

A picture perfect gift. The Globe Collection - curated vintage photos taken by renowned Globe photographers. Shop now.

TEXT SIZE | MANAGE ACCOUNT | LOG OUT

The Boston Globe

NEWS	▶	METRO	▶
LOTTERY	▶	OBITUARIES	▶
GLOBE NORTH	▶	GLOBE SOUTH	▶
GLOBE WEST	▶	DATA DESK	▶
MAGAZINE	▶	INSIDERS	▶
TODAY'S PAPER	▶		

E-MAIL | FACEBOOK | TWITTER | LINKEDIN

GO



GLOBE STAFF FILE

Leaders who topped the \$1 million salary threshold included (from left) Joseph Aoun at Northeastern University, Susan Hockfield, who formerly led MIT, and Robert Brown at Boston University.

By Ester Schwartz

GLOBE STAFF | DECEMBER 07, 2014

Three dozen presidents of private colleges and universities — including three from the Boston area — received more than \$1 million in compensation in 2012, as the salaries for college leaders continue to climb, according to an annual survey by [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

Among private colleges surveyed in Massachusetts, many presidents received far more than the national average of \$400,000 a year. Leaders who topped the \$1 million threshold included Susan Hockfield, who formerly led the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Joseph Aoun at Northeastern University, and Robert Brown at Boston University.

Overall, salaries of presidents at nearly 500 private colleges rose 2.5 percent in 2012, the latest available figures. That increase was generally in line with previous years.

The survey included base salary, bonus pay, and other benefits in its calculations, including payments for housing, travel, moving expenses, and spending accounts. In response to complaints from colleges, the publication did not include compensation set aside for future years, such as retirement pay, as it had in previous annual surveys.

Lucrative presidential salaries have come under sharp scrutiny in recent years, as tuition continues to increase and students take on heavier debt burdens. In 2013, about 70 percent of graduates had student loans, with an average debt of more than \$28,000.

Graphic: What Mass. college presidents made in 2012

Among private colleges surveyed in Massachusetts, many presidents received far more than the national average of \$400,000 a year.

Shirley Ann Jackson, president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, received more than \$7 million in pay and benefits, the nation's highest sum in 2012. Beyond her regular salary of \$945,000, the total included a nearly \$5.9 million payout that had been set aside as an incentive to stay on as president.

A spokesman for the college said the deferred compensation accumulated over a decade and had been reported in previous tax filings. In a statement, Arthur Gajarsa, chairman of the institute's board of trustees, said Jackson's pay reflected her "extraordinary leadership."

John Lahey, paid \$3.7 million by Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn., had the second-highest pay package. In a statement, a spokesman said the university "adheres to the highest standards of corporate governance" for establishing presidential salary.

The school said that in 2012 Lahey became fully vested in his retirement plan and had to report the full amount for tax purposes, a one-time requirement.

Jackson and Lahey were followed by Lee Bollinger at Columbia University, who received \$3.3 million, and Amy Gutmann at the University of Pennsylvania, who received \$2.4 million.

MIT's Hockfield, who left as president in June 2012, received \$1.6 million that year, including \$713,000 in base pay and \$884,000 in other pay, according to the survey. Her total compensation rose more than \$500,000 from the year before.

Nate Nickerson, an MIT spokesman, said the president's pay usually falls "in the middle of the pack" but increased sharply because of retirement and deferred compensation. Such an increase is common in a college president's final year, he said.

The current MIT president, Rafael Reif, received \$691,000 in 2012.

At Northeastern, Aoun was paid \$1.1 million, the 19th highest figure in the nationwide survey. The survey last year found that Aoun was awarded \$3 million in 2011, a figure that included \$2 million that he would not receive until he leaves the university.

Henry Nasella, chairman of the Northeastern board of trustees, said the university has flourished during Aoun's eight-year tenure.

"President Aoun continues to surpass every goal that he and his leadership team set for Northeastern," Nasella said in a statement.

At Boston University, Robert Brown was paid \$1.1 million, a 4 percent increase from the previous year. A spokesman, Colin Riley, said Brown's compensation includes a housing allowance that is calculated using the assessed value of the entire property where he lives, rather than the portion considered to be a private residence.

The presidents of Tufts University, Anthony Monaco, and of Emerson College, M. Lee Pelton, received over \$750,000. Drew Faust at Harvard and Frederick Lawrence at Brandeis University received more than \$900,000.

Presidents at Boston College and the College of the Holy Cross, both Jesuit colleges, received no compensation.

