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Aspirations Leader Named to Regional Accreditation Board

ORONO, Maine -- Russell J. Quaglia, director of the National Center for Student Aspirations at the University of Maine, has been named a trustee of the New England Association of Schools & Colleges, Inc., the nation's oldest regional accrediting organization, dedicated to establishing and maintaining high standards for all levels of education, pre-kindergarten to the doctoral level.

Based in Bedford, Mass., NEASC serves 1,800 public and independent schools, colleges and universities in the six-state region, and approximately 70 American/international schools around the world. Quaglia was named to the governing board following his appointment as chair of the association's Committee on School/College Relations which encourages and promotes K-16 collaboration through the development of partnerships designed to build schools' capacity to meet NEASC accreditation standards.

The 23-member Board of Trustees includes administrators and educational leaders from public and private schools throughout New England.

"It's an honor to serve as a trustee for an organization that promotes high standards and quality in education," says Quaglia. "This is an opportunity not only to share my ideas, but also to learn from the distinguished people on the board and the NEASC staff."

Quaglia has worked in partnership with the NEASC Office of School/College Relations on a number of schoolwide projects to increase aspirations and academic opportunities and performance, including publication of his new book, "Believing in Achieving." The book describes the conditions that research by Quaglia and UMaine colleagues shows positively influence the development of student aspirations.

The National Center for Student Aspirations was established following a decade of research and work in schools. More than 12,000 students around the country have taken the Center's Student Aspirations Survey, providing a new perspective about what works in education for schools to use in reform efforts. The Center conducts field service and model programs centering around the research-based conditions and has developed self-scoring inventories to help teachers, parents, higher education faculty, volunteers and coaches assess how their attitude and practice might influence or hinder student aspirations.

An associate professor of educational leadership at UMaine, Quaglia earned his doctorate from Columbia University, specializing in organizational theory and behavior.

Released: March 2, 1998

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