Brockton campus occurred in 1969, and by 1972, the campus was officially opened. During this time, Massasoit Community College received its first accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. By 1978, the five remaining buildings of the campus were completed.

In 1985, the Blue Hills Technical Institute, itself in existence since 1966, formally merged with Massasoit Community College and is now the Canton campus. The Conference Center at Massasoit opened in 1997, offering 7,200 square feet of meeting space for local businesses and other community organizations.

The college is named for Massasoit, the Great Sachem (Great Chief) of the Wampanoag tribe at the time of the Pilgrims’ arrival. Massasoit is a symbol of mediation between different cultures. He also signifies commitment to dialogue, rather than war, as a way of settling differences among people.

Recognizing that diversity is an important source of its strength, Massasoit Community College responds to the needs of its community and expects that everyone at Massasoit respects the rights and affirms the dignity of all people. The college strives to construct a safe and trustful environment where everyone can engage in open dialogue.

Our final, and inarguably most important, step in devising a regional vision for public higher education focuses on garnering the wisdom and expertise of local citizens who have a vested interest in its development.

We solicited input from citizens in two ways: through directed interviews with more than two dozen prominent corporate, civic and public officials; and through a coordinated and targeted series of focus groups held under the auspices of the Regional Leaders Summit of June 2005.

In phase one, stakeholders were asked to respond to four basic questions. Their answers revealed much about the dynamic nature of the economic, social and cultural forces at work in our region. A synopsis of the questions and responses follows.

**Question 1:** Thinking about the Southeastern Massachusetts region, what do you most enjoy about living and/or working in the region? What do you think are the region’s greatest assets?

- Plentiful and accessible natural resources
- Very high quality of life; excellent place to raise a family
- Proximity and connectivity to business and cultural hubs of Boston and Providence
- Relatively affordable housing vis-à-vis the rest of Massachusetts
- Less congestion; more open space
- Strong neighborhoods
- Lower business costs than Metro Boston

Connect Partner Profile: Massasoit Community College

[Image of a person sitting at a table, engaged in a meeting]
Our Citizens

Question 2: What are your general perceptions of the public higher education institutions in Southeastern Massachusetts in terms of affordability, accessibility, quality and responsiveness to the region’s needs?

- Institutions enjoy a solid reputation across the region
- Perceived as being a very good value for the money
- Quality of programs has improved over time, but perhaps not the quality of graduating students
- Institutions are trying to weave themselves into the surrounding communities, but support needs to be more sustained and agile
- Community colleges are more effective at responding to the immediate needs of employers than four-year institutions

Question 3: What do you see as the most important education and training needs for the region over the next decade? Do you see the public institutions playing a role in the region beyond preparing the labor force of tomorrow?

- Need to improve basic academic skills (reading comprehension, writing, critical thinking) among graduates
- The development of quality teachers and administrators; sustained partnerships with local public school districts
- Promote greater interest in science and math
- Instill in the population a thirst for lifelong learning, engaged citizenship and public service
- Opportunity to work with and foster specific industry clusters and to be an incubator for industries of the future
- Promote technology as a bridge between old and new economies of the region

Question 4: Beyond the need for more resources, what do you feel is the greatest challenge facing public higher education in Southeastern Massachusetts?

- Perception that the best and brightest students in the region are leaving the region
- Politics prevents public higher education from reaching its full potential
- Rising selectivity may cause some to be left behind
- Striking the optimal balance of liberal arts education and vocational training
- Convincing citizens that higher education is a necessity and not a luxury

Dr. Kathleen Schatzberg
President
Cape Cod Community College

“The whole inadequacy of preparing our science and math teachers and people entering STEM careers is not going to be solved unless we begin to talk about what happens in elementary school. That's where we need to begin educating students about what their opportunities are. Then we can work on articulation agreements between high school and college programs.”
The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is part of the five-campus university system. Tracing its origins to 1895, when the state Legislature chartered the New Bedford Textile School and the Bradford Durfee Textile School in Fall River, the university has established a distinguished and evolving tradition of innovation in teaching, research and service for the region and the commonwealth.

Since the Fall River and New Bedford campuses merged and ground was broken for the Dartmouth campus 40 years ago, enrollment at the university has grown from 2,500 to 8,500. The campus became part of the internationally recognized UMass system, joining campuses in Amherst, Boston, Lowell and the medical school in Worcester, in 1991. It has retained its focus on the teacher-faculty relationship while expanding its research enterprise from $2 million in annual funding to more than $17 million.

UMass Dartmouth has made special efforts to engage its undergraduate students in the research activities of the campus. The campus houses more than 4,000 students and has added doctoral programs in electrical engineering, marine science, chemistry and biomedical engineering.

