Enrollment on the rise



Salem State University students participate in group discussions and training to be on-campus desk receptionists in preparation for the new academic year. Total enrollment at the school this year is 10,050. "We're absolutely full," spokeswoman Karen Cady said.

North Shore colleges welcoming more students than ever this year



Courtesy photo

Gordon College in Wenham welcomed its biggest-ever freshman class this year. Students began classes last Wednesday.

By BETHANY BRAY STAFF WRITER

Colleges across the North Shore are seeing an uptick in enrollment numbers this fall for reasons as varied as the institutions themselves.

From the economy to student retent , administrators are pointing to myriad reasons for the increase.

Endicott College just finished construction on a new residence hall, allowing the provide college to accommodate 260 ...ore students on its Beverly campus.

Endicott and its Wenham reighbor, Gordon College, can both boast of a largest-ever freshmen class this fall.

Montserrat College of Art in Beverly has a 28 percent increase in new students, and it's the first time in the school's history it has had a waiting list.

The North Shore's two public institutions, Salem State University and North Shore Community College, are seeing more moderate increases in enrollment this year.

With all the "twists and turns" in the economy, students and parents are putting more thought into selecting a college, Montserrat President Stephen Immerman said.

At Montserrat, students visit campus two, three or four times as they build an application portfolio.

"It (the admissions process) mirrors the education on campus – quite transparent," Immerman said. "... I believe our admissions

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COLLEGES: Schools across the North Shore seeing uptick in enrollment numbers

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are about relationships, and that relationship is more important than ever. That's what we do here, it's a small community."

Retention rate - the percent of students who return for a second year — is also a key factor in enrollment. At Montserrat, retention is at an all-time high of 82 percent this year. At Endicott, retention is 87 percent.

Endicott's new dorm, ready as students move in this week, is part of a long-term plan to increase enrollment and alleviate housing conditions, such as freshman rooms with three students, said Tom Redman, vice president of admissions and financial aid.

Endicott's freshman class size has increased each year for 19 years. The new dorm, named Marblehead, will house 260 upperclassmen and includes private bathrooms in each room.

"We're very fortunate to be in the position we are, but it's something that has been planned for a number of years," Redman said. our students (on campus) now. ... There has been more change at ever freshman class. Endicott arguably than any other college in New England."

Montserrat College of Art student orientation leaders get ready for a scavenger hunt game. From left. Morgan Farrar, Kelly Mahoney, Tcheilly Nunes, Blake Tobln, Merriweather McCarty, Liz Laskey and Haley Vessey check out new software from McDougall Interactive, which works with Montserrat on social media.

Dan Tymann, executive vice president and chief of staff at Gordon College, credited an overhaul of the Christian college's "We're housing 84 percent of admissions process and a new science building for its biggest-

"This place is much more than tweaked marketing materials buildings, it's people and pro- and outreach to be "high touch." grams," he said. "It's a special Tymann said, including increasplace, and special things are ing the use of social media and

faculty members' interaction spike in enrollment as the econwith prospective students.

At the same time, Gordon became stricter on admissions requirements and increased the amount of merit financial aid it doled out.

After seeing a four-year that, 'yes, a private education is decline in enrollment, Gordon expensive, but there is a huge return in value for that," Tymann said. "We're the same quality institution we've been for many, many years. We're just more year, bringing the total graduate to a greater number of people."

This week, North Shore Community College is registering 100 students per day, expecting an enrollment increase of less than 10 percent over last year.

"I can't say we're going to hit more moderate pace than years past," said Donna Richemond, vice president for student and (most community colleges saw a SalemNewsBB.

omy turned sour). We're experiencing a leveling-off right now."

However, NSCC is seeing an increase in its retention rate. Richemond said, as well as an increase in part-time students "(We want to) make it clear and the number of students taking a combination of night and day classes.

At Salem State, preliminary enrollment numbers show an increase of 30 students from last effective in communicating that and undergraduate enrollment to 10,050.

"We're absolutely full," said Karen Cady, Salem State spokeswoman. "It's a combination of things. A public institution has an affordability feature that you don't always get at a private instirecord enrollment. We continue tution. We've had more exposure to increase, but this year it's a in becoming a university (from a college). Also, word-of-mouth is the best advertising."

Staff writer Bethanu Brau can enrollment services. "Two years be reached at bbray@salemago, things were a lot different news.com and on Twitter @



MARK TEIWES/Staff photo

Salem State University students Brittany Perez, left, and Emma Gelinas participate in a group discussion during training for student support staff at the start of the new school year.



Gordon College student orientation leaders, from left, Kayla Pacheco, Rachel-Anne Minor, Chelsea Anderson and Elise D'Adamo get ready for the college's largest-ever freshman class.



Courtesy photo

Endicott College's new Marblehead Hall has 260 beds.

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY

- Total enrollment: 10,050 undergraduate and gradu-
- Increase from last year to this year: 30 students Cost: \$7,730 per year (in-state undergraduate day student), \$13,970 (out-of-state, full-time tuition and fees);
 - **NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
- Total enrollment: 7.985

room and board starts at \$4,800 per semester

last year was 2,529

Cost: \$162 per credit, including tuition and fees; fulltime course load of 12 credits is \$1,944 per semester

BY THE NUMBERS

MONTSERRAT COLLEGE OF ART

- Total students: 395
- New students: 148 (last year 116)
- **Cost:** \$24,750

ENDICOTT COLLEGE

■ New students: between 2,500 and 2,600 expected; ■ Total enrollment: 2,288 this year (2,082 last year)

- New students: 716 this year (664 last year)
- Cost: \$39,990 per year, including tuition, room and board

GORDON COLLEGE

- Total enrollment: 1,485
- New students: 525 (last year 407)
- Cost: \$39,000 per year for room, board and tuition
- * Figures are preliminary; student numbers fluctuate through the first few weeks of classes