

LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Paramount for Student Success

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Gretchen E. Mullin-Sawicki

I was really pleased to see that our regional accreditor, *The New England Commission on Higher Education*, had this year rewritten its standards for accreditation emphasizing the need for diversity and inclusion criteria.



The change highlighted the important work that NHTI has been focusing on and provided even more justification that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not just adjunct or initiative-driven work but the framework for everything that we value.

Our 2020-2025 strategic plan establishes DEI as one of the four strategic pillars that support the ongoing daily work of the college. Our strategy includes integrating DEI into our curriculum, looking at our staffing outreach to increase diversity in candidate pools, prioritizing ongoing DEI professional development, and increasing our diversity programming. Our mission embraces DEI through our recognition that we must create a welcoming and caring culture at the college for everyone.

All of the strategies in the world cannot make students feel and know they are welcome on your campus without inclusion at its core. The art we hang,

the programs we support, the clubs we fund, and the grants and scholarships we seek are meaningless without a commitment to welcoming and caring for our students each and every day.

Colleges are digging into diversity data to see where students can be better supported and developing welcoming strategies to support our diverse populations; however, the challenges are profound, especially in academic achievement levels. The *Achieving the Dream* organization helps colleges use data and strategy to remove barriers that create achievement gaps between our poor and white, Hispanic, and black students. Having worked with them extensively in the past, I have known the real struggles colleges have in finding solutions that will move the needle on these disappointing academic achievement gaps.

Colleges have tried inspirational mentoring programs, supported-cohort models, and co-requisite course strategies. We have tried targeted scholarship support, peer supporting, and event summer bridge programs. Yet, no one program addresses or is successful in meeting academic achievement gaps. A one size fits all approach to diversity work does not work. For, diversity is multiplicity in individuals; it is race, age, gender, sexual identity, physical challenges, economic, cultural and experiential—

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Alumni Share Stories of Education Pathways

On Jan. 19, NHTI invited N.H. legislators to a Zoom event to hear first-hand from NHTI alumni about their successes and transitions in the workforce during the pandemic. Our goal was to share the importance of what NHTI offers and how students emerge fully prepared to find meaningful work by making connections not only to a discipline of their choice, but to a host of growth opportunities while studying.

While much learning takes place in the classroom, it extends well beyond this at NHTI. Fabulous faculty-to-student ratios along with access to a multitude of campus resources – financial, academic, physical, emotional, student government opportunities, leadership opportunities, and lots of student clubs and organizations – the college provides endless opportunities to make connections. And, they are meaningful and provide lasting results in both strong, discipline-focused skills and the broader soft set like presentation skills, mindful communication, collaboration, and leadership. All of these are what employers look for in today's workforce.

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COVID-19 Financial Aid Helps NHTI, Students

The CARES Act, federal funding allocated “to provide emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus,” substantially assisted our students by offsetting the cost of items such as food, housing, course materials, technology, healthcare and childcare expenses. Gratefully, 1,528 NHTI students received a total of \$903,288 with an average award of \$600 per student. Additionally, The Governor’s Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) allowed NHTI to award more financial support to 280 students for a total of \$635,532, with an average award of nearly \$2,300 per student. Stu-

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Alpha Upsilon Omicron Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Debuts College Project

By Michele Kenney, Connor Safstrom, Jasmine White Taylor, and Shoghy Ngoy

Members of NHTI’s chapter of Phi Kappa Theta spent the last days of ‘20 and the early days of ‘21 finalizing their PTK College Project and putting it into motion. For this year’s Honors in Action project, we considered what is happening in the world in terms of resistance and rebellion. What we could, or should, expect of ourselves? What we could expect of our fellow club members? What could we expect of the country and world if we just went along with the status quo? The problem we found is that there is little to no research that describes or discusses this questions.

We did not want to settle for the status quo, in terms of recognizing student clubs may not be as diverse as the student body. We developed a survey to help clubs assess student diversity and generate ideas that would encourage greater inclusivity.