As Southeastern Massachusetts has evolved, UMass Dartmouth has become a powerful catalyst for economic and social development as evidenced by:

- In 1997, the campus opened its Center for Marine Sciences and Technology on Clark’s Cove in New Bedford. This center is fast developing a national reputation for research on fisheries, ocean modeling and underwater vehicles and is a key component of an emerging Massachusetts marine science corridor.
- In 2001, the campus opened the Advanced Technology and Manufacturing Center in Fall River. The ATMC provides technology solutions to companies throughout the region and is the site of a dozen start-up firms. The center is a magnet for larger technology companies. Avant Immunotherapies, Inc., one of the state’s leading biotech firms, located a satellite operation at the center, and Meditech Information Technology, a leading health care software company, has announced plans to locate a 500-employee facility next door.
- Also in 2001, the campus located a modern College of Visual and Performing Arts facility in downtown New Bedford, enhancing the university’s engagement in the cultural life of the city.
- In 2002 and 2004 the campus opened professional and continuing education centers in New Bedford and Fall River, respectively, to expand access to university classes and serve the educational and training needs of the region’s employers.
- In 2004, the campus opened the new Charlton College of Business building and has launched outreach efforts to connect teaching and research to the needs of business and industry.
- And, in 2005, the campus broke ground on a new 20,000-square-foot research facility due to open in the fall of 2006, providing another innovative economic catalyst for the region. The facility will be a magnet for non-state research funding.

During phase two, contributors to the Regional Leaders Summit were invited to participate in one of five focus groups representing some of the largest clusters in Southeastern Massachusetts – PreK-12 education, health and human services, government and public affairs, arts and culture, and business and industry (broadly defined). Each group was asked to identify its overarching needs and to suggest ways in which better synergies with public higher education could translate into new opportunities for growth.

Cluster: PreK-12 Education

Needs:
- Replacement of retiring teachers and top administrators (e.g. superintendents, principals)
- Solution to endemic retention problems
- Recruitment and development of teachers for science and mathematics
- Paraprofessional training and adapting to changes in professional licensure
- Innovative pedagogies supporting the teaching of basic skills

Opportunities:
- Developing excitement at an early age for future careers in teaching, science, engineering and mathematics
- Systematically engendering within young people an appreciation for higher education
- Establishing a regional information and resource center for teacher advancement
- Forging partnerships for a sustained dialogue between PreK-12 and higher education
- Supporting the development of teachers hailing from alternative career tracks

Cluster: Health and Human Services

Needs:
- Attract and retain new health care workers, especially nurses
- Professional development opportunities for existing staff
- More integrated planning efforts surrounding regional health concerns
Our Citizens continued

Opportunities:

- Developing partnerships aimed at recruitment between industry, higher education institutions and local districts
- Introducing a forum for regular dialogue between educators and practitioners; matching educational offerings with cluster’s needs

Cluster: Government and Public Affairs

Needs:

- Qualified professionals for positions of public management
- Technical assistance and policy research

Opportunities:

- Coordinating regional leadership opportunities
- Maximizing the effectiveness of higher education’s capabilities to study and advise on pressing issues of public policy
- Better utilizing public higher education institutions as the nexus between government and business

Cluster: Arts and Culture

Needs:

- Exposure, publicity, recognition of value to regional community
- Predictable funding levels from both public and private sources

Opportunities:

- Sharing opportunities for promotion, advocacy and awareness
- Linking the education, government and artistic communities

Cluster: Business and Industry

Needs:

- Qualified workforce possessing both basic and advanced skills
- Educational programs that respond quickly to changing needs

Opportunities:

- Underwriting of regional educational opportunities
- Emphasizing the importance of reading, writing and critical thinking

Dr. Charles Wall
President
Massasoit Community College

"Employers need to seek us out more, and we need to respond more quickly. There’s still too much of a lag between their expression of need and our delivery of service. Connect is changing this for the better. When it comes to workforce development, a call to one is increasingly a call to all. Our partnership has enabled us to improve the level of value-added services we can offer to the people of this region and commonwealth."
Part I: Organizational Objectives

To meet its goal of becoming a full partner in helping Southeastern Massachusetts reach its tremendous potential, a maturing Connect Partnership must institutionalize itself as an organization. Doing so will greatly improve its ability to serve as the point of contact between public higher education and the region.

1. The Connect Partnership should hire a full-time executive director possessing extensive knowledge of both the region and of public higher education. Primary operational and compensation costs should be shared equally by the five Connect institutions, and the individual will be located in Southeastern Massachusetts.

2. To facilitate regular communication at the operational level between the Connect institutions, each campus should appoint one member of a liaison group to meet monthly with the executive director. Connect liaisons will be charged with updating their respective institutions on Connect activities, proposing new initiatives, and, as necessary, engaging external public higher education constituents.

3. Working with the chief executives of the Connect institutions, the executive director should assemble the Connect Regional Leaders Consortium, a group including representatives from each of the five primary clusters (PreK-12 education, health and human services, government and public affairs, business and industry, arts and culture).

