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New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) opens at 2 Bayley Street in Pawtucket - by Donald Grebien

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Donald Grebien

This month, New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) along with in the City of Pawtucket, Boys & Girls Club of Pawtucket (BGCP) and Pawtucket Central Falls Development (PCFD) held the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony of the all-new University Resource Center in downtown Pawtucket at 2 Bayley St., a property owned by PCFD.

The University Resource Center will be the point at which Pawtucket students can board a dedicated shuttle to the NEIT campuses in Warwick and East Greenwich. The new center will provide a shuttle waiting area, house a community meeting space and a student lounge. NEIT plans to offer information sessions for students, their families, and friends as well as prospective students.

NEIT has worked with the city to engage civic and education leaders to develop community awareness of this new educational initiative.

Bringing NEIT into downtown Pawtucket was a huge step forward with post-secondary education in Pawtucket and it has been a great experience to work with the NEIT to provide this opportunity to Pawtucket residents. Having that presence here in our city will provide us with a more accessible and flexible higher learning and technical learning experience to Pawtucket. We are excited to work closely with NEIT and all of the educational initiative's partners including the Boys & Girls Club, PCFD, the city council, and the school department for helping to promote this opportunity and getting us to where we needed to be.

NEIT's program also offers pre-high school age students inspirational, immersive, and exciting activities and experiences to help them see the purpose in learning through visits to the NEIT campuses, activity days with the BGCP and the Dare to Dream Ranch in Foster. NEIT is working with BGCP to engage families on the importance of post-high school opportunities once.

NEIT is also exploring ways of making new educational opportunities available to Pawtucket residents. The school offers enrollment opportunities to Pawtucket high school students, graduates and adult learners interested in advancing their education with a New England Tech degree. NEIT also offers high school students the opportunity to enroll in the All Course Network, which provides college credits, along with college-readiness coaching, technical camps, internships, and real-world preparation for employment opportunities.

Finally, we see many benefits to participating in NEIT's Pawtucket College Readiness Initiative. We see the newly established NEIT Resource Center, located at the center of the Pawtucket Qualified Census Tract, allowing the university to serve students from the neighborhood, many of whom may have limited financial resources. NEIT's partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Pawtucket, will also stimulate the creative imagination of school children allowing them to develop sustained interest in learning. The Initiative aims at increasing high school graduation rates and college attendance among Pawtucket youth.

The Initiative has the goal of increasing college attendance and graduation rates of Pawtucket

students significantly from current levels. Finally, in collaboration with PCFD, NEIT's initiative will conduct up to 12 sessions each year in the Resource Center to provide families with information about financial literacy and other knowledge necessary to transition from renting to homeownership.

For more details about Pawtucket's economic development incentives, contact commerce director Sandra Cano at scano@pawtucketri.com.

Donald Grebien is the mayor of the city of Pawtucket, R.I.

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