

The JOURNAL of COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Volume XXXIII, Number 2

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The Journal of Cooperative Education
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GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Each year, the editorial board selects a special theme for the winter issue of the *Journal of Cooperative Education*. The theme for the winter 1998 issue, Celebrating Partnerships, was chosen for several reasons; first, to honor employer and university executives, whose loyal support has been so important to cooperative education over the years, and to provide a forum for executives to share their thoughts about cooperative education with the co-op community. Second, this thematic issue explores partnerships among education, business, private associations, and the government such as traditional cooperative education, school-to-work, tech prep, and summer internships for students with disabilities. Third, the global marketplace and international partnerships demonstrate the growing influence of cooperative education on the world scene.

The first two articles by James E. A. John, David J. Doherty, and Robert M. Nichols of Kettering University (formerly GMI Engineering and Management Institute) and Richard M. Freeland of Northeastern University, with Robert C. Marini, a business executive at Camp Dresser & McKee, and Scott Weighart a co-op educator at Northeastern University, give the co-op community a rare glimpse into the minds of university executives and their views of the future of cooperative education. John, Doherty, and Nichols challenge co-op educators in the new millennium to embrace the global marketplace and to take advantage of advances in information technology to improve curriculum. Freeland, Marini, and Weighart focus on the ways in which increasing interdependencies among universities, industry and government will challenge co-op institutions to create optimal partnerships that clearly benefit all parties. They outline strategies for achieving these partnerships, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of both the educational institution and the employer.

Moving on to government and private association partnerships with educational institutions, Polly Hutcheson, Vice President of the National Commission for Cooperative Education, interviewed John B. Childers of the College Board, James F. McKenney of the American Association of Community Colleges, and Reginald Wilson of the American Council on Education, offering yet another perspective seldom heard by co-op educators. Childers, McKenney and Wilson discuss the role of government policies and funding priorities, the tensions in academia between theory and practice, and the need for data to demonstrate the value of cooperative education. They share examples from their own experience to buttress their views and explain their personal commitment to co-op, warning that organizational commitment is often based upon the power of one individual and that institutional commitment to co-op can wane with personnel transitions.

Continuing with government-business-education partnerships, in the fourth article, Terri Howard of Holyoke Community College in Massachusetts describes her role in linking cooperative education, tech prep, and school-to-work in both secondary and postsecondary educational institutions. She explains how federal funding opened the door to unique partnerships and a leadership position for co-op educators. In the next article, Jeanne Morrell, IBM Executive on Loan to the American Association for the Advancement of Science's (AAAS) Project on Science, Technology, and Disability, and Virginia Stern, Director of the AAAS Project, describe a creative partnership among business, government and a private organization.

Robert C. Marini of Camp Dresser & McKee with Robert R. Tillman of Northeastern University), Ed Wax of Saatchi & Saatchi, and Krishen Mehta of Price Waterhouse, provide the perspectives of business executives with long term commitments to cooperative education. All three articles focus on the benefits of cooperative education for both students and businesses. Marini discusses ways in which cooperative education helps students develop skills that will be needed in the future workplace. Both Marini and Mehta emphasize co-op and permanent employment opportunities in the global workplace, especially Asia. Wax ponders the difficulty of marketing and advertising cooperative education despite its many benefits.

Both university and business executives in this issue have argued for the central role of the global marketplace in the future of cooperative education. In the last article, Peter Franks, Chief Executive Officer of the World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE), discusses the role of WACE, which encompasses both university and business officials, in expanding cooperative education throughout the world.

Acknowledgments

I owe a debt of gratitude to many individuals who were instrumental in the development of this thematic issue. First, Paul Stonely and Polly Hutcheson of the National Commission for Cooperative Education were invaluable in providing contacts with university and business executives through their work on the Commission. They brought the executive viewpoint within the reach of co-op educators, and this issue would never have come to be without their hard work and assistance in contacting and following up with potential authors. Jean Egan and Veronica Porter, co-op faculty at Northeastern University, also were extremely helpful in contacting and securing commitments from authors. Robert Tillman and Scott Weighart, also Northeastern University co-op faculty, offered their skills in readying articles for publication. And last, I appreciate the confidence and support of Jim Wilson, Pat Rowe, and other members of the editorial

board. I am deeply grateful for the assistance and support of all these folks who made my job just a little easier.

Kathleen L. Finn
Guest Editor