

Celebrating STEM Week

During the past twenty months, our public colleges and universities supporting Southeastern Massachusetts have rallied in developing creative solutions to continue to provide stellar higher education to the communities we serve. Faculty and staff embraced online and virtual education while developing new practices to give our students flexible options that work around their lives.

We are, of course, taking cues from the very students we serve, who demonstrate their tenacity and willingness to take on challenges every day. As we look to the not-so-distant future, higher education in our region will continue to be nimble in how we serve our students, and the options we provide will lead to sustainable and quality careers in our communities.

The future will largely focus on our growth in educating the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) professionals of tomorrow. From wind power initiatives and the growth of the “Blue Economy,” to the groundbreaking advanced manufacturing and robotics initiatives booming out of Woods Hole, to culinary arts, human nutrition, and hospitality entrepreneurship supporting our guests across the South Coast, the power of STEM is already upon us.

A commonality that all our Massachusetts community colleges and state universities share is that when students arrive at our doors, they want an education for a career that will improve their lives and the lives of their families. For many, those pathways lie in STEM fields.

During the week of October 18, the six colleges and universities that make up the CONNECT partnership (Cape Cod Community College, Bristol Community College, Massasoit Community College, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, and Bridgewater State University) will host a robust series of events for STEM Week in Massachusetts. With a focus on the practicality and sustainability of STEM education, and a showcase of what various industries really look like, our collective goal is to shine an even brighter light on these fields so that current and future students engage.

On Tuesday, October 19, the Presidents of the CONNECT colleges will join local legislators, business and community leaders, and other stakeholders at [Bristol Community College's National Offshore Wind Institute in New Bedford to celebrate the expansion of the CONNECT4WIND agreement](#). This event will celebrate the ongoing commitment to share resources and program development for Offshore Wind programming between the CONNECT institutions.

Following that event, local high school students, veterans, business leaders, and community members are invited to Mass Maritime to view [Global Wind Organization \(GWO\) Basic Safety Demonstrations on Climbing Heights and Crew Transfer](#).

On Wednesday, October 20, STEM will roll on with [a Virtual Wind Symposium that is free to the public](#). During this half-day event, high school and college students will join key local stakeholders [for panel discussions on Workforce Development, Research, Development and Technical Assistance, and Entrepreneurship and Business Assistance](#).

Here at Cape Cod Community College, we'll also be celebrating [STEM Week with tours of our one-of-a-kind Aviation Maintenance Technology \(AMT\) program at Plymouth Municipal Airport](#). It's the perfect opportunity to see our hangars, the aircraft our students train on, and learn more about how our AMT program is training the next generation of aviation mechanics and technicians.

The future of Southeastern Massachusetts is intrinsically tied to how our six CONNECT institutions continue to prepare the STEM learners and workforce professionals of tomorrow. As a team, we are fiercely committed to providing access to STEM education for all of our communities, including our K-12 students who will be moving into higher education in the next few years, as well as those individuals considering career changes or a return to college as a life-long learner.

On behalf of our CONNECT Colleges and Universities, please have a look at these STEM Week events and perhaps check them out for yourself or a family member or friend. Our future is bright in our region, and we look forward to seeing you at our events and on our campuses in the years to come.

John L. Cox is President of Cape Cod Community College