

**Media Release**

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### **Zide Joins Central Links as Executive Director**

Worcester, Mass.—Dr. Michele Moran Zide, a longtime educator in the local area and current Fitchburg State College professor, has been appointed to serve as the executive director of Central Links, the Central Massachusetts public higher education alliance.

Central Links, a four year old effort, is a relatively new concept of state and community colleges joining together to better serve the residents of the Commonwealth. The Central Links alliance includes Fitchburg State, Mount Wachusett Community College, Quinsigamond Community College and Worcester State College. The alliance seeks ways to save the Commonwealth money, as well as share resources and make it easier for residents to transfer credits and reap the benefits of shared positions. Collectively, the schools have a \$217 million economic impact in Massachusetts and serve 38,000 students per year.

Dr. Michele Moran Zide has more than 35 years of professional experience in higher education, serving in a variety of roles. She worked at Fitchburg State College as a faculty member in the Special Education Department, principal of the McKay Campus School, dean of Graduate and Continuing Education, as interim vice president, and dean of students and retired after working as associate vice president of Academic Affairs. She continues to teach at Fitchburg State as an emeriti faculty in the graduate program in education leadership and management.

“We’re thrilled to have attracted a professional with Michele’s experience,” said Dr. Gail Carberry, president of Quinsigamond Community College and the current head of Central Links for 2006-2007. The four college presidents rotate chairing the alliance yearly.

Zide holds a doctorate degree in education from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She earned a master’s degree in urban studies from Boston College and holds a bachelor’s degree from Mount Saint Mary College. She has participated in numerous other leadership and senior management programs, as well.

Past Central Links projects have included an economic impact report, legislative breakfast, educational programs, community outreach, volunteerism, and shared purchasing. Planned projects for 2007 include an economic forum with the colleges in the spring, ongoing communication with legislators, academic collaboration, and sharing of technological resources, as well as other initiatives.

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