



Dallas County Community College District

Office of the Chancellor

TO: DCCCD Board Members

FROM: Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr.

DATE: May 29, 2009

RE: Weekend Memo #145

OH - THE WONDERS OF TEACHING

From time to time this little commentary section will focus on the essence of why the DCCCD exists, and that is to engage in the wonderful experience of teaching. I offer these little musings and occasional thoughts of mine, perhaps as flash points for one's moments of reflection.

Teaching . . .

A bridge, spanning the distance from the knowledge-body to the study-mind.

Over the chasms and barriers.

Sometimes self-imposed by either teacher or learner,

We diligently seek to join disparate ends,

In the context of desperate needs.

For - is not teaching the task most vital?

Greatest of all?

How else can social ills be cured?

The citadels of hope secured?

Are not these cherished goals the product of . . .

Expanded minds,

Energized bodies,

Elevated spirits?

Teaching - the bridge, the nexus,

The instrument of linkage combating the world's shrinkage;

And in prescribed proximity

Achieving equanimity,

The calm of peace of souls at ease.

One Precious Chance . . .

In the classes that I teach at the graduate level, I share this little poem that touched me deeply years ago. Ponder the thoughts contained in it.

*Every seed has one precious chance at life . . .
So do YOU!*

*One chance, one lifetime to REACH for the sky!
One moment to come alive, to find the Glorious WHY!*

*YOU . . .
That particular YOU,
The first time to live,
Fruition to reach,
With so much to GIVE!*

*Find the REALITY that
CREATION meant you to see -
The essence of LIFE,
BECOMING, TO BE!*

The final thought is this little teacher's prayer that someone passed to me years ago.

A Teacher's Prayer

*Lord,
Enable me to teach with WISDOM,
For I help to shape the mind.
Equip me to teach with TRUTH,
For I help to shape the conscience.
Encourage me to teach with VISION,
For I help to shape the future.
Empower me to teach with LOVE,
For I help to shape the world.*

This was a somewhat different commentary, but it is consistent with the messages that I seek to convey to my colleagues on a weekly basis.

El Centro College

The Small Business Awards Luncheon - "The Spirit of America, 2009 Salute to Small Business" - for Small Business Week was held Thursday, May 7th, at the Sheraton Arlington Hotel. It was co-hosted by the North Texas Small Business Development Centers Network, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, and the Office of the Governor. Twelve (12) awards for excellence were presented to small businesses and business service providers. Three hundred fifteen (315) people attended. The featured speaker was Don Huffines of the Huffines Communities, which are green communities.

In recognition of April being poetry month, El Centro College's library sponsored a poetry contest centered-around themes related to sustainability or environment sensitivity. Many entries were submitted and displayed in the library during the month. Contest winners were Garth Hill (Spirit Matters), first place; Mark Thames (Sus Stain), second place; and La Jeanne Williams (Do I Dare Disturb the Universe?), third place.

Gus Katsigris, retiree and former program coordinator of El Centro College's Food and Hospitality Institute, was selected as the *2009 Educator of the Year* by the Dallas Chapter of the Texas Chefs Association. He was selected for this prestigious award because of his contribution to the Dallas Chapter, and because he is a person that "goes the extra mile" and is dedicated to making a difference within the culinary field. Gus will be honored at the *2009 Texas Chefs Association Annual Convention Awards Luncheon* on August 1st at the Radisson Hotel-Market Square in San Antonio.

El Centro College has received its ultrasound re-accreditation from the American College of Radiology for Obstetrics, Gynecological, General and Vascular Ultrasound services to include peripheral vascular, cerebrovascular, abdominal vascular and deep abdominal vascular ultrasound exams. El Centro College scored 98.93%. Jan Blend, program coordinator, attributes much of this success to the capabilities of Monica Guzman, Tiffany Moore, Bonnie Lomax, Brittany Mayo, Brittany Matthews and Holly Wesberry, all of whom helped with this effort.

DCCCD College High Schools

Students of the **Middle College High School at El Centro College** received excellent results in taking the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills test. One hundred percent of students passed the Reading, English, Math and Social Studies tests. Ninety-two percent passed the science test. Students who scored over 90 per cent correct are rated "Commended." The commended rates were 38 percent in Reading and English, 34 percent in Math, 16 percent in Science, and 64 percent in Social Studies. Also, Middle College students recently enjoyed their 2009 prom at the Sheraton Hotel.

Richland Collegiate High School (RCHS) Class of 2009 graduates have officially surpassed the number and dollar amount of academic transfer scholarships offered to the RCHS Class of 2008. The total amount of transfer scholarships for this year's seniors is \$3,146,474 from 50 universities and colleges across the state and nation. Congratulations and good luck, Class of 2009!