In May, a Chronicle survey of salaries at public institutions showed a 5 percent increase between 2012 and 2013 to \$478,000. The [president of the University of Massachusetts](#), Robert Caret, received \$592,000.

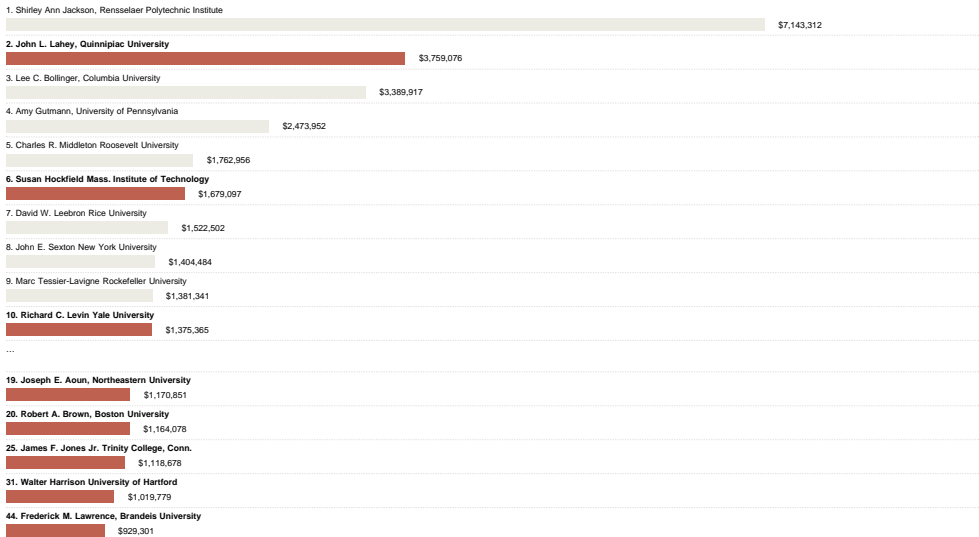
William G. Tierney, a professor at the University of Southern California who has studied college president pay, said the rise in presidential salaries has widened the gap in earnings between leaders and faculty.

"I think we are losing our way when we believe that the few at the top need to be treated like kings and queens and the rest of the campus are the peasants," Tierney said. "At some point, it's going to come back and bite us."

A report this year by the Institute for Policy Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank, found a relationship between the salaries of presidents and other spending. At state schools with the highest-paid presidents, administrative spending rose much faster than scholarships, and the percentage of permanent faculty fell.

Executive compensation at private colleges, 2012

In red, New England colleges



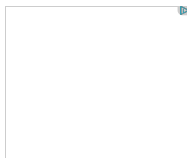
Related coverage:

- [UMass chief's pay up 7.5%: data says](#)
- [Why do people earn what they earn?](#)
- [Coakley lawsuit wants college's ex-chief to repay millions](#)
- [A gilded goodbye for many private college leaders](#)
- [Pay for ex-college presidents](#)
- [3 in state among top in college heads' pay](#)

Globe correspondent Matt Rocheleau contributed to this report. Peter Schworm can be reached at pschworm@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter [@globepeete](https://twitter.com/globepeete).



SHOW 69 COMMENTS



Top 10 Trending Articles

Most Viewed

Most Commented

Most Shared

CBS sideline reporters have been off their game lately

The best movies of 2014

Want to rent in Boston? Get a \$50-an-hour job

No shortage of weird New England stories in 2014

Dopey and gory, 'The Interview' was bound to disappoint

Despite boasts, ISIS failing in attempt at state-building

Learn more

Who is Lizard Squad?

[SUBSCRIBE](#) [BOSTON GLOBE INSIDERS](#) [EPAPER EDITION](#) [NEWS IN EDUCATION](#)

Brooklyn Nets' Kevin Garnett still a fan favorite at TD Garden

MY ACCOUNT

LOG OUT

Wine connoisseurs, vineyards eagerly await new direct shipping rules

MANAGE OUR PREFERENCE

'Unbroken' shines a light on Louis Zamperini's triumphs in the face of bigotry and brutality

SOCIAL

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE+

CONTACT

HELP

FAQS

GLOBE NEWSROOM

ADVERTISE

MORE

ARCHIVES

PRIVACY POLICY

TERMS OF SERVICE

TERMS OF PURCHASE

YOUR AD CHOICES

WORK AT BOSTON GLOBE MEDIA

© 2014 BOSTON GLOBE MEDIA PARTNERS, LLC