



Dallas County Community College District

Office of the Chancellor

TO: DCCCD Board Members

FROM: Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr.

DATE: September 11, 2009

RE: Weekend Memo #159

THE TOMATO MAN

Whenever I have a holiday break, I try to find time to sort through items that I have assembled in my home office. Many of the items examined no longer have utility. However, a few catch my attention with their relevance. This story about the "Tomato Man" seemed to relate to the current economic state that touches many lives.

An unemployed man is desperate to support his family of a wife and three kids. He applies for a janitor's job at a large firm and easily passes an aptitude test. The human resources manager tells him, "You will be hired at minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour." (This gives you some indication of the date of this little story). "Let me have your e-mail address so that we can get you in the loop. Our system will automatically e-mail you all the forms and advise you when to start and where to report on your first day."

Taken back, the man protests that he is poor and has neither a computer nor an e-mail address. To this the manager replies, "You must understand that to a company like ours that means that you virtually do not exist. Without an e-mail address you can hardly expect to be employed by a high-tech firm. Good day."

Stunned, the man leaves. Not knowing where to turn and having \$10 in his wallet, he walks past a farmer's market and sees a stand selling 25-lb. crates of beautiful red tomatoes. He buys a crate, carries it to a busy corner and displays the tomatoes. In less than 2 hours he sells all the tomatoes and makes a 100% profit.

Repeating the process several times more that day, he ends up with almost \$100 and arrives home that night with several bags of groceries for his family. During the night he decides to repeat the tomato business the next day. By the end of the week he is getting up early every day and working into the night. He multiplies his profits quickly.

Early in the second week he acquires a cart to transport several boxes of tomatoes at a time, but before a month is up he sells the cart to buy a broken-down pickup truck.

At the end of the year he owns three old trucks. His two sons have left their neighborhood gangs to help him with his tomato business, his wife is buying the tomatoes, and his daughter is taking night courses at the community college so she can keep books for him.

By the end of the second year he has a dozen very nice used trucks and employs fifteen previously unemployed people, all selling tomatoes. He continues to work hard.

Time passed and at the end of the fifth year he owns a fleet of nice trucks and a warehouse that his wife supervises, plus two tomato farms that the boys manage. The tomato company's payroll has put hundreds of homeless and jobless people to work. His daughter reports that the business grossed a million dollars.

Planning for the future, he decides to buy some life insurance. Consulting with an insurance adviser, he picks an insurance plan to fit his new circumstances. Then the adviser asks him for his e-mail address in order to send the final documents electronically. When the man replies that he doesn't have time to mess with a computer and has no e-mail address, the insurance man is stunned. "What, you don't have e-mail? No computer? No internet? Just think where you would be today if you'd had all that five years ago!"

"Ha!" snorts the man. "If I'd had e-mail five years ago I would be sweeping floors at Microsoft and making \$5.15 an hour."

While there is a bit of humor in this story, there is also a strong message about courage, commitment and risk taking. As I often say, "food for thought, colleagues."

North Lake College

Our students – North Lake College held “welcome back” parties for students at the north, south and central campuses to encourage fellowship and treat students to a short break from classes and schedules. The college provided student activity information tables where students were able to learn more about the organizations and activities offered at the college. Pizza, cookies and other refreshments were served; hydraulic cart racing and a free caricature artist were available.

Our community – As part of the “Government Leadership Seminar” series, Rose Cannaday, Irving City Council member, spoke to North Lake College students and employees on Wednesday, September 9th. Dr. Gabriel Bach, government professor, facilitated the event.

Our employees – Steve Schellenberg, assistant director for facilities services, represented the college at the 12th Annual Texas Recycling and Sustainability Summit at Moody Gardens in Galveston, Texas, August 30th

-September 2nd. The college was recognized for winning the “2009 RecycleMania” competition as part of the Environmental Leadership awards. This is the second consecutive year that the college has finished first in the waste minimization category of the competition.

Brookhaven College

Staff members of the newly re-named Student Life Office hosted the college’s “Welcome Back” party on September 10th. This year, the party kept the Commons Courtyard full of music, food and fun with a Caribbean percussion band and dancers. Students were able to learn more about college activities at various tables featuring clubs and organizations. For fun, participants also could sit for a caricature drawing, an airbrush tattoo or a photograph. The event was coordinated by Joy Arndt and Yasaman Contractor.

