

## Jeremiah Conway: Professor of Philosophy

**It is the only study that has the word 'love' in it. The love of Wisdom.**

- **There is tremendous concern today for a result oriented education that fits well with technical acumen. So for instance, you get people trained in Political Science who are adept at polls, but who have never carefully thought about what a society is, or have any ideas or understandings of different ones. A few of these then go on to become our leaders with policies that then become driven by a lack of knowledge and awareness of any histories or cultural sensitivities whatsoever.**
- **Higher education should mean in some way- the issue of acquiring depth as a person. And if a college education does not provide that then I think a society is in trouble.**

## Leonard Shedletsky: Professor of Communications

**I take the view that the world doesn't come to me as a gift, I interpret the world. And I call that communication.**



- **There's been an increasing- what I would call a disrespect for education in this culture. We have turned education like everything else into a commodity. Its for sale.**
- **Students' who are paralyzed by fear to take a position in class, spout forth on the internet, because then they don't have to face rejection in person. From an individualistic society we are becoming one that is now even afraid to act or to think as an individual.**

## **Mike McCarthy: Principal, King Middle School**

### **Outward Bound Expeditionary Learning**

I want it to be the place where children say that the most memorable part of my learning experience was King Middle School.



- **People profiled as low learners early on in their life, decide that that's what they are. There's no Tracking here. No 'good' students and the 'rest.'**
- **When I decided to make the school non-tracked, there was a lot of resistance and resentment from the teachers. When I decided to join a Swedish 'Outward Bound' program- started for sailors- only 4 or 5 people came initially, then more and more came. There was resistance all the way! But slowly teachers started to come around and the school changed.**
- **The school is rife for problems- 60% (poor) school lunch population, refugees from all over the world with non-english speaking children- but the team learning and the hands on learning approach involves everyone. It works. It is a model school that people now visit from all over the world including India.**

## **Elizabeth: Director, Youth Alternatives & Family and Child Together**

A school's reason for existence must be to transform and broaden the mind. It should provide a place where people realize that they have the power to change themselves and to make a difference in the wider world.



- **We have this fake expectation that everybody can succeed in US, and we actually blame people when they don't. We don't take into account people's background, their education, and the money that's passed on from generation to generation and how that buys people things that other people don't have any opportunity for.**
- **We worked about 100 students a year, helping them make a good choice for college. And then they were expected to at least help one other person to go to college. We set up an internship program with the governor's office, so college students would come and get a paid internship during summer and meet other educated people in their own state. Many of those students who went through that got advanced degrees came back to W. Virginia.**

## Ken Kunin: Principal, Deering High School

Even if kids have mis-steps along the way any positive experiences they have will always remain with them.



■ Previous to here, I have taught a wide range of kids- kids who have been severely abused- emotional, physical or sexual abuse and kids who have developmental challenges. There is a lot of anger in these kids who have had a difficult time negotiating the world- have had difficulty learning. A hundred of those kids is like 1200 of kids here.

- There were many of these kids coming from places like public schools, so we decided that maybe the places that these kids were coming from needed to develop more capacity and competence to keep these troubled kids. So we helped develop programs in schools.
- At the elementary public school here, where we had many poor kids and many immigrant refugee kids, we took on dental care because there was such a high correlation between kids with poor dental care and kids who were missing school because of other illnesses, not just toothaches.
- Here at the high school, we have 220 students whose primary home language is not English. We have kids reading at 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level, who are expected to be mainstreamed. And for a 12<sup>th</sup> grader to sit in 9<sup>th</sup> grade English, they can do that- but how motivating is that for a 18-19 year old with broad life experience and challenges and struggles well beyond what a ninth grader will have coming in? So some online learning will be the direction we will be going in the next couple of years.
- Maybe, if a student is proficient in Arabic, why not take an online math class in Arabic? But there is great cost to some of these things.

## Ken Kunin: Principal, Deering High School

**On School shootings:** Would people do horrible things? Well- my parents died in a plane crash. Why did they die in a plane crash? Somebody blew it up. Somebody who was disconnected, and angry at the world- sounds like Virginia Tech Massacre in a bizarre way. So if people say its happening now- it didn't happen before- well, it did. We have to find an opportunity to get to know and find some connection for every student and faculty member that we have.

