



# Dallas County Community College District

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## Office of the Chancellor

TO: DCCCD Board Members

FROM: Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr.

DATE: March 27, 2009

RE: Weekend Memo #137

### A CUP OF COFFEE

*Six years ago a colleague sent me a thoughtful e-mail that I am expanding on in this commentary. It seems appropriate as we traverse difficult terrain in the financial arena.*

*The message that was sent began with the statement that after reading this little story you will never look at a cup of coffee the same way again. Here is the story.*

*"A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved, a new one arose. Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to a boil. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed coffee beans.*

*She let them boil, without saying a word. In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.*

*Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what you see?" "Carrots, eggs and coffee," she replied. She brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. She then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, she asked her to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, "What does it mean mother?"*

*Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity -- boiling water -- but each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after*

*sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water they had changed the water.*

*"Which are you?" she asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean?"*

*Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity, do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit, but after death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and a hardened heart? Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hours are the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate to another level? How do you handle adversity?"*

*The question is - are you a carrot, an egg, or a coffee bean? Words to ponder and food for thought for each of us during these tenuous times that we find ourselves in.*

### **El Centro College**

The Bill J. Priest Institute for Economic Development/El Centro College and its partnership with Community Resource One Stop System (CROSS)/Operation Oasis held its first graduation on Saturday, February 28th. CROSS/Operation Oasis offers transitional skills courses for ex-offenders. There were a total of 74 graduates with 63 in attendance. This graduation was the first of many to be supported by Safer Dallas-Better Dallas, which has chosen to support efforts to improve the re-entry process in the City of Dallas, Dallas County, and the surrounding communities. Honored guests/speakers included Mayor Tom Leppert, Ron Stretcher, Charles Terrell, W. G. Garland and Dr. Leslie Shelby.

The *Annual Texas Student Nurse Association (TSNA) Convention* was held February 26-28th in Houston, Texas. The El Centro Student Nurse Association was represented by twelve students and one faculty advisor. Four students served as delegates to the convention. As delegates, these students participated in the process of adopting resolutions, as well as voting into office the 2009-2010 TSNA officers. The North Lake College Student Nurse Association Chapter was represented at the state convention by two students and a faculty sponsor. Students represented the local organization as delegates to all business meetings and voted for the new slate of state officers.

Howard Finney, Sigma Tau Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) sponsor, along with two officers (Duane Murphy, vice president of fellowship, and Jan Anderson, vice president of service) attended the *PTK Regional Convention* on March 5-8th in Waco, Texas. El Centro College's PTK Chapter won the following awards: Chapter of Service, PINNACLE Chapter, and Merit Award for Scholarship Hallmark and Five-Star Program. Jan Anderson, vice president, was also inducted into the Hall of Honor.

On February 25th, the Center for Government Contracting of the Small Business Development Center at the Bill Priest Institute of El Centro College co-hosted a highly successful conference on General Services Administration (GSA) federal supply schedules. Mr. Albert Garza of General Services Administration presented a thorough overview of the schedule process. Almost 130 small businesses from around the DFW area attended. The conference was also sponsored by the Cross Timbers Procurement Center of UT Arlington.

### **Cedar Valley College**

*Student Success* – Twenty eight (28) Cedar Valley College students participated recently in a TRIO transfer trip. The students visited Sam Houston State University and Prairie View A&M University. Feedback received from students was extremely positive and many students expressed a desire to transfer to either of the institutions. One of the goals of TRIO Student Support Services is to ensure that students graduate and/or transfer from the college with the aim of earning a baccalaureate degree from a 4-year institution. Also, Kris Middlebrooks, 19 year old computer graphics student, won the Services for Disabled Students Scholarship awarded earlier this month.

*Employee Success* – Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, president, was selected to participate in the *Boys and Men of Color Conference* in Washington, D.C. this past week, which was sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation. The purpose of the meeting was to honor current and past work in the field, to determine key learning opportunities, and to articulate how work going forward might be supported and leveraged towards an effective larger agenda for improving the lives of boys and men of color in the country. Discussions relative to this population and strategies to address the issues and problems of this population also took place. Dr. Wimbish shared initiatives that have been implemented locally at the college and nationally through the President’s Roundtable.

Anna Mays, vice president of student services and enrollment management, has been elected to serve as Communication and Publication Director of the National Council on Student Development, a member of the Executive Board. The National Council on Student Development is an affiliate council of AACC (American Association of Community Colleges), and is the only national organization representing student services professionals and issues in community colleges.

Cedar Valley College, Suvarna Desai, information systems manager, was the keynote speaker recently at a Naturalization Ceremony hosted by the Department of Homeland Security. Suvarna shared with the audience her experiences as an immigrant who obtained citizenship over twenty years ago and the importance of education in reaching her goals.

### **Eastfield College**

Congratulations to Theresa Sternat, Learning Assistance Center director, who was recently awarded the Mirabeau B. Lamar Education award. The award is presented by Texas Freemasons and is given to outstanding students and educators. Lamar was the second president of the Republic of Texas and a Freemason. He is considered to be the “Father of Public Education” in Texas. Sternat was nominated by Richard Brand, an Eastfield College student, who serves as Master of Aubrey Earl Hope Masonic Lodge in Balch Springs.

Eastfield College Title III projects that have been implemented and/or expanded this spring include Advisor Trac and Tutor Trac, admissions and financial aid call center and faculty mini grants. Advisor Trac, a student tracking system and early alert system was initially implemented in academic advising last summer and expanded to the financial aid office last fall. The web-based database system allows the college’s student services areas to track students’ use of services and progress. The system enables administrators to immediately access data that can assist their area in providing better services to students,

improving process efficiency, and informing staffing decisions, particularly during peak registration times. Tutor Trac was implemented in the Learning Assistance Center (LAC) last fall. Like Advisor Trac, Tutor Trac is also a web-based database system that simplifies the process of usage tracking for the LAC. Tutor Trac enables the LAC access to usage data and students' grades in tutored courses, which helps to inform staffing and training needs. The next phases of both of these projects are to expand the implementation to Advisor Trac to admissions and career services and to implement kiosks machines in all areas using Advisor Trac and Tutor Trac to improve the student check-in process. The call center was developed to address high call volume in financial aid and admissions. The Call Center was tested at the end of last semester and fully implemented this spring. Call Center staff assists students with front-line financial aid and admissions questions and concerns. Three faculty proposals were selected to receive mini-grants this spring. Buddy Saucedo and Leticia Escobar (College Readiness) were awarded \$4,800 for their project "Development of Online/Hybrid courses for Developmental Mathematics."

Gloria Jackson (Social Science) received \$4,900 for her project on "Mentoring and Coaching Initiative for African-American and Hispanic Students." The third grant was awarded to Loretta Rodgers (College Readiness) for her project "Reading Teachers Connect: A Professional Development Workshop for Adjunct DREA Faculty."

The premier of Dr. Harrell Lucky's, Eastfield College music faculty, new work - **AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH** - was successfully presented by the Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church Sanctuary Masterworks Chorus and Orchestra on March 22nd. Dr. Lucky was invited to be the guest conductor. The 120 voice semiprofessional chorus and members of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra received an appreciative standing ovation from over 500 church members and guests.

Gallery 219 at Eastfield College presents Jorge Misium: "Skunk Works" through April 3rd. This installation project is by professor of 3D Design and Sculpture, Jorge Misium of Dallas. This space transforming installation, breaking the boundaries of wall and ceiling and wrapping the viewer in a participatory sound and movement experience, demonstrates Misium's interest in creating spaces that directly engage the visitor. Misium is a Uruguay-U.S.A. dual national and holds graduate degrees in science and art (MFA Sculpture, PhD EE, MA, and MS) from Berkeley, Rensselaer, and SMU. Professor Misium learns from teaching 4D Design, which he loosely defines to include subjects such as animation and interactive installations using high-tech tools, as well as traditional 3D design, sculpture and installation. Misium's works are in institutions ranging from the Hiroshima Peace Museum to New York University. Recent solo shows include "Waterboarding Suite" at the Dallas Center for Contemporary Art and "Serving the People" at Brookhaven College. His installations were visited in 2008 in Beijing at the National Art Museum and Mozen Art Museum, in Shanghai at the Zendai MoMA, and in several U.S. locations. He is fabricating several new MIRROR installations integrating technology and art for different venues including OPEN'09 in Venice, Italy, later this fall.

### **North Lake College**

*Our Employees* – Patty Lollar, North Lake College employee, was recently honored by Irving Mayor Herbert Gears, who proclaimed Saturday, March 14th "Patty Jo Lollar Day." Patty was recognized for her work over the years as State President of the Women's Auxiliary of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States. She has volunteered many hours in VA hospitals, where her clown costume and comical antics have uplifted many patients in need of encouragement.

*Our Students* – North Lake College theater students performed "The Cherry Orchard" March 10-13th before packed audiences. Valerie Hauss-Smith, former college theater student and professional actress, was the director. Alice Butler, theater program coordinator, produced the play, and Michael McKee, the

college's technical theater specialist, designed the set. The comedy is one of Russian Playwright Anton Chekhov's most acclaimed works.

*Our Employees* – On Tuesdays during March and April, North Lake College's career services is presenting a series of career workshops, "Tuesday's Tips for Making it in a Tough Economy." Jamal Williams, the college's career counselor, is the presenter of "How to Conduct a Successful Job Search" on March 10th and April 7th; "Tips for Writing Effective Resumes" on March 17th and April 14th; "Interviewing Techniques" on March 24th and April 21st, and "Selecting Careers Based on Personality Type" on March 31st and April 28th.

*Our Students* – Brandon Brooks, a former basketball Blazer at North Lake College and point guard for Alabama State, was named *Player of the Year* in the Southwestern Athletic Conference during the NCAA's March basketball tournament. In the first game of the tournament, Brooks led his team in three categories with 10 points, 6 rebounds and 2 assists. The game was aired on ESPN on Tuesday, March 17th.

### **Mountain View College**

The Continuing Education office at Mountain View College hosted Spring Break Camps for 126 youth, ages K-12 March 16-19th. Four separate camps were offered, focusing on academics, technology, fine arts, and sports. During their lunch break, campers were entertained by popular movies and treated to awe-inspiring magic shows performed Dr. Geoff Grimes, communications faculty member. Spring Break Camps were coordinated by Liz Jackson, senior program development specialist, under the direction of Vonice Champ, director of continuing education, and assisted by Continuing Education employees Angella Bryant, department secretary; Rosa Rosales, continuing education coordinator; and Norma Morales, Gabriela Duran and Vanessa Lopez from continuing education admissions.

The Communications & Teacher Education Division at Mountain View College extends congratulations to Dr. Joyce Tarpley, English faculty, and Mary Ann Taylor, English adjunct, who attended the *Conference of College Teachers of English* in Austin March 5-7th. Dr. Tarpley delivered a presentation entitled "Showing Them the Money: The Economic Way of Thinking in Literature." Professor Taylor gave a presentation entitled "The Trickster Figures in Charles Chesnutt's work, The Goophered Grapevine." Taylor also won the fiction prize at the convention for her presentation of a short story.

The Chemistry Astrophysics Club at Mountain View College, under the direction of Jesse Fox, chemistry instructor and club advisor, took an educational journey to Florida March 16th-22nd. The students witnessed the departure of the space shuttle Discovery from Cape Canaveral while also learning about the aerospace industry, NASA's future goals and missions, and what they could do as students to support NASA's ongoing exploration of space. Club members also visited Disneyworld, Universal Studios, and the beautiful cities of Orlando and New Orleans. The club also provided an educational presentation entitled "Living Green" on March 24th for students, faculty and staff at the college. The presentation focused on how to implement simple changes in our daily lives to minimize our impact on the environment.

Mountain View College hosted members of the Dallas Lepidopterist's Society on Saturday, March 21st. Lepidopterists study members of an [order](#) encompassing [moths](#) and the three superfamilies of [butterflies](#), [skipper butterflies](#), and [moth-butterflies](#). The college's stunningly scenic Urban Wildlife Sanctuary, dedicated by the Humane Society of the United States, provides an ideal observation area for butterfly enthusiasts, and was thus selected as the site for the Dallas Lepidopterist's Society's first field trip of the 2009 viewing season. The college also enjoys the distinction of having the first Urban Wildlife Sanctuary certified by the Humane Society of the United States located on a college campus.

### DCCCD Campus High Schools

**Mountain View College's Early College High School's (ECHS)** Mountain Force Robotics Team (MFRT) competed in a Robotics Competition held at Southern Methodist University March 12-14th. The MFRT qualified and competed all the way to the semi-finals and placed 13th among 50 teams. The MFRT was also ranked as the second-highest achieving first-year team at the tournament. Participating students included Judith Claxon, Pedro Morales, Juan Gutierrez, Tania Matta, Gustavo Castillo, Jose Torres, Juan Almanza, Fermin Vasquez, David Fabia, Ricky Poncianno and Arlette Garcia. The students were accompanied by a team of mentors, consisting of ECHS science teachers, as well as Mountain View College students and faculty.

Katie Bierschenk, **Richland Collegiate High School (RCHS)** senior and Texas Regional Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) president, addressed and inspired the general session of the *Texas Community College Teachers Association* on February 19th. Katie is a member of the college's Alpha Alpha Xi Chapter of PTK and is active in helping to plan chapter events and service projects, and representing Richland/RCHS at conventions and meetings. Currently ranked third in her RCHS senior class, she will graduate in May with an Associate in Science degree and plans to transfer to a university to major in mechanical engineering.

### Richland College

*Community and Economic Development* – Tom Pauken, chairman of the Texas Workforce Commission, presented Richland College and the Dallas County Manufacturers' Association (DCMA) a Skills Development Fund (SDF) grant check for \$372,090 during a special community event at Garland's Granville Arts Center on March 25th. This is the DCMA's first SDF grant. Representatives of the participating Garland employers Automatic Products Corporation, Karlee, Kingsley Tools, J&A Manufacturing, Plastipak Packaging, Sherwin Williams, and Micropac Industries, Inc., joined Chancellor Lassiter, State Legislative