Brookhaven College’s Associate Degree Nursing Program at Brookhaven and Mountain View colleges will benefit from an award of \$100,000 from the Texas legislature through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The money is part of the Professional Nursing Shortage Reduction Program (PNSRP). Signed on August 26, 2009, House Bill 4471 improves the PNSRP, which was established in 2001, to help stem the shortage of nurses in Texas by rewarding high-performing nursing programs with up-front money to hire additional faculty. The bill also holds nursing programs accountable by creating a new incentive for schools to admit and graduate more nurses. The amount of money given to each school was based on the number of additional students it would take to reach the legislature’s goal of a 12 percent enrollment increase in first-year registered nurse programs. The state money is earmarked for hiring additional faculty and clinical lab staff to teach the increased student load, for retention staff to help keep nursing students in school, and for certain types of supplementary teaching and lab equipment. Despite gains, Texas nursing schools will not produce a sufficient number of nurses to meet the health care needs of Texans through 2020, according to the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies.

Brookhaven College welcomed more than 35 companies offering opportunities for students and community members to speak directly with employers who are looking for employees. This year’s fall career fair, coordinated by Angela Shoultz and Robin Washington-White, on September 10th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., was conducted in the student services center. Employers included banks, hotels and resorts, financial services, retail, insurance, and government and technical companies. With the large number of employers in attendance, potential job openings were available at national and local businesses, large and small. In addition to two semi-annual career fairs, the college’s Career Development Center offers individual counseling, mock interviews, career testing, and job-search assistance.

Eastfield College

If you happen to be in Rowlett, stop by Amelia’s restaurant owned by Jehieli Contreras, former Eastfield College student. After being at the college for two years, Contreras then transferred to Texas A&M University-Commerce and graduated with a teaching degree. She taught high school Spanish at South Garland High School for three years and then decided to follow in her parent’s footsteps (owners of Tortillas Del Rancho in Garland) and go into the restaurant business. Amelia’s is a family-run business; Contreras’ little sister and brother both work there as well.

J.J. Johnson, former Eastfield College basketball player, will be inducted into the Garland Hall of Fame this month. At one time, J.J. was one of the fastest men in the world running the 100 meters in 9.95 seconds and the 220 in 19.88. Johnson played basketball at North Garland High School before coming

to the college. He is a two-time World Outdoor Championship Gold medalist in the 4x100 meter relay, Goodwill Games Bronze medalist and Grand Prix final champion. Johnson now works as a fitness/sports performance trainer and massage practitioner in-charge of the Metroplex-based Synergy Bodywork & Elite Training.

The Eastfield College Auto Body Soccer Team was invited to play at the Highland Oaks Church of Christ five-on-five soccer tournament over the summer. After five games the team ended up in the championship final, which they won 3 to 2. Carlos Ojeda and Ramiro Gutierrez, auto body faculty members, co-founded the club because of their passion for both the game and retention of their students. They strongly believe the soccer team is an effective retention and recruiting tool for the auto body program. Currently, the entire team is made of all auto body students; however, it was recently opened up to the entire student body. Ojeda says they will probably be looking at a team or possibly two teams made up of Eastfield College students.

More than 600 students attended the “Back to School Welcome-Palooza,” sponsored by the Eastfield College Office of Student Life. The mechanical bull, dunking booth, and super trampoline highlighted the games available. The two henna tattoo artists and chair massages proved to be a great hit among students. Music and announcements were provided by Bill Cody, former DCCCD student, of Bill Cody’s Party Time Productions. He promoted the upcoming club fair and encouraged students to become involved in student life.

Cedar Valley College

Student Success – Lisa Cothran, Cedar Valley College vet tech student, has been awarded a scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 by the American Kennel Club and Bayer K9 Advantix. To be eligible, candidates had to be current, full-time students at an American Veterinary Medical Association-accredited Veterinary Technician School and be a National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) student member or a member of a NAVTA student chapter (SCNAVTA). Scholarship recipients were selected on the basis of academic achievement, activities in the small animal, exotics, and research areas, and activities in NAVTA or SCNAVTA.

Ronshea (Shea) Clark, Cedar Valley College alumna, was recently hired as administrative assistant for Pure Springs Gospel, after serving as an intern with the record label. Gospel recording artist CeCe Winans is the chief executive officer for the company. Shea’s email to the campus tells the story of her journey. (See email attached.)

Employee Success – Ed Smith, long-time Cedar Valley College music adjunct professor, recently received a tremendous honor. A respected instrument manufacturer (Mallettech) selected Ed to endorse and introduce a new instrument, the vibraphone, worldwide. Smith was flown to Fermo, Italy on September 7th to give the vibraphone its world premiere performance at a percussion festival at the Conservatory of Music. Mallettech also plans to name two of their vibraphones after Smith to be sold world-wide.

