



# Dallas County Community College District

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## Office of the Chancellor

TO: DCCCD Board Members

FROM: Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr.

DATE: June 26, 2009

RE: Weekend Memo #149

### PREPARING OUR SONS FOR THE GAME OF LIFE

*Have you noticed how much time, attention and money parents invest in their son's athletic careers? They attend all the games, travel hundreds of miles to take them to tournaments, and scold them if they slack off during practice drills.*

*However, those same parents are missing-in-action when it comes to providing educational oversight. They may travel hundreds of miles and spend many hours in the bleachers, but they rarely take even 60 minutes to review their children's academic standing - particularly the boys.*

*Too many have become consumed by what is called the ESPN culture by focusing on athletic highlights 24/7. Our young black men have been filled with hoop and gridiron dreams of NBA and NFL glory.*

*Worse, their parents are caught up in the same grand delusion. They overlook the fact that very few individuals even make it to the NBA or NFL. This viewpoint comes at a time when an entire generation of African American males is at risk.*

*A 2008 report from the Schott Foundation for Public Education concludes that "black males have consistently low educational attainment levels, are more chronically unemployed and underemployed, are less healthy and have access to fewer healthcare resources, die much younger, and are many times more likely to be sent to jail for periods significantly longer than males of other racial/ethnic groups."*

*The same study reported that more than 50% of black males do not graduate with their high school class and the 10 states with the lowest graduation rates - including New York, Georgia, Illinois, and Michigan - enroll more than 1.6 million black male public school students, roughly 40% of that population. Other reports have*

*revealed that 75% of all college-age African American men are not registered at any institution of higher education, and that one in nine black males ages 20-34 is incarcerated.*

*We can ill afford to simply throw up our hands and justify such poor performance as a consequence of economic, cultural, and societal factors; a declining public education system, a widening technology chasm, an ever-expanding income gap as more and more U.S. industries relocate overseas, and an increasingly vulgar popular culture that devalues scholarship and glorifies the gangster way of life.*

*Despite the fact that the nation has entered the age of Obama, more and more black men are being shut out of the promise of opportunity and pushed into the margins of society. Simply put, we are in a state of emergency.*

*Don't mistake me by appearing to demean athletics. They simply must be placed in the proper context and used as a means to build self-esteem, instill values, and spur academic achievement among young people.*

*Solving the problems facing young black men requires us to be vigilant and committed at all levels. Whether you are a parent or not, I urge black men to apply your own expertise to the cultivation of excellence among our young people.*

*Look for opportunities to inspire and encourage young minds and stoke their ambitions. Promote education, entrepreneurial skills, and smart money management as vital tools they will need to achieve life goals. Help lay the foundation of stable communities that allow them to flourish.*

*When they have been able to apply their talent and reach their full potential in the classroom and the workplace then we will all have something to cheer about.*

*I have recently approved the final proof for my 8<sup>th</sup> book - *An Outstretched Hand*, which my son co-authored with me. When I have received copies of it from my publisher, I will share an abstract in this commentary series. It is a book designed to aid fathers and father-figures in "providing an outstretched hand" to male youths.*

### **LeCroy Center**

Silver and bronze were the winning colors for the LeCroy Center at the 30th Annual Telly Awards for 2009. Dallas TeleLearning, the national marketing and production arm of the LeCroy Center, received the honors for the two new English distance learning courses, "A Writer's Circle" (ENGL 1301) and "The Writer's Odyssey" (ENGL 1302). Celebrating the best in local, regional and cable television programs and commercials, as well as video, film and web productions, the annual Telly awards attract more than 14,000 entries from across the globe. Judges honored Dallas TeleLearning with the top silver award for "Arguing Arguments," featured in A Writer's Odyssey, and two bronze awards for "Analyzing Images" and "Building Arguments," both featured in the course A Writer's Circle. In an odd twist the Telly awards don't give gold awards -- so the silver Tellys are their highest honor, followed by the bronze awards. Congratulations go to the LeCroy Production Department, Marketing

Department and the entire LeCroy Center staff. To read the full article, go to <http://www.tellyawards.com/winners/>. (See article attached.)

Here are a few updates on video productions at the LeCroy Center. The Geology team completed 13 days of video production in the LeCroy studio recently. Katherine Listi, producer, Lynn Millwood, content specialist (MVC), and Janice Christophel, instructional designer, wrapped up 40 videos for the geology lab lessons, ranging from step-by-step instructions on identifying minerals and rocks to creating a topo profile and experiments about porosity and permeability. The lab videos are a key component of the Physical Geology 1403 online course. The programming team of Thomas Upton, Lewis Gonzales, and Judit Makranczy has been buried under a pile of rocks...that is, a pile of rock photos. They've been fine-tuning the interactive mineral and rock identification tool while adding photos of hundreds of minerals and rocks.