Our team could only be more diverse if we had more members. As Dr. Dottie Morris, associate vice president for institutional diversity and equity at

PROJECT, continued on Page 7 ...

Tradition + New Ideas = Strong Student Leadership

Leadership opportunities at NHTI are plentiful for our students. Whether it’s a group project, in one of our 30-plus clubs and organizations, on an athletic team, or in a committee, leadership skills and roles are in demand.

NHTI believes in giving our students opportunities to develop and enhance their leadership skills so they can be active and engaged on campus, in the community, and in life. Through our Lynx to Leadership Program, our students learn “leadership is influence,” a lesson that lives on well after their time at NHTI.

“The lessons I learned from the Lynx to Leadership program I still carry with me every day,” said Pat Dodge, 2018 NHTI Robotics and Automation graduate, member of the Alternative Spring Break Club, and student athlete. “When I first started working at BAE, my boss said, ‘Your knowledge and degree might get you your first job but your soft skills will get you your second.’ Things like teamwork, communication, and even a proper handshake are so important.”

NHTI continues to developing strong leaders through additional programs and training. In 2020, NHTI became a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS), a

which has more than one million members nationwide and over 700 participating colleges.

NSLS helps students identify career goals, hone leadership skills, and turn ambitions into action. It gives students access to essential tools to excel in their future and make a change in the world. Members are part of a community of success-driven, like-minded people with access to professional leadership training and networking events.

NHTI inducted an inaugural class of 46 students who completed the program in Fall 2020. Eight of these energetic NHTI students have committed to serving as the chapter’s first student executive board. This group has been planning for the Spring 2021 semester to develop a new cohort of members.

“My experience in the NSLS has been outstanding,” said Heather Hill, NHTI’s NSLS chapter president. “This society is where we can speak our mind on what our dreams and goals are without fearing any judgement. Everyone is

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CCSNH Winter Convening Dedicated to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In response to events related to the injustices experienced by black Americans and other people of color, CCSNH affirmed their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts across all of the CCSNH colleges in its Winter Convening, held on Jan. 14, 2021. It's the goal of every CCSNH college to be a welcoming and supportive place where students and employees feel safe and valued equally and to understand whether our minority students feel we serve them well and if our employees of color feel valued, heard, and fully included.

This task force of representatives from each college meets regularly to help guide system DEI efforts and develop a path that ensures we are listening to what our students, employees, and other minority members of our communities tell us. This is why the chancellor, presidents, and task force dedicated the Winter Convening to, "Why is Diversity Important to NH & CCSNH?"



Dr. Dottie Morris, associate vice president for institutional diversity and equity at Keene State College, provided the keynote and training. She has spoken generally about diversity at CCSNH campuses on several occasions. Her keynote at the Winter Convening was a next step for CCSNH DEI efforts. The virtual program, offered in morning and afternoon sessions, serves as a starting point for conversations and events planned over the course of Spring semester for faculty and staff across the system, colleges, departments, and disciplines.

Over the past two decades, Dr. Morris has demonstrated a consistent and persistent devotion to diversity, inclusion, multiculturalism, and social justice. Prior to her position at Keene State College, she served as the associate dean for student learning at World Learning School for International Training Institute in Brattleboro, Vt.; the director of student affairs for the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at Antioch University New England in Keene; and staff counselor at the Colorado State University Counseling Center and the coordinator of its Employee Assistance Program.

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big issues with big complexities. It is work that must seek several solutions and ongoing solutions. And, in all of this work, we must create welcoming, flexible, practical, and nuanced programs and curriculum that appeal to many diverse groups and individuals – not just one.

We must also look at the internal factors of why our diverse students struggle more and how the mindset might contribute to achievement gaps. In the literature I have read and the experiences I have had with students, one of the biggest success factors is confidence levels. Students who have had significant socioeconomic disadvantages typically lack confidence in their academic abilities. Students who are confident take the opportunity to interact with professors; they are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities; they are more likely to do the work required to do well in classes; they find ways to overcome obstacles. Students who lack this confidence are less likely to do well in school because their motivation dwindles when they don't believe in themselves. NHTI builds these confidence muscles by getting to know our students better and helping them to discover their own unique abilities.

