This overview of the Connect partnership and some of its principal activities depicts the ongoing collaboration among the five colleges, and the invaluable contributions of our partnership to the quality of life in southeastern Massachusetts.

Individually and together, the Connect schools are working with and for each one of this region’s elementary and secondary school systems, all of its municipal governments, most of the area’s public and non-profit agencies, and a growing number of businesses, large and small.

To learn more about projects mentioned here and the entire range of projects conducted by each college, please consult the Connect homepage and the individual campus links listed below.

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University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Dr. Jean MacCormack, Chancellor
www.umassd.edu/connect

Statistical Profile of Connect colleges
(from Economic Impact Report/Connect, 2003)

• The five campuses of Connect enroll over 35,000 students, 83% of which come from southeastern Massachusetts.

• In the past five years, the five campuses have graduated over 20,000 students with associate, bachelors, and graduate degrees.

• The five campuses employ over 9,500 people, ranking collectively as the 2nd largest employer in the region.

• Taken together, they spend over $300 million on goods and services, with over 60% of those expenditures in southeastern Massachusetts.

• The Connect institutions have an estimated total economic impact of $750 million, mainly in southeastern Massachusetts.

What is 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.

What is its mission?
Established in January, 2003, Connect has two basic goals:
• to improve the quality, accessibility, and affordability of higher education;
• to advance the economic, educational, and cultural life of southeastern Massachusetts.

How does Connect fulfill its mission?
Connect realizes its mission by focusing on four major areas, with activities and initiatives that:
• enhance academic programs and ease transfer of students among the institutions;
• foster economic development throughout the region;
• promote cultural programs and projects;
• share expertise and resources.

The executive officers of the Connect institutions act cooperatively to strengthen their institutional missions, and to enrich the life of the region.

What is the central message of Connect?
Higher education plays a pivotal role in improving the quality of life of both individuals and communities. As public institutions of higher education dedicated to serving the region and Commonwealth, the Connect schools are embedded and engaged in the well-being of the cities and towns that are their neighbors.

There are no ivory towers here—only groups of citizens and institutions with expertise and resources to share. The Connect partnership strengthens the leavening role of public higher education in society. It has become a model for cooperation among regional institutions of higher education, and for interaction with various segments of society, for the betterment of all.

Within this brochure are some examples of the work of Connect in the four major areas of its mission, examples of the partners’ vitality and impact on groups as numerous as they are diverse—from school districts, to businesses, to social service agencies, to governmental organizations.

Please visit these web sites to learn more about Connect and its projects.
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The Connect colleges meet a full range of educational needs, and interact with all of the region’s elementary and secondary schools.

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Why higher education matters
Connect: for a healthy, vibrant economy

All five Connect colleges are deeply involved in initiatives that stimulate and boost the economic life of the region. The multi-pronged effort is accomplished through a variety of educational programs and direct collaboration with public and private groups and institutions.

- Massasoit Community College annually works with Bridgewater State, Massachusetts Tech Prep, the Brockton-area Youth Council, area businesses, and high schools on a program to bridge the gap between education and employment. Through the program, small teams of high school and college educators participate in workplace activities, and the insights gained help shape relevant, contemporary curricula.

- Thanks to Bristol Community College’s "Women in Technology" venture, 62 percent of the 300-plus women who have participated in the program have entered engineer- ing and technology careers. The College works with the Bristol Tech Prep Consortium to tap women engineers and technicians who offer mentoring and direction at local businesses.

- Bridgewater State College’s Institute for Regional Development joins forces with municipalities and non-profit agencies to tackle issues and concerns through applied research, training, and technical assistance. In 2003, more than 350 employees from 60 organizations received training through the institute.

- UMass Dartmouth’s Advanced Technology & Manufacturing Center provides cutting-edge technological knowledge and assistance for people and businesses whose high tech visions need a nurturing environment. Eight start-up tech ventures are housed in the Fall River facility, with more expected in 2004. Faculty offer their expertise to industries conducting research; students have the chance to work with their professors on substantive research projects; and the center’s programs foster the exchange of ideas and technical know-how.