The development team for the online U.S. & Texas Government courses started production on video modules for the Texas lessons. An interview with Texas District Court Judge John Creuzot kicked off production Wednesday; to be followed next week by six interviews in Austin and two more in Dallas. Michael Coleman, producer, David McCoy, content specialist (CVC), and Ruby Lorenzana, coordinator, have been working with consultant John Sparks to finalize scripts and experts for the Texas lessons. Video production on the National Government lessons will follow in September. Meanwhile, Kay Hampshire, instructional designer, has been creating interactive activities for the thirty lessons in the two-semester course.

### **North Lake College**

*Our community* – As part of their partnership with INROADS, the continuing education department at North Lake College hosted more than 100 college students during the annual *INROADS Leadership Summit*, June 19th-20th. INROADS is a non-profit organization whose mission is to prepare minority college students for a lifetime of corporate and community leadership. The two-day training session, attended by juniors and seniors throughout Oklahoma and Texas, covered topics such as community development, self-management, valuing diversity and communication skills. Dr. Marco Hinojosa, executive dean of the North Lake College-North Campus, coordinated the event.

*Our community* – The North Lake College-South Campus hosted an open house event for area high school graduating seniors on Thursday, June 18th. The students were able to take a campus tour and learn about the admissions process, available financial aid, academic programs and student services. Potential students had the opportunity to talk to faculty members, staff and the college students about their educational plans. Graduating seniors from Nimitz, Irving and Grand Prairie high schools attended the event.

### **Cedar Valley College**

*Student Success* – Jennifer Wisdom, Cedar Valley College student and newly-elected District II vice president for Phi Theta Kappa, is attending International Honors in Richmond, VA, this week along with DJ Walsted, the college chapter president. Both students will return with programming ideas for the Phi Theta Kappa Honors study topic, "The Paradox of Affluence: Choices, Challenges and Consequences." Last Saturday, Jennifer led the District II Honors in Action Academy at The University of Texas at Dallas. Over 70 students and advisors attended the training.

Distance Education Veterinary Technology Program students representing eight states from Washington to South Carolina were on the campus of Cedar Valley College this week to participate in fast track labs. The labs are designed for students enrolled in advanced classes with access to

companion animals only. The fast-paced program immerses the students in concentrated clinical experiences.

*Community Development* – Cedar Valley College launched the Workforce Readiness Internship Training Experience (WRITE) Program this week with 500 student participants. A collaborative effort between the City of Dallas, Workforce Solutions of Greater Dallas and Cedar Valley College, the program is designed to train younger workforce members the soft skills necessary to be successful in the job market. Over the next several weeks, students will be engaged in day long workshops with industry professionals covering topics such as financial literacy, goal setting, educational opportunities, and careers. The participants are between the ages of 17-24.

The Small Business Development Center at Cedar Hill has been instrumental in providing assistance with the grant writing process for a community partner. Nourishing Minds, Inc., of DeSoto, Texas has received a grant from the Texas Department of Agriculture to be used to serve 1,200 lunches and snacks on a daily basis during the summer. The grant, totaling over \$200,000, is a summer food program located at five apartment complexes throughout Dallas County. “The Best Southwest Small Business Development Center was pivotal in guiding us through the grant writing process, and I still depend on them for advice regarding human resources, business management and fiscal responsibility,” said Sharonda Jones, executive director of Nourishing Minds, Inc.

### **Brookhaven College**

Students and community members were tested for HIV and received a special free concert ticket on June 23rd, as Brookhaven College took part in the second annual Hip Hop for HIV campaign. Hip Hop for HIV is a month-long, HIV and AIDS awareness campaign supported by a dozen educational and health care centers throughout Dallas including the DCCCD. Each of the 135 people who were tested received a free ticket, presented by KBFB-FM, Radio 97.9 “The Beat,” to a hip-hop concert on July 12th. A promotions crew for the radio station was at the college during the four-hour testing period encouraging students to get tested.

Jane Rowe, Ph.D., child development professor, was honored by the Dallas Association for the Education of Young Children (DAEYC) at a dinner on June 11th. The annual event brings together leaders in the early childhood development profession to recognize professionals who care for young children. Dr. Rowe received the Pat Kennedy “Educator of the Year Award,” which recognizes an individual in higher education who has had a positive impact in the field of early childhood education. Nominees must have extensive training and/or classroom experience and be involved in DAEYC and other professional community activities. To read the full article, go to [http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/bus/columnists/rmiller/stories/DN-p2miller\\_11bus.ART.State.Edition1.4118722.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/bus/columnists/rmiller/stories/DN-p2miller_11bus.ART.State.Edition1.4118722.html). (See article attached.)