We know that diversity and equity help an organization by expanding creativity and problem-solving, improving decision-making, increasing profits and productivity, enhancing employee engagement and retention, and improving the reputation of the college – and we also know that DEI improves student success. It makes our students feel, know, believe, and trust they are truly welcome, they belong, and they can do college. It shifts mindsets to ones of confidence and clarity. This is our mission, purpose, and value.

ALUMNI, from Page 1 ...

Each of the four alumni came to NHTI unsure of their path forward. The themes that emerged while listening to these NHTI graduates at the event were that faculty and staff helped them find their own path. The supports provided all along their educational

path kept them motivated and on track to complete their degrees. They each found ways to fully appreciate and participate in NHTI's full college experience, which helped them find their passion and gainful, satisfying employment. They each directly link their skill sets, confidence, and current successes to what they learned while at

NHTI.

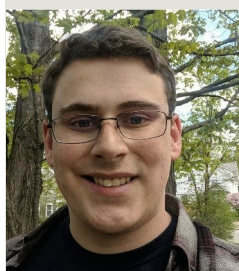
Even after moving on to other higher education settings and work places, the strong foundational skills gained at NHTI are what grounds each of them. Each of them expressed in their own way that NHTI provided "so much more than I had imagined."



Ana Byers wanted to make a fiscally responsible choice for education and chose NHTI's dual Business Administration and Accounting degree program. Ana graduated from NHTI in 2015 with her Associate degree in Business Administration and Accounting. She transferred to SNHU and earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degree. To this day, she continues tutoring accounting students at NHTI and has become an adjunct instructor teaching Accounting 101. When she interviewed for her current job as an accountant with Wipfli in Bedford, she cited her NHTI work to highlight her skillsets. She credits the rigor and high expectations of the Accounting program, strong relationships with faculty, and her experience tutoring students for her skills progression to confidence, leadership, and career success.



Ian Mackenzie knew technology was going to be his future but wasn't sure where to begin. During a campus tour at NHTI, he met with faculty in the Animated Graphic Game Programming (AGGP) program and learned that NHTI had just received a grant to purchase the latest virtual reality equipment. What sealed the deal, though, was the time faculty took to explain how technology skills and career paths intersected. He excelled in the NHTI AGGP program and took a job just after graduating with AML Partners, an anti-money laundering firm in Penacook – which had several other NHTI alumni working there! "The other alumni and I used to joke that we were really designing video games disguised as banking software," he said. He now works for NeuroLogics in Danvers, Mass., as a software engineer.



Nathanael Page explored several programs and graduated from the Computer Programming Engineering Technology (CPET) program. He credits his in-class academics and his on-campus student life experiences for his skillsets and ability to land a good job. While on campus, he served as Student Senate treasurer, an experience that taught him great leadership and people skills and aids him in his role as a manager today. NHTI's CPET program's capstone project, which requires a collaboration with classmates, provided Nathanael with collaboration and presentation skills. He boasts that, because of the price point at NHTI, he was able to graduate debt free. He works for Gannett Fleming in Laconia as a software engineer and manager.



Patrick Blanchette graduated from NHTI in 2010 with his Associate degree in Liberal Arts. "I kept my head down and did my work," he said of his first year at NHTI. "But in my second year, the faculty really got me out of my shell." He became a math tutor in NHTI's Academic Center for Excellence. In 2014, he graduated with his second degree from NHTI: an Associate in Mathematics. Faculty encouraged him to continue his education, and in 2016 he received an engineering scholarship to UNH – he even became an RA! Today, Patrick no longer has issues being social and regularly helps his coworkers at Quantech in Lexington, Mass., have fun online while working remotely. This is a skill he credits to being part of the NHTI team that developed an online support platform for students.



Lynx Shout Out!