The **Early College High School at Mountain View College** recently announced its Campus Instructional Leadership Team (CILT) for the 2009-2010 academic year. The new team is comprised of the following teachers: Paula Anderson, English; Bennett O'Connor, Chemistry; Aaronda Smith, Reading; Kristen Gates, Math; and Jeannie Adams, Social Studies. The team is designed to deliver Dallas Independent School District initiatives and information in a concise manner from executive positions to localized department levels on campus.

North Lake College

Our community – North Lake College in conjunction with Mountain View College and the Air Hogs Minor League baseball team hosted *High School Senior's Night* at Quick Trip Park in Grand Prairie on Tuesday, May 26th. Although the game was delayed and eventually postponed due to rain, the colleges were able to hand out information and balloons, and talk with high school seniors about their future plans.

Our community – On May 19th, North Lake College hosted the DCCCD event "*A Frank Discussion of Race: In Black and White*," presented by The Malcolm X Birthday Celebration Committee. Bob Ray

Sanders with the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* acted as master of ceremonies for a discussion panel, which included Steve Blow, *The Dallas Morning News*; Juanita Simmons, Ph.D., assistant professor, University of Missouri; Ray Winbush, Ph.D., professor, Morgan State University; and Herbert Gears, mayor, City of Irving. Sponsors for this event included the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce, DCCCD African American Read-In, Africans and African Americans for Enslavement Reparations, and Ali Luqman Dawah Committee.

Brookhaven College

The Brookhaven College Windmill Writers' Club has just completed its first publication, *The Moulin Review*. The student writers' club has officially been in existence for only a year with Aaron Clark, communications professor, and Tina Aguilar, School of the Arts professor, serving as club sponsors. The publication includes student artwork, such as paintings, photography and drawings along with literary works ranging from creative nonfiction to poetry. The 48-page publication is expected to be printed and at the college in a few weeks.

Richard D. McCrary, interim president for Brookhaven College, spoke at a meeting of the Carrollton-Farmers Branch Rotary, May 21st, at the Brookhaven Country Club. He shared the latest information on the college's bond programs, employee and student community service activities as well as new efforts for student retention programs. In addition, Dr. McCrary focused on the college's efforts to expand recruiting in the communities in the 75220 zip codes with an emphasis on the educational and economic challenges of that area. The Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch has had a long relationship with the college, supporting students almost each year with scholarship funds.

Joy Bailey, professor of cultural studies and program director for Workforce and Continuing Education Division at Brookhaven College, was invited to speak at the Seoul Institute of the Arts in Seoul, Korea. She was in Korea for a two-week vacation visiting family. While there, she was introduced to Jae Soh, the director of the Art and Technology Center at the Seoul Institute of the Arts, who invited her to come and speak to 40 art students. She gave a presentation, "Continuing Education in a Global Society," which focused on encouraging students to consider their future education and the importance of cultural research for their future careers. The thank-you note she received from Soh thanked her for "taking the time to come to our college to present a thought-provoking and dynamic learning experience for our students."

Richland College

Sustainable Community Building – "Social equity and justice" - Albanian-born, Swiss writer Shefqet Dibrani visited Richland to conduct research on diversity among college students and faculty as part of a national tour of American colleges. Gjeke Marinaj interpreted research-based conversations with Richland College students and a campus tour conducted by Shannon Ydoyaga, both of the School of Mathematics, Science and Health Professions. Dibrani, a member of the Writers Union of Switzerland, is a well-known poet, prose writer, journalist, literary critic, and the author of nine books translated into German, Italian, French, Turkish, Romanian, Slovakian, and English.

Student Success – Congratulations to Richland College art student Betty Levy who won 3rd Place Overall in this year's National League for Innovation Art Competition. Betty was one of five winners in the DCCCD League exhibition at Mountain View in January, which placed her work in the national competition. Her work and a national press release announcement may be viewed at http://www.flickr.com/photos/richland_art/3342143678/. (See article attached.)

Employee Success – Richland School of Engineering, Business, and Technology Executive Dean Martha Hogan recently received notice from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board that she has

been named to serve on the Mechanical Engineering Statewide Articulated Transfer Curriculum Committee. The committee's charge is to identify a set of lower division courses, up to the associate degree level, that will provide the necessary academic background to integrate a mechanical engineering student seamlessly into participating engineering programs at four-year institutions. Travel funds from the Lumina Foundation for Education's *Making Opportunity Affordable* initiative will reimburse her travel expenses throughout the committee's work together.