4. Using this monograph as the principal precursor, the executive director should spearhead the development of a comprehensive strategic plan for Connect. Such a plan will be developed in close consultation with the Regional Leaders Consortium and be presented publicly in the fall of 2006.
Recommendaions:
for Public Higher Education

Part II: Regional Objectives

Connect has already gleaned sufficient regional input to propose a number of critical – if preliminary – recommendations for cooperative action within Southeastern Massachusetts. Each could be characterized as performing one or more of the following core functions:

- Increasing public higher education’s **capacity** for teaching and learning in critical areas;
- Serving as a **communications link** through which regional leaders can articulate and refine their agendas for public higher education and regional development;
- Training/empowering a new cadre of **leaders** within the region.

**Increasing Capacity**

1. The Connect institutions should work together to coordinate the expansion of their collective teaching and training abilities as they pertain to essential regional workforce needs (both current and emerging). Areas of emphasis include, but are not limited to, teacher preparation, nursing and STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics).

   *(primary clusters served: PreK-12 education, health and human services, business and industry)*

2. Connect should work cooperatively and systematically with regional partners to focus the attention of students at the middle and high school levels on career paths related to these same regional workforce needs. These are the career paths that will most directly benefit the economy and citizens of the region and commonwealth.

   *(primary clusters served: PreK-12 education, health and human services, business and industry)*

3. Building upon its early success in coordinating basic writing requirements and pedagogies across the five institutions (and by extension, the three sectors of public higher education), Connect should similarly work to coordinate the initial sequence in the teaching of mathematics.

   *(primary cluster served: business and industry)*

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Mr. William Zammer Jr.
Owner and Operator
Cape Cod Restaurants, Inc.

"You don't have many new math and science teachers any longer. They're gone. And the people who are still teaching are nearing retirement. Southeastern Massachusetts is ripe to become a marine technology corridor... but we just don't have the workforce in place yet to seize that opportunity. Connect is trying to change that. It needs to sustain its mission and keep on doing what it's doing."
4. The Connect Partnership should build strong ties with Southeastern Massachussetts’ workforce investment boards (WIBs) and regional competitive councils (RCCs) to assess and augment capacity in adult basic education (ABE) programming and English as a Second Language (ESL) offerings.

*(primary clusters served: government and public affairs, business and industry)*

5. In an effort to maximize the development and reach of the region’s cultural and artistic events, Connect should explore opportunities to work with the relevant county visitor and convention bureaus, tourism organizations and regional arts associations. Possible synergies include: conducting a current economic impact assessment of arts and culture in the region; showcasing on-campus fine and performing arts; jointly sponsoring a regional arts and culture cable television program; and strategically sharing responsibility for event publicity.

*(primary cluster served: arts and culture)*

6. The Connect Partnership should serve as a regional informational resource in support of teacher recruitment, preparation and advancement. Possible activities include working together to design and implement an ongoing MTEL (Massachusetts Test for Educational Licensure) preparation seminar series for prospective teachers in Southeastern Massachusetts and beginning a new dialogue with local school districts on issues of paraprofessional training.

*(primary cluster served: PreK-12 education)*

7. The Connect institutions should design and implement a plan for an annual, broad-based, regional leadership training and networking seminar spanning all of the clusters.

*(primary clusters served: PreK-12 education, health and human services, government and public affairs, business and industry, arts and culture)*
8. Connect should coordinate its array of degree and non-degree programs in state and municipal leadership development and offer a comprehensive series of training modules for public sector leaders.

*(primary cluster served: government and public affairs)*

9. The Connect Partnership should work closely with regional science, engineering and technology firms to improve their employees’ overall level of business acumen. The degree to which Southeastern Massachusetts can grow and sustain a workforce comprised of professionals possessing scientific know-how and business savvy will largely determine its ability to attract and retain high technology industries.

*(primary cluster served: business and industry)*

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Dr. Judith Gill
Chancellor
Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

"You have done something that is truly incredible. You have moved to build a new model of public higher education. Collaboration has existed in this region for a long time. All sorts of partnerships have come and gone. But these kinds of partnerships haven’t been enough, and you saw that. Connect focuses public higher education’s attention on addressing the needs of the region, and in my mind, this is the most important thing you can be doing. I have no doubt that you will succeed."
Dr. Una S. Ryan  
President and CEO, Avant Immunotherapeutics, Inc.  
Chair, Massachusetts Biotechnology Council  
Keynote Speaker, Regional Leaders Summit

“From a very small nucleus in Southeastern Massachusetts, you can effect outcomes across the globe. It’s a very empowering feeling. We need to be sure to have the state legislature behind us, to provide technical resources and financial incentives to high schools and institutions of higher learning, to build sustainable industry-academia alliances and to introduce educational programs for skill sets that the industry actually needs.”

In November 2004, Avant Immunotherapeutics, Inc. opened a pilot manufacturing facility in Fall River following a global search. The facility develops and manufactures the company’s “next generation” of vaccines for clinical trials and eventual commercial applications. Avant is a developer and manufacturer of vaccines and medicines that employ the human immune system to prevent and treat disease.
Numerous third party data sources were utilized in the preparation of this document. If you would like a citation, please contact the Connect office at 508.531.2918 or via email at connect@bridgew.edu.
A Southeastern Massachusetts Public Higher Education Partnership