- In some sense schools here in US do take on that broader youth development missing in some other countries. You can't have kids play sports with clubs and all, like in Europe, particularly in rural areas. Here, the school is the hub and the community for many children.
- If we could run some of our classes like say, football, where you have assessment every week- and you watch film to see how you did and come back and practice based on this assessment- well, that's good stuff in terms of learning!
- I see tremendous value for kids to be involved in team sports and if you talk to students it is some of their stronger experiences. Also, kids who participate in more teams tend to be better students.
- We did a student faculty exchange recently- where we trained students as facilitators who came in during staff development time and worked with groups of staff - what it means to be respected- how staff feels respected- how students feel respected- and what are some of the challenges
- We use student facilitators for dialogs between students also- to address issues and conflicts based on the model developed by the Center for prevention of Hate Violence.
- Drugs and alcohol is certainly a huge issue here at Deering, though kids are a bit more wary today that adults in their lives are more aware and concerned. So, if they do it- parents or school or police might catch them. That has started to push down some level of use - but there is a long way to go.
- Suspension for harassment, bullying , drugs- whether or not it changes that individual's behavior, it does change the climate of the school. And students care about it because school is their social place to be.
- Its not up to the school to stop everything- but its up to the school to make its values clear to say how it feels about a particular issue- racist ideology or drugs or anti-Semitism...
- I went to a small high school where focus was on building relationships and connections in a real way- and that's why it doesn't happen in a small high school. But, its not fail safe.
- We need people to have a pause between impulse and action. And in that pause there is a circle of caring, and of interaction that's worth belonging to. That won't stop all horrible things. It won't stop all suicides... all homicides. But we would do a heck of a lot better with it than without it.
- Schools are fragile. You build the culture and you build the community but you're never done.

## University of Southern Maine Students

**Education needs to be equitable. Affordable and good for all.**

- **I think education is definitely the biggest issue that needs to be fixed. Private universities can do whatever they want but public universities should definitely provide good education at affordable rates.**
- **I'd like to go to other countries- where the language is different- Germany or Spain- or any of the "istans-" Pakistan, Turkmenistan, whatever- where I could learn a different culture and a language and learn about the people**
- **We don't even learn all our history here in America. We get some slight truncated version of it.**

# **Annie: A Back to School Mother**

## **Fred Gemmer: A Back to School Father**

### **Annie: Aspiring Physicians Assistant**

**I am in my 40s now and I love going back to college. I like the mix of all ages. And usually when you go back to college- you are serious about it- you want to study. They should do what they can to help people of my age go back to college.**

### **Fred: Registered Nurse**

**It's only difficult when you decide to start over at my age. You are no longer the person with the senior authority and the knowledge base that other people need. You are back learning. Sometimes that's a little bit difficult to the ego but if you make the decision and you're grounded then you don't dwell on it but I don't discount the fact that it's difficult- emotionally or to the male ego or to anybody's ego. Its humbling. Its humbling to start over. Balancing- home, School, work, commitments, family, all that stuff has been very hard- it gets tiring.**

## Marni: USM student

My parents don't pay for any books- any schooling - Nothing. They check in on me as on an adult. They don't baby me. If I get and A or get an F- its on me. I do what I can. Its nerve racking not to have any support- but its also that much more gratifying to know that you can do it on your own. You learn to lean on yourself.

It amazes me to see the number of students who are going full time to college and are working one or two jobs. Enormously busy lives- juggling a lot of different balls. I would say work and school dominates all these students lives to an extraordinary extent. Sometimes, listening to them, you wonder how they do it! Something has to give. If you are taking 3,4,5 classes and working 30 hours a week- there's no time! And add on to that all those examples of single mothers- and its a stretch.  
-Jeremiah Conway, Professor

- I have had a job since I was 13 really. I pay for everything on my own- house, car, oil, heating. electric, roadrunner, clothes, food, insurance ...
- Pros of moving out- Freedom, you hit the real world when you are younger
- Cons: No money. Sometimes you feel that you have no one to lean on. Lots of responsibility. You develop like a rough exterior. But it also makes you appreciate things so much more. For some of my friends they come back for summer, make a few thousand dollars, put it away- use it for clothes and whatever when they go back. Mom and dad don't charge them room and board- its just a free ride you know. Its hard sometimes..
- I have been working for the city of Portland because the city pays 50% of your tuition if you go to USM. I am working 23 to 25 hours a week while I go to school and during summer I go up to 35 hours. I take summer off from school and during school year I take 4 classes.
- As far as jobs are concerned I am setting myself up with a dual degree. Bachelors in Communications with a major and minor, and then certification as a personal trainer.