Lisa Ehrich, art professor at Brookhaven College, has pieces on exhibition at the Mary Tomás Studio Gallery. The exhibition, “Organica,” includes pieces from six local artists and opened on June 13th. Professor Ehrich, who also serves as the president of the college’s Faculty Association, contributed sculpture in clay and metal to the show which runs through July 12th. The gallery is in the design district west of downtown Dallas in building 1080 at 1110 Dragon Street.

Monica Taliaferro, Brookhaven College director for marketing and public information, will travel to St. Louis, Missouri, for the *2009 American Association of University Women (AAUW) National Convention*. As the newly-elected chapter president, Monica will represent the Farmers Branch-Carrollton AAUW chapter at the convention June 26-28th. This year’s convention will focus on “Breaking through Barriers,” reinforcing the AAUW’s mission of advancing equity for women and girls. Casting two votes

for the chapter of 50 local women, Monica will help decide on controversial topics up for a vote, including whether to open membership to those who do not have a college or university degree. Monica also serves as the co-sponsor of the AAUW student affiliate with Delryn Fleming, professor of speech, a life member of AAUW and former chapter president.

### DCCCD Campus High Schools

**Richland Collegiate High School (RCHS)** staff participated in Citizen Advocacy Day for Charter Schools on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. this week. The advocacy initiative was a focal point of the *9th Annual National Charter Schools Conference* on June 21st-24th, sponsored by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Donna Walker, RCHS deputy superintendent, Dr. Kristyn Edney, principal, and Debbi Richards, registrar, visited the office of U.S. Congressman Sam Johnson, 3rd District-Texas, to speak on behalf of charter schools and heighten his awareness of the rigorous academic experience and exemplary student success of RCHS.

About thirty students of the **Early College High School at Mountain View College** have been invited to attend the first *Hispanic Youth Symposium* in Texas. Only about 200 high school students from throughout the state have been invited to attend. The symposium, which is sponsored by the Hispanic College Fund, the Dallas Independent School District and Southern Methodist University, will be held on the Southern Methodist University campus June 30th-July 3rd. Students will be exposed to seminars and discussions about issues pertaining to leadership, public speaking, resume writing, selecting a college, obtaining financial aid, and much more.

### Eastfield College

The June 11th publication of *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* featured comments from DCCCD Chancellor Wright Lassiter. Amid a foundering economy, Dr. Lassiter noted the District's enrollment increases and how community colleges specialize in "second chances" for its students. The article notes Dr. Lassiter's keynote address last month at the *NISOD Conference* hosted by the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin. Lassiter spoke of learning environments and the need to be innovative. Dr. Lassiter cited the college's replacement of traditional classrooms with interactive studios in the college's new Learning Center as an example of a way to rethink student learning. In the same article, Patsy Caropresi, director of career services, is quoted on recession-proof careers and how they are counseling students. [http://www.diverseeducation.com/artman/publish/printer\\_12651.shtml](http://www.diverseeducation.com/artman/publish/printer_12651.shtml). (See article attached.)

Michael Gutierrez, Eastfield College interim vice president of teaching and learning, welcomed more than 50 participants to the *Mesquite Chamber's Economic Development Forum* held on June 23rd at the college. Six of the top ten employers in Mesquite were in attendance, including IntegraColor, Baker Drywall and Christian Care Center. The state of the City of Mesquite's economy and future projects were presented by Tom Palmer, Mesquite manager of economic development, Judy Skowron, director of the Mesquite convention and visitor's bureau, and Daren Watkins, economic development and special events coordinator. John Emery, Eastfield evening administrator and event coordinator, serves as the chamber's vice chairman of business development.

Attending the *Federal Bureau of Investigation Student Leadership Academy* on June 27th-July 4th in Washington, D.C. will be Eastfield College student Britney Flores of Mesquite. The 20-year-old student, who has cystic fibrosis, has always wanted to be a police officer following the career path of her father. The inherited chronic illness affects the digestive system and lungs, making the lungs susceptible to infection and affecting the body's ability to properly digest food. Not willing to let the disease deter her from her career decisions, the 2008 Mesquite High School graduate continues to follow her dream of working in law enforcement as a second-year member of the Law Enforcement

Exploring Program with the Mesquite police department. The program, which is a part of the national Learning for Life network, instructs youth ages 14-20 on laws and police procedures and allows them to participate in law enforcement scenarios with hands-on training and mentorship from police officers. The knowledge gained has given Britney an understanding on how to deal and cope with being an officer, while still protecting and servicing the community. After following in her father's footsteps by becoming a police officer, Britney plans to pursue her ultimate goal of working for the FBI as a criminal psychologist and study the minds of criminals to understand why they commit crimes. Britney's father, Dallas Police Senior Corporal Bert Rippy, is supporting her law enforcement career path.

On June 6th, Eastfield College was a community partner for the most successful *Mesquite Rotary Bike Ride* ever held with more than 1,800 rider participants. Proceeds from the bike ride benefit Mesquite charities and student scholarships. This year's Mesquite Academy valedictorian received one of the \$1,500 scholarships and will attend Eastfield in the fall. For thirteen years, the bike ride has donated several annual scholarships to students attending Eastfield.

### **Richland College**

*Sustainable Community Building* – “Social equity and justice” - A six-member delegation of Richland College faculty and administrators was invited by Deputy Chair Natalia Starshova of the Government Saratov Region to visit Russia next week. The delegation will meet with officials of the Government of the Saratov Region, regional businesses, and cultural arts centers to explore future possibilities for expansion of the three-year educational partnership between Richland College and Saratov State University. Since the December 2005 Memorandum of Understanding was established between Saratov State University and Richland College, joint online courses in economics, history, government, and journalism have been developed and delivered via teleconferencing, and have resulted in the successful completion of associated student-learning projects by the college and Russian students.

*Student Success* – Wyane Loucas and Roy Cirigliana, Richland College photo/imaging instructors, accompanied 13 student photographers to Northern New Mexico this May for the college's *15th Annual New Mexico Workshop*. The resulting student photography, *New Mexico Workshop 15*, is now on display in the Brazos Gallery through August 6th. Based out of Santa Fe, the class traveled to visually stunning sites such as Rancho de Taos, Rio Grande Gorge Bridge, Chimayo, Ghost Ranch and red mesas of Georgia O'Keeffe country, Echo Amphitheater, Cumbres/Toltec Railway Station in Chama, and Turquoise Trail.

*Employee Success* – Dr. Barbara Dogger, Richland College ESOL professor, recently presented ESOL COMPASS Testing and Placement at Richland College during the *13th Annual Southwest Regional ACT Assessment Conference* in New Orleans. Her presentation included accuracy of placement and end-of-course grade information regarding the current placement practices for ESOL students.

*Institutional Effectiveness* – The Richland College Office of Planning and Research for Institutional Effectiveness staff hosted a group from Palo Alto Community College of the Alamo Community College District in San Antonio on June 23rd to discuss the Malcolm Baldrige in Education criteria and the college's performance excellence model. The visiting group included Dr. Ana Guzman, president, Dr. Michael Flores, vice president, and Catherine Chapa, director of institutional research.

### **Mountain View College**

Mountain View College recently announced the hiring of two new deans: Ms. Heather Marsh, dean of resource development, and Dr. Molly Boyd, associate dean, exemplary programs. Before coming to Mountain View College, Ms. Marsh was the vice president of development for Texans Can where she

raised over \$3 million in support of ten charter schools around the State of Texas, as well as the development of a model Early Childhood Education Center in San Antonio, Texas. Dr. Boyd was born and raised in Dallas before starting a lifelong career in education. She has worked for many years in the areas of evaluation and program improvement, and she has worked with community colleges to help measure institutional effectiveness and to increase success rates and student outcomes.

Mountain View College and the DCCCD Business Diversity Department hosted a Bonding Assistance Program Seminar on June 16th. The purpose of the seminar was to prepare businesses to become eligible to receive support for public entity projects that require bonding. The seminar provided technical review assistance, information regarding various types of bonding, and pre-assessment evaluations with trained consultants. Chambers of commerce, contractors, construction companies, skilled trade businesses, janitorial services, and many other types of organizations were in attendance. The seminar was sponsored by View Point Bank-Oak Cliff Branch.

The Mountain View College Fine Arts Department is presenting live theatrical performances from June 24th-28th. Five performances of “The Laramie Project,” a documentary play, will be delivered under the direction of drama instructor Nathan Cole, along with members of the Tectonic Theatre Project and student-actors from the college. The play is about Matthew Shepard, a gay college student who was murdered on the outskirts of Laramie, Wyoming. After the event received national media coverage, Moisés Kaufman and members of his company interviewed more than two hundred residents to create a chronicle of the life of the town of Laramie in the year after the murder. The result is a deeply moving play about bigotry and tolerance, fear and courage, and hate and hope.

On June 19th, the Office of Student Life at Mountain View College held a Juneteenth celebration. In celebration of the freedom of over 250,000 slaves at the close of the Civil War, the holiday is based on events that occurred in Texas, but are now celebrated nationwide. The celebration takes its name from June 19, 1865; the day federal troops arrived in Galveston to inform people of the Emancipation Proclamation made by President Lincoln. Those in attendance enjoyed cultural foods and a showing of the mini-series “Roots.”

### **El Centro College**

The El Centro College Medical Assisting Program was featured on Channel 33 News the evening of June 18th. Videos showing students in class and lab, an interview with one student, and some statistics regarding community college growth were included in the newscast.

The Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council Education and Research Foundation Workforce Center honored Sondra Flemming, vice president health and economic development, at the June meeting for her service as a member of the advisory board and chair of the Workforce Center Advisory Board.