The **Early Childhood Education** degree program at NHTI has earned the continued NAEYC accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs. The commission found our program to have met the conditions set in the initial accreditation decision. Continued accreditation is awarded for a full 7-year term, through September 2026.

STAFF PROFILE

NHTI's Marketing Officer Rebrands College from Inside Out

Amber Gavriluk, marketing officer at NHTI, has made a big impact in her short time at the college – namely boosting enthusiasm and pride in our college community. Faculty and staff from all disciplines and departments have expressed how excited they are about the new look and future it is ushering in for NHTI, and she is proud to have been the catalyst for change.

Since arriving on campus in June 2020, Gavriluk has rebranded the college with a new look and feel and overhauled the web design and content to increase versatility and navigation. She has created and published full style and brand guides that have become not only the standard but the template for the other CCSNH colleges.

In her Department of Marketing and Communications, she refreshed the NHTI brand colors; created individual

variations for Athletics and the BTC; evolved our social and digital footprint to include more papers, radio stations, websites, and Pandora; expanded our coverage territory to include southern N.H. and parts of northern Mass.; and streamlined marketing to be more proactive to strategic initiatives.

Her infographics, blogs, and other content have elevated the brand to one of enviable professionalism and student inspiration. Her creative marketing campaigns have kept our metrics steady in a year of near-constant decline, and her strategy of consistent messaging has led to increased hits, traffic, and session time.



In her professional career, she is an expert copy editor and has worked in all forms of media and marketing for more than 15 years prior to coming to NHTI. She has designed layouts for articles, ebooks, infographics, regular graphics, and more in magazines, newspapers, digital, and social. She has written countless blogs, infographics, and whitepapers on everything from computer security to weather to insurance claims. She even created and ran marketing campaigns for small businesses up through IBM.

Gavriluk is a happily married mom of three teenage boys, two old cats, and a 5-year old Cavalier. Some of what she considers to be the cooler things she's done include working as an archaeologist in Belize, dancing ballet professionally as a kid, writing three young adult novels, and even piloting a plane.

FACULTY PROFILE

Liberal Arts Chair Embraces Travel, Language, and Student Success

Dr. Paula DelBonis-Platt is the chair of Liberal Arts, overseeing Social Science, General Studies, ESOL, and Liberal Arts programs. She teaches writing, literature, mindful communication, and French at NHTI and earned the Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence in 2015.

When not traveling with students to Walden Pond, Robert Frost's farm, Manchester's Québécois restaurants, or publishing houses in New York City, she is busy serving on NHTI teams committed to student success. She has served on a number of committees, including the Teaching and Learning Team; the Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Task Force; the Convocation Team; the Guided Pathways committee; the First-Year Experience team; the Service Learning Team; and others. She oversaw a pilot program to study data and improve offerings and outcomes for developmental writers, students not

yet ready for college-level offerings.

Dr. DelBonis-Platt has also taught at the University of Montana and the University of Burgundy and earned her Ph.D. from the City University of New York. She worked for eight years at Macmillan/St. Martin's Press and has received a number of writing awards from the New England Press Association and the Montana Press Association for news and feature writing, including one for a year-long series on the struggles of Main Street, USA. She has served as an editor and copyeditor and has worked on such titles as *Imagining the Sacred Past: Hagiography and Power in Early Normandy* (Herrick, Harvard UP); *The Complete Jewish Guide to France* (Kamins, SMP); *Eastern Europe:*



A Traveler's Companion (Méras, Mariner); *Sarah's Key* (de Rosnay, SMP); and *Franz Fanon* (Macey, SMP). Working for the Harlem Renaissance writer Dorothy West on her book *The Richer, The Poorer* (Anchor) was a highlight of her time in publishing.