## Ashok Nalamalapu: President ICSI

**This country has given me freedom where I can grow myself with my talent and performance. Where I can grow my knowledge and my Self. That's the great thing about America- Freedom! Freedom!**



- **A child can have more time and happiness growing up here in America. Here my children can spend more time reading Harry Potter. There in India kids are getting up early and studying for 12-13 hours. There is more competitiveness. Here they don't have much homework either.**
- **Our children are creative and observant and ask good questions. I'm sure most children are like that. We lose that when we grow up.**
- **So many things that you can learn that you don't learn in regular schools. That's the reason I keep requesting my daughters to get into sports - so much to learn.**

## Moira: Actress and Mother

To me a good liberal arts education is coming to some sort of empathy with the human condition. And I think my mom and dad certainly understood that. My sister is a successful sculptor. Uncle who's a successful record producer. People who have made careers in art.



Moira Driscoll

- **We never had much money growing up but what we did have went to education. We all went to good colleges.**
- **Graduating from college, I always wanted to be an actor which was fine with my family. And being an English major was in the ballpark- you could do a number of things with that degree if acting didn't work out.**
- **It's a frustration in this country that the Arts are not known. Thankfully, there are lots of studies and scientific analysis of Arts education and what it actually does to kids brain that maybe that would make people listen now.**
- **For my kids, I would be thrilled if they would be whatever- musicians, painters, comic book artists, teachers, social workers, athletes, anything. But I would hope they would use their minds and whatever they did would be intellectually evolving in some way. I do hope that they would go to college with great teachers and fellow students who are thinking- and where there minds would stretch.**

Anant Ahluwalia: Vice President, IT Operations, Hannaford Bros.  
Innovation is what the US has been known for. I think we breed Innovations. Kids like Innovation. Kids like Energy.

- **The world is getting smaller so the more exposure kids have to global outlooks- the better success they are going to have in their ability to make decisions. Where they end up who knows? Could be China, Could be Korea...If they have the confidence to make the right choices I think that's more important. And education provides that.**
- **The amount of effort my kids are putting in and the amount of effort we put in school and college in India was significantly different. Orders of magnitude different.**
- **It was easier for us to make choices growing up though, because they were fewer. Not going to college was not an option. Dropping out of high school was not an option. So those decisions were pretty easily made. It was a lot less complicated then what my kids will have to do. They have varying degree of options. So the drive has to be more personally than through the environment.**

## David Cluchey: Professor of Law

The future is in high end creative work. That's what you want the economy to be focused on. In jobs of the future, people will be highly educated and compensated well, and to get those jobs you will have to develop the technology.



- I tell this to my kids- you are either going to be part of the global economy or you are going to be serving the kids who are. And sure enough, more than half of Americans will be serving those who are part of the global economy.
- Those service jobs won't go anywhere because they will need to be here- from cleaning houses to running MacDonaldis to fixing cars- there are always going to be those jobs.

## Donald Hankinson: Doctor and Teacher of Osteopathic Medicine

I tell young people the same thing no matter what profession they're thinking about. That if they're thinking about Medicine or Business or Food Preparation- or Art: Choose what you love. Start with that something that ignites something inside of you.



- Hitch your star to the thing that would give you the most happiness. That would fill you on a mental, emotional and spiritual level- as opposed to deciding how can I assure myself of the best living in the biggest house and deciding about how to suit yourself to something in that profession.
- As far as the prestige and all those things- some people are dissatisfied with the fact that today it's 13 below zero, and there are other people who are just as distressed when it's 90 degrees and 90 percent humidity. Sometimes you've a picnic planned and it rains. You pick where your heart and soul are and the rest of it will take care of itself.
- I've been so blessed- I just love what I do. I teach which I love to do. I practice which I love to do.