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COFHE adds Bowdoin, Caltech, Middlebury, Vanderbilt

The Consortium on Financing Higher Education (COFHE), an organization of private colleges and universities that share a commitment to excellent undergraduate education and affordability through generous financial aid programs offering significant grant aid that meets the full need of admitted students, has admitted four new members, effective July 1, 2015. The new members are Bowdoin College, the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), Middlebury College, and Vanderbilt University. This brings the total membership of the organization to 35 schools.

“We are very pleased to be able to add these new members,” said David Leebron, chair of the COFHE board of directors and president of Rice University. “They have already participated in a number of COFHE studies and projects, and we look forward to engaging them more fully in our work. We are confident that their presence will bring important new perspectives to our discussions.”

From its founding in the mid-1970s, COFHE has intentionally remained small to encourage in-person discussion and information sharing. It follows a practice of reviewing its membership every five years, although these are the first new members -- and the membership has remained unchanged -- since 1988.

In addition to their prior participation in COFHE projects, the new members bring additional geographical range to the organization. Kristine Dillon, president of the Consortium said, “Like all COFHE members, these new member schools are committed to offering an outstanding undergraduate educational experience and they provide generous institutional need-based financial aid that meets the full demonstrated need of the students they admit.” The four institutions are also highly selective in their admission processes as they seek to enroll classes that are both exceptionally accomplished academically and diverse in their backgrounds and interests.

COFHE collects data and conducts research and policy analysis on matters related to access, affordability, and assessment, particularly as they relate to undergraduate education, admissions, financial aid, and the financing of higher education. Its activities are intended to inform and support institutional decision-making by its members.
COFHE’s main office is located on the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Cambridge, MA, and it also maintains an office in Washington, DC (at Johns Hopkins University), to track legislative issues pertaining to financial aid, tax policy, and other topics affecting college attendance and the cost of college.

**New members**

Bowdoin is a liberal arts college of 1,775 undergraduates located in Brunswick, Maine. Caltech is a science and engineering research and education institution with 977 undergraduates and 1,204 graduate students in Pasadena, California. Middlebury is a liberal arts college of 2,450 undergraduates located in Middlebury, Vermont. Vanderbilt is a research university with 6,851 undergraduates and 5,874 graduate students in Nashville, Tennessee.

The 31 current members of COFHE are Amherst College, Barnard College, Brown University, Bryn Mawr College, Carleton College, Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Duke University, Georgetown University, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Mount Holyoke College, Northwestern University, Oberlin College, Pomona College, Princeton University, Rice University, Smith College, Stanford University, Swarthmore College, Trinity College, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, University of Rochester, Washington University in St. Louis, Wellesley College, Wesleyan University, Williams College and Yale University.

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