



## NORTH STATE TOGETHER

*The purpose of North State Together is to increase community vitality through local solutions within a regional support framework.*

### A LITTLE ABOUT US...

Welcome to the very first newsletter from North State Together! We hope to produce a quarterly newsletter, providing updates, progress reports, and useful information to those in our service area. But first, who, and what, are we?

North State Together (NST) is a new initiative that will support community collaborations in Tehama, Shasta, Trinity, Siskiyou, and Modoc counties. It is a \$2.5 million dollar, three year grant awarded by The McConnell Foundation. This grant will allow us to create a regional, “Cradle to Career” partnership where leaders from education, business, philanthropic, nonprofit, civic and faith communities join together to improve education success for every child through a data-driven, collective impact approach.

North State Together will provide direct funding to counties and also provide a “backbone support team” that will help existing and emerging collaborations in each county. This backbone support team consists of a dedicated staff who can plan, manage and support the partnerships through ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and the many administrative details required to help the partnerships run smoothly. The backbone support team is lead by Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Kevin O’Rorke, with Dr. Kate Mahar serving as the Chief Learning and Research Officer, and Sharon Strazzo as Operations Manager.



### CRADLE TO CAREER

“Cradle to Career Pathways” outline educational outcomes from early childhood through postsecondary education that will ensure that all students have access to quality education and viable careers.

Collective Impact refers to a theory of action where multiple stakeholders work together to achieve a common goal. As outlined by StriveTogether, the essential elements of collective impact include:

- A Shared Community Vision for Change
- Evidence Based Decision Making
- Collaborative Efforts Towards a Common Goal
- Leveraging of resources (human and financial) towards long term sustainability

North State Together will support Cradle to Career Pathways within each county using a collective impact framework to identify and implement local solutions for county-based goals and priorities.

# MEET THE BACKBONE...



**Kevin O'Rorke, Ph.D.—Chief Executive Officer**

Kevin is also the Assistant Superintendent / Vice President of Student Services at Shasta College, and lives in Redding, California. He began his career in Higher Education in 1998 where he was an Academic Counselor at Northern Arizona University. He then migrated to nearby Yavapai College to serve as Advisor/Financial Aid Coordinator. By 2001, he joined the staff at Arizona State University to work as a Senior Advisor and faculty member. From there he accepted the position of Associate Dean of Students at Broward College in South Florida. In 2006 he joined Shasta College as the Dean of Enrollment Services, and has been the Assistant Superintendent and Vice President of Student Services since 2013. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Public Health Education, a Master's Degree in Counseling and a Ph.D. in Lifespan Developmental Psychology.



**Kate Mahar, Ed.D.—Chief Learning and Research Officer**

Kate Mahar is currently the Shasta College Dean of Effectiveness and the Chief Learning and Research Officer for North State Together. Kate has a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Rollins College and a Master's degree in Humanistic/Multicultural Education (with an emphasis on Social Justice) from SUNY New Paltz. Kate also has an Ed.D from USC in Educational Leadership. Kate has held leadership roles in K-12, community college and four year universities, and has spent her career focusing on increasing access to education; especially for underrepresented populations. Kate believes in the power of individuals and community and feels strongly that we can create local solutions to address issues of access and equity in our region for the betterment of society as a whole.



**Sharon Strazzo—Operations Manager**

Sharon also serves as the Executive Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent / Vice President of Student Services at Shasta College. She has previously worked as an Information Analyst for the Calaveras County Office of Education, and upon moving to Redding in 2007, started working at Shasta College as a Research Technician. Sharon and her husband, Richard, a retired Battalion Chief with Cal Fire, have two adult children, daughter Sarah, a Climate Scientist who lives in Washington, D.C., and son Daniel, an Arborist who lives in San Francisco. Sharon studied English at U.C. Davis. While Kevin and Kate are the big picture thinkers of the group, Sharon is the detail person. She is freakishly organized and has an almost frightening attachment to her label maker.

Visit our website at [northstatetogether.org](http://northstatetogether.org) to view our latest news, events calendar, success indicators, and information from our county collaboratives.