She is in her second year as a CCSNH Fellow for the New Hampshire Humanities Collaborative. She is an instructor of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and mindfulness-based communication and literature courses, having trained at the UMass Medical School's Center for Mindfulness. She also enjoys book groups; serving as faculty advisor to *The Eye*, NHTI's journal now in its 32nd year (<http://nhteye.com>), and to Campus Reads; kayaking; and cooking. She is especially known for her Italian dishes and her Escargots à la Bourguignonne, served annually at NHTI's multicultural fair.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

BTC's First CNC Machining Cohort Complete Their Training

The BTC is proud to announce that its first CNC Machining microcredential cohort (pictured above) completed their training on Friday, Nov. 20. This program is a collaboration between CCSNH, the N.H. Department of Corrections, N.H. Employment Security, and ApprenticeshipNH to help individuals with their re-entry into the workforce.

As part of this program, CCSNH provides access to short-term, technical education programming in the form of a microcredential. Participants gain the skills necessary for entry-level employment. Participants were selected from a pool of candidates that completed the WorkReady NH program, met the TABE® test score requirements and earned the National Career Readiness Certificate.

All successful completers of the CNC Machining microcredential will have support from N.H. Employment Security to develop skills in the job application process and bridge connections to potential employers. ApprenticeshipNH will help align businesses to become sponsors of the registered apprenticeships for occupations aligned with this short-term training.

NHTI's BTC is running a second cohort CNC Machining microcredential on campus Fridays and Saturdays, Feb. 12 - April 10.

The February session of 7 Habits of Highly Effective People microcredential is sold out. A new cohort is open April 21 - June 2, 2021, on Wednesdays from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Find out more: <https://nhti.coursetorm.com/category/7-habits-of-highly-effective-people>



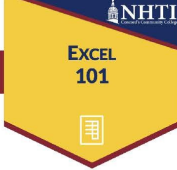
The Communicating Mindfully course schedule has changed; it will be running weekly March 3 - April 21 on Wednesdays from 5-7 p.m. Find out more: <https://nhti.coursetorm.com/category/communicating-mindfully>

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NHTI - CONCORD'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Don't settle for a "1-day bootcamp" or "2-day workshop." NHTI's **Business Training Center** understands the needs of your workforce. Our microcredentials are well planned and executed to give you the best learning experience and targeted training that **delivers results.**

SPRING 2021 COURSES ARE NOW OPEN

 <p>April 6-May 25, 2021</p>	 <p>Jan. 20-April 28, 2021</p>	 <p>Feb. 2-March 16, 2021</p>
 <p>April 21-May 26, 2021</p>	 <p>March 3-April 7, 2021</p>	 <p>March 4-11, 2021</p>

All microcredential courses run at different times throughout the year to allow for individual and group enrollment. We offer customized training that can be scheduled and targeted for your needs and industry.

CONTACT NHTIBTC@CCSNH.EDU TO SIGN UP TODAY

FINANCIAL AID, from Page 2 ...

dents who were negatively impacted by COVID-19 were able to use these funds to help offset some costs associated with their NHTI tuition.

The newest source of financial support, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRSSA), was signed into law Dec. 27, 2020, with \$3,714,959 allocated to NHTI. Of that total, more than \$1,000,000 will be awarded to students financial im-

acted by COVID-19. Students must have a 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 FAFSA on file to confirm U.S. citizenship or have an eligible noncitizen status. At this time, NHTI is in the early stages of reviewing application and developing award strategies. NHTI will be able to utilize the CRSSA dollars to support COVID-related financial losses including housing, board and rental losses.

Financial Aid paperwork can be daunting in the best of times; the pandemic further heightened students' anxiety, con-

fusion, questions, and concerns; however, our financial aid office team is helping students navigate it all - grants, scholarships, required documentation, and deadlines. We are able to help more students get registered for classes and stay registered. In turn, this funding has positively impacted NHTI's enrollment and helped stabilize its revenue during these challenging times.

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positive and the networking opportunities are endless. Building this chapter has definitely been a challenge, but it isn't so bad when you have great people by your side."

"In today's job market, it's not enough to have a degree," said Dr. Laura Pantano, vice president for student affairs. "We recognize the importance of providing students with the leadership skills that employers are looking for.

