



# Maine Community College System

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **MCCS Board of Trustees announces establishment of The Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges**

*New statewide organization to benefit MCCS students and programs*

AUGUSTA, ME—The Board of Trustees of the second fastest growing community college system in the nation has established a statewide foundation to benefit MCCS students and programs. The Foundation for Maine's Community Colleges will begin its work in January 2010 and will be charged with raising critically needed funds for scholarships, instructional equipment and technology, and new facilities and capital repairs.

"Maine's community colleges have earned the respect and support of businesses and organizations across the state," noted MCCS President John Fitzsimmons in announcing the Board's action. "The Foundation will enable us to strengthen those ties and form innovative new partnerships to help our colleges continue to grow and serve more Maine people."

Fitzsimmons also announced that former Maine Governor John R. McKernan, Jr. will serve as the volunteer Chair of the Board of the non-profit organization. Over the past decade, McKernan has served as President, CEO, and now Chairman of the Board of Education Management Corporation, one of the largest providers of private post-secondary education in North America.

"What the people of Maine need—access to affordable higher education and the skills needed to compete for good jobs—Maine's community colleges offer," noted McKernan in explaining his interest in working with The Foundation. "Our community colleges are critical to both individual and statewide prosperity. We all need to play a role in helping them succeed."

Elizabeth O. Shorr has been hired by the foundation Board to serve as the organization's President. Currently Vice Chancellor, University Advancement at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, she previously served as President and CEO of the University of Southern Maine Foundation and as Vice President for University Advancement at USM.

“We needed a strong and proven leader to launch this critically important effort, and we got that in Beth Shorr,” said McKernan, in announcing her appointment.

Other founding members of the foundation’s volunteer Board include Lisa Gorman, a community activist and fundraiser; Elaine Rosen, current Chair of the Board of The Kresge Foundation and former President of the Unum Life Insurance Company of America; and Daniel Wathen, former Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court and the current Chair of the MCCS Board of Trustees.

Maine’s community college system has seen enrollment growth of 62 percent in the seven years since the institutions transitioned from technical to community colleges. This fall, over 16,300 students are enrolled in the seven colleges. Over 95 percent of them are Maine residents.

For more on Maine’s community colleges: [www.mccs.me.edu](http://www.mccs.me.edu).

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