- The wide spectrum of the visual arts is brought to the community at Bristol Community College’s spacious Grimshaw-Gudewicz Art Gallery. Opened in 2000, the gallery has drawn more than 7,000 people to its exhibits and special presentations.

- The distinctive history, culture, and society of the Portuguese-speaking world is the focus of the diverse programming and outreach of the Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture at UMass Dartmouth. The Center also collaborates with area school systems to promote Portuguese culture and language study.

- Cape Cod Community College received more than $5 million in federal and state grants for its GeoGraphics Laboratory, supporting research applications for the transportation industry. The college’s faculty and students helped to develop the technology that launched the Intelligent Transportation System on Cape Cod.

- The former Star Store in downtown New Bedford is now a striking, modern campus shared by UMass Dartmouth’s College of Visual and Performing Arts and Bristol Community College. The two schools, joined by Bridge- water State College, forged a similar educational alliance in downtown Fall River, transforming the Cherry & Webb building into the Professional Development Center.

- Massasoit and Bristol community colleges jointly contribute expertise and training resources in a WebCT "Campus" each summer to develop faculty online course training and participation.

- UMass Dartmouth’s Center for Policy Analysis, a multidisciplinary research unit to facilitate economic, social, and political development, provides research, information, and technical assistance for business, government, and non-profit and educational agencies. In the last decade, the center has completed more than 150 commissioned studies on a variety of modern-day issues.

Connect: sharing resources and expertise

Each Connect school offers an extensive array of degree and non-degree educational pro- grams that prepare individuals for rewarding careers and a fulfilling, productive life. We serve not only those who enroll in our courses, but we also develop educational opportuni- ties for the school systems and residents of the region. Our collaborative programs enhance opportunities for school systems and the region’s population.

- UMass Dartmouth and Bristol Community College have teamed with 14 school districts and numerous area businesses to form the SouthCoast Education Compact, which develops programs and projects that translate into improved schools and a “support education” attitude among communities.

- Bristol Community College, UMass Dartmouth, and Bridgewater State, are working with Fall River schools to enrich history education. More than 200 teachers, from 17 southeastern Massachusetts school districts, have participated in “Teaching American History,” funded through a $1 million U.S. Department of Education grant.

- Helping teachers teach better is the aim of the more than 50 teacher training sites established by Bridgewater State’s School of Education and Allied Studies in K-12 systems in southeastern Massachusetts. The outreach effort includes professional development programs, an interactive multimedia Web portal for teachers, a teacher technology laboratory, and education workshops.

- Cape Cod Community College fosters adult education through its innovative partner- ship with the state, the Cape’s Economic Development and Literacy councils, school systems, and community groups. Nearly 500 adults are served annually through “ACCESS.” Ninety-one percent of program completers in 2003 went on to college.

- When the Brockton public schools’ paraprofessionals needed assistance because of the federal “No Child Left Behind” Act, Massasoit Community College developed an Instructional Para-professional Certificate and Program Option. Now Massasoit has expanded its offerings to other area school systems.
The Connect colleges are supported, financially and otherwise, by the people they were established to serve. We recognize that the public expects us to act honorably and responsibly, and to use our public funds wisely. As we fulfill our primary goal of providing high-quality education, we also acknowledge the trust placed in us by achieving economies of scale, and by sharing the intellectual capital of our faculty, staff, and students.

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The Connect colleges share their resources by collaborating with each other and with community groups.

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• Cape Cod Community College’s “Making Art, Making A Living” is in its ninth year of educating artists, gallery owners, and performers about the business of creative expression. The college, through its Workforce Development Resource Center, collaborates in this effort with the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod, The Provincetown Art Center and Museum, a number of regional Economic Development Councils, and private foundations.

The Connect colleges have raised $1.2 million for the Fall River-based Cherry & Webb Transportation System that launched the Intelligent Transportation System on Cape Cod.

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Connect researched the effect the five member schools have on the region’s economic well being, and published the results, which detailed the wide-ranging, beneficial economic impact of the institutions on the region.
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