The leadership programs we offer at NHTI are intentional and developed with this in mind."

The Lynx to Leadership program and NSLS are just two examples of how NHTI is committed to developing our students into tomorrow's state and industry leaders.

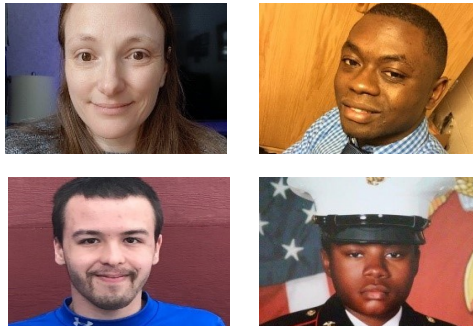
Check out more information for NSLS NHTI local chapter on the following social media: <https://www.facebook.com/nsls.nhti.1>

PROJECT, from Page 2 ...

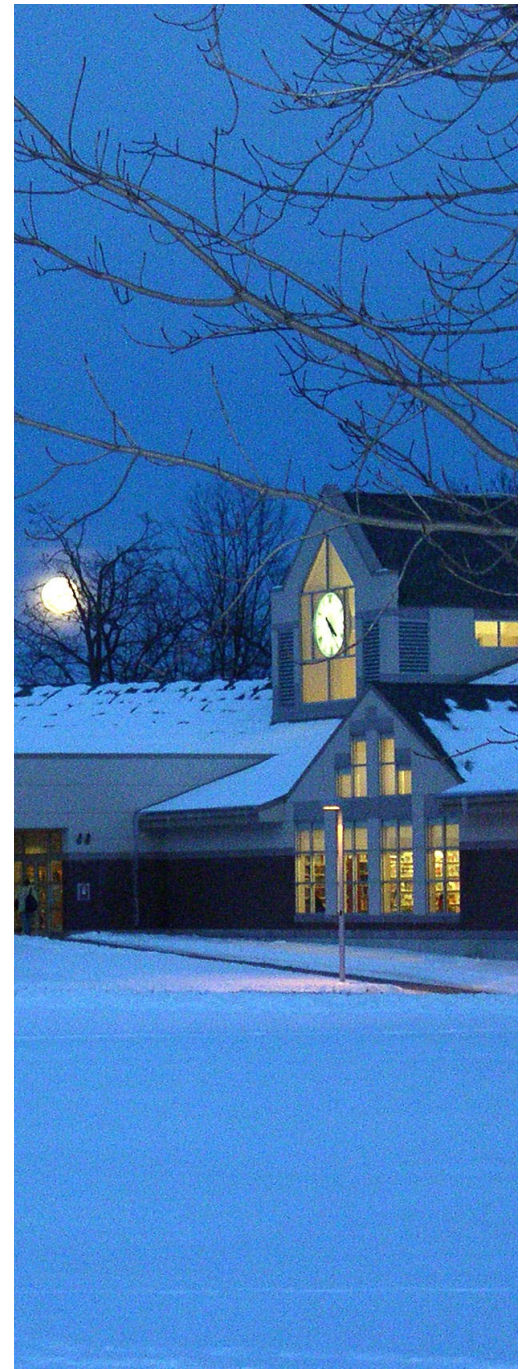
Keene State College, points out, "Who is missing from the table?" This quote changed our college project. We initially intended to create a list of ways other clubs could ensure inclusivity, but we determined it would be better if all NHTI students, from all of our college clubs, participated. Essentially, this would invite everyone to the table and ensure that we left room for those who would be included in the future.

Based on assessing the results of diversity in community college clubs,

how do we rebel against the status quo and move toward ensuring inclusivity? This was our guiding question.



Contributors, clockwise from left: Michele Kenney, Shoghy Ngoy, Jasmine White Taylor, and Connor Safstrom



Have a Question or Comment?

Let us know! Email us at NHTIinfo@ccsnh.edu or call 603-230-4001. You can also visit us online at www.NHTI.edu.