



HORN RITUAL AT THE CELEBRANT
FOUNDATION & INSTITUTE'S
COLLECTIVE WISDOM CONFERENCE

POSITIVELY TRANSFORMATIVE

Learning centers offer that important personal touch

In the midst of the worst economic recession since the Great Depression, most academic hubs are reassessing their futures, trying to maintain a level of rigor and service in the face of dwindling endowments and anxious students.

Not Southwestern College. Based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, the school just got an improbable (not to mention LEED-certified) art therapy complex. State-of-the-art caichments purify the water, and photovoltaic cells provide all the electricity.

"We had no interest in going into a fear place and hunkering down until the storm is over," says James Nolan, president of the college. "One of our main tenets here is to align ourselves with what we believe to be true, and assigning, expecting and manifesting

a good future for us."

Nolan says he expects Southwestern College's student body to double in the next decade. It's a confidence many transformative educators exude. Universities of natural medicine and centers of art therapy, yoga, holistic learning and personal leadership are all enthusiastic about their futures and those of their graduates.

These institutions used to be viewed skeptically as renegade purveyors of fringe disciplines and weird retreats. Now many of these same venues and teachings are mainstream. Their emphasis on spirituality and personal transformation resonates with a society reeling from financial, technological and material overload. Here's a look at some of transformative education's brightest stars.

Celebrant Foundation & Institute

Need a non-denominational personality to guide you and preside at an important event? The mission of the Celebrant Foundation & Institute is to create professional life cycle celebrants trained to officiate, plan and personalize ceremonies for any occasion. The Institute offers three year-long certificate programs—Funerals and Healing Rituals, Weddings and Families and Children. Courses are completed online and celebrated at a graduation and Collective Wisdom Conference at the Institute's home in Montclair, New Jersey. This year, the graduating class included 104 students from six countries and a broad range of backgrounds—former and active writers, directors, producers, psychologists, truck drivers, doctors and postal workers.

"There's a heightened response from people in our society right now," says Charlotte Eulette, the foundation's co-founder and director. "They saw what happened on 9/11; all of a sudden the world changed and what was mundane is now very precious."

This year marks Celebrant's 10th anniversary. Fellow co-founders Gaile and Pat Sarma were inspired by how embedded celebrants were in Australian culture after a visit there. So they returned to the U.S. to found an institute that could offer the same kinds of services within American society, including helping people heal after divorce, celebrating a soldier's return from war or presiding at a multicultural wedding.

"Many people in our society don't have anywhere to turn for these sorts of celebrations," says Cynthia Reed, director of academics. "They're looking for ways to find these connections in a really personal and dignified way, and that's what celebrancy provides."

Bastyr University

At Bastyr University, natural medicine is science-based. This is America's most prestigious holistic university, which has as its flagship program a four-year doctorate in naturopathic medicine. Physical medicine, homeopathy, health psychology, herbal science, acupuncture and nutrition are taught at Bastyr. The master's in nutrition is the largest program in the country; the doctorate in

CELEBRANT FOUNDATION & INSTITUTE