Institutional Effectiveness – Richland College recently completed its second annual electronic upward evaluation of supervisor/administrator performance using the college's 10 college values (ThunderValues) as the basis of the evaluation. Employees anonymously submitted 324 electronic evaluations and 7 in hard copy form. This response represented an increase of 83 evaluations over the 2008 upward evaluation total. Pat Bollin, executive director of human resources, prints the evaluations and distributes them to supervisors for inclusion in individual progress discussion evaluation conferences conducted in June.

District Administrative Offices

The District Service Center has been celebrating a twist on TGIF for the past year. In a practice started by Executive Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs Ed DesPlas, a monthly (or sometimes more often) Friday "drawing of tickets" to Mavs games, Ranger games, NASCAR races, the circus, music and dance events, and sometimes ticketed events at our colleges gives staffers a chance to get out and have some fun at no cost (TGIF = "Thank Goodness It's Free"). On several occasions "prizes" have been donated by a good member of the DSC community. It has been a fun way for the DSC staff to have a chance to participate in a "winning" idea.

Eastfield College

Eastfield College hosted its first ever *Clean UP/Clean OUT Day* on Friday, May 29th. Dr. Conway, interim president, saw this as a good opportunity to improve the college's appearance and have employees clean up their personal space (office, desk, e-mail). In order to have a concentrated time for clean up, May 29th was designated an official clean up day; Dr. Conway requested that no meetings be scheduled so that all could participate. Discarded items were taken to a designated campus location and employees were able to browse others "trash" to see if it might be their "treasure." Items that were not taken were donated to the SECC Country Store and local agencies.

C. Bryan Alberts, former Eastfield College student, and Jill DeVitto, former National Science Foundation (NSF) research coordinator, were recognized in the *Texas Microscopy Journal*. The journal featured a micrograph of feather mites on Kentucky Warbler on its cover. The original micrograph was taken by Curtis Hoagland (National Park Service); the color art was performed by Alberts. Both Hoagland and Alberts were associated with the Eastfield College NSF STEP Summer Institute in the Big Thicket National Preserve, Texas. The micrograph was sent by DeVito. Here is a link to the journal's page (pg. 3): http://www.texasmicroscopy.org/Journal/38-2Journal_Web.pdf. (See article attached.)

Eastfield College hosted *Gateway to College (GtC) Information Sessions* May 26-28. To date, GtC has 24 students enrolled in the program; capacity is 40. With three more information sessions still to go before Fall begins, the program is already at 60% of its capacity. GtC is a program to assist Mesquite and Garland Independent School District high school students in completing their high school diploma while receiving college credit. The program is funded by a \$300,000 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation as well as money from the Gates Foundation, Eastfield College, and Garland and Mesquite school districts. College tuition and books are provided free of charge. The program was developed at Portland Community College, who selected Eastfield College to replicate their nationwide program.

Mountain View College

Tomea Coleman, Mountain View College school alliances coordinator, visited the Dallas County Juvenile Department's Medlock Treatment Center on Wednesday, May 20th. Coleman delivered a message of hope and provided general information about the value of education to four classes of students ranging in ages from 13-18. Coleman's visit was part of College Career Day activities, regularly facilitated by Recruitment Services personnel at Mountain View College.

Dr. Karen Valencia, executive dean of sciences, allied health, and physical education at Mountain View College, attended a *Mechanical Engineering Statewide Articulated Transfer Curriculum Committee* meeting in Austin on Thursday, May 28th. The committee is currently reviewing policies to increase the efficiency of degree pathways and to develop a specific statewide articulated transfer curriculum for mechanical engineering students upon transferring to four-year colleges and universities.

Mountain View College welcomed 70 students from Venture High School on Friday, May 22nd. Student mentors gave their own testimonies and shared experiences with the high school students and encouraged them to pursue higher education. The presentation consisted of information from access, aviation, career services and student recruitment. Students also received tours of the campus where they experienced the new flight simulator in the aviation department and walked through the nursing skills labs. Venture School originated in the fall of 1987 as an alternative educational program for grades 9-12 that offers self-paced, individualized and computer-assisted academic instruction. The school is a drop-out prevention and recovery program designed to assist young people in achieving their high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED). Venture High School is an extension of the six Arlington ISD high schools, and diplomas are awarded through each student's home campus after successful completion of all credits and exams required for graduation.

Graduating high school seniors in the Mountain View College and North Lake College service areas enjoyed an evening at Quick Trip Park Ballpark in Grand Prairie – home of the Grand Prairie AirHogs Minor League baseball team – on Tuesday, May 26th. Though the game was eventually rained out, students enjoyed pre-game festivities as they received information regarding credit and non credit programs offered at both campuses, including Rising Star scholarship information. Mountain View College mentor students were also on hand providing their personal experiences of “life on campus.” Mountain View College President Felix A. Zamora threw out the ceremonial first pitch for the opening night contest between the AirHogs and the Shreveport Bossier Captains.