Community Development – As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the directors of the local Dallas County Workforce Development Board recently awarded a grant to develop a comprehensive child care training program. Cedar Valley College will collaborate with Eastfield and Brookhaven colleges on the project to enhance the qualifications and skills of child care providers in Dallas County. The Cedar Valley College center in Cedar Hill will provide leadership for continuing education targeting child care center directors and lead teachers. The idea is to provide real-world

learning opportunities that are not limited to the classroom, but include innovative teaching strategies such as laboratory experiences, peer reviews and webinars. In addition, support groups for directors will be established to address issues related to center accreditation and management.

El Centro College

El Centro College is forging a partnership with the Texas Discover Gardens Foundation at Fair Park. Last week Marilyn Sullivan, fashion marketing program coordinator, and Amy Reeder and Jacqueline Padilla, students, teamed up with Ross Bennett, organic fashion designer, to produce an “Organic Couture” – classic and sustainable exhibit at the Gardens. The exhibit opened at the inaugural release of the butterflies into the new permanent Butterfly House and will be on display during the State Fair. Plans are underway to also incorporate the college’s environmental biology program into the partnership to supplement the activities at the Trinity River Audubon Center.

A Labor Day panel discussion was held in El Centro College’s performance hall on Tuesday, September 8th. The objective of the program was to celebrate Labor Day by discussing its beginnings and its importance. The panel consisted of the following prominent college faculty and administrators: Wanda Jones, Derrick Payne, Fela Alfaro and Larry Pool. The program was coordinated by Gay Michele and Bettie Tully, members of the college’s MOSAIC Committee. A MOSAIC Committee is responsible for planning programs that supplement the education of students and staff and highlights the diversity of cultures and collective accomplishments of all the parts of the college. The program also included music provided by Jerry Jones, college’s music professor.

On September 1st, El Centro College held a successful kick-off celebration for its “2009 State Employees Charitable Campaign.” It was a come and go affair, and staff members were given the opportunity to visit with representatives from the following agencies: The Boys & Girls Club of Greater Dallas, Citizens Development Center, Alzheimer Association, Bryan’s House, Child & Family Guidance Center, The Family Place, and the El Centro College Chess Club. Cake, coffee and punch were served and a drawing was held for door prizes. The winners of the door prizes were Maggie Garza (Ranger tickets), Alicia Colon (chair massage) and Helen Pharr (\$10 Subway gift card).

El Centro College will hold its fall career fair on Wednesday, September 23rd, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the student center at the downtown campus. With the current downturn in the economy, we expect a great deal of interest in this event. A number of local employers with jobs available will be in attendance. Interested applicants should bring along plenty of resumes and dress for success. For more information, visit www.elcentrocollege.edu/careerservices. (See article attached.)

Richland College

Sustainable Community Building – “Healthy environment” – Richland College received a \$42,000 grant from the Kohlberg Foundation to fund a student-focused climate action project. This came about as a result of the college’s participation in the Rocky Mountain Institute’s “Accelerating Campus Climate Change Initiatives” program--one of only 12 institutions of higher education nationwide to be selected. The college proposes to implement a climate action project that will: 1) produce student data leading to reductions in green house gas emissions through more climate-friendly student commuting choices; 2) change a longstanding institutional dynamic by strengthening students’ responsible participation in sustainability-related decision making; and 3) promote similar actions at sister DCCCD colleges. The initiative will be carried out in three phases: 1) a social marketing study of students commuting habits, perceptions, and motivators; 2) a district-wide *Student Sustainable Transportation Summit* to develop a social marketing campaign; and 3) a social marketing campaign coupled with a student-managed

Climate Action Fund.

Student Success – Shirin Askari, Richland College alumna, who is currently a contestant on Lifetime Network’s “Project Runway,” spoke to students Friday about her experiences in a season-long television program, including auditioning and working with a camera crew and director.

Employee Success – Bryce Lafferty, Richland College adjunct art instructor, has been selected as an exhibitor in the “Annual New Texas Talent” (NTT), hosted by Craighead Green Gallery. Bryce was one of 43 artists selected out of 370 entrants. Conceived in 1994 by Craighead Green Gallery, NTT is designed to introduce and promote emerging visual artists in the commercial market. Through their participation in the show, some artists have been offered representation by galleries and/or have been extended invitations for inclusion in future exhibitions. The exhibition and its participants have also received media exposure in publications such as *D Magazine*, *The Dallas Morning News*, and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

Institutional Effectiveness – Richland College leadership finalized the college’s thirteen (13) Organizational Actions for academic years 2009-14, initially drafted at the annual strategic planning retreat. Organizational Action plans represent the “approach” phase of the continuous improvement cycle; “approach-deploy-learn-integrate.” Organizational Actions have specific areas of focus and link directly to college strategic planning priorities, key performance indicators, and measures. They are based on: 1) initiatives that are college-specific; 2) mandates from the DCCCD Board of Trustees or the State of Texas; or 3) identified performance gaps. The college’s vice presidents will discuss the action plans with their councils this week and develop supporting departmental action plans or process improvements. The college’s 2009-14 Organizational Actions are located at: http://www.richlandcollege.edu/effectiveness/strat_doc/OrgAct0914.pdf (See attachment.)

Mountain View College

Tim O’Brien, award winning author, presented two lectures at Mountain View College as part of the “Common Book” series on Wednesday, September 9th. His acclaimed novel *The Things They Carried* is being utilized by more than 100 interdisciplinary courses throughout the fall semester. Students will read the novel and explore the varied tenets that accompany discussions about conflict, humanity, and healing. Mr. O’Brien’s writing explores the relationship between fact and fiction, reality and imagination, and between storytelling and truth telling.

Lupita Murillo Tinnen, acclaimed artist and professor, held a special reception at Mountain View College on Thursday, September 10th. Her current exhibit, “Looking Inward,” is on display in the college’s Kiva Gallery until September 18th. Prior to the reception, and as a part of the Larry Felty lecture series, Professor Tinnen delivered an entertaining and educational presentation regarding important issues raised by her works. Much of her work addresses issues faced by the Mexican immigrant community, and her stunning large-scale color photographs convey a wealth of cultural and social insight. Professor Tinnen, originally from Ft. Worth, is chair of the Photography Department with the Collin County Community College District.

The month of September will bustle with on-campus events and activities at Mountain View College, many of which are associated with the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, or Mes de la Herencia. A free viewing of the movie “Heroes of Another Land/Héroes de otra patria” will take place on September 14th. A discussion facilitated by Joseph Brockway, instructor, will follow the movie. A Diez y Seis celebration will be held September 16th, and on September 29th guest speaker Cora

Cardona will deliver a presentation entitled “History through Theater.” Also in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, the college will host the highly anticipated Latin American cultural fair on September 26th. Through fun-filled activities, food and live performances, the fair will offer a fascinating exploration of Latin American culture. Contact the office of Student Life for more information about these exciting events.

Dr. Karen Valencia, executive dean of science, allied health and physical education at Mountain View College, met with administrators from the University of North Texas on September 10th to discuss how the college’s new engineering program can best serve the needs of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) students, especially those pursuing engineering careers, through collaborative efforts between the two institutions. Special guests from the University of North Texas included Dr. Reza A. Mirshams, associate dean and professor for the college of engineering, and Dr. Vijay Vaidyanathan, associate dean for undergraduate study.

DCCCD High Schools

Elections for senior class officers are occurring this week at the **Early College High School at Mountain View College**. Administrators report an excellent turnout of student voters, as they decide among almost 20 candidates for the posts of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

Jessica Barner, a **Richland Collegiate High School (RCHS)** senior, has been honoring the memory of her brother by starting “Yellow Ribbon Week,” a special commemoration project for teen suicide prevention and awareness. Jessica was interviewed by Zachary Sang of WZAP Internet Radio about her experience following her brother’s suicide and the Yellow Ribbon project. Zachary is 16 years old and is featured on WZAP which is “the Hottest Teen Radio Show” on the web. Jessica is pursuing distinguished graduate status, currently ranking in the top 10% of her senior RCHS class. To listen to WZAP, visit <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/wzapradio>.

LeCroy Center

John Stoll, assistant provost at Governor’s State University in Illinois, spent a day at the LeCroy Center (LCET) on September 4th meeting with several LCET staff involved in the National University Telecommunications Network (NUTN). The LeCroy Center is developing the upcoming NUTN virtual conference. John is the new chair for NUTN and Patti Jennings (LCET) is the NUTN administrator. John’s visit was to work on preparations for the conference which included membership and a name change for the 22-year old network. NUTN is a consortium of over fifty institutions of higher education, and consists of professionals responsible for the administrative support and management of telecommunications networks with specific emphasis upon distance learning and videoconferencing. NUTN is an organization that offers assistance and education to institutions making the adaptations necessary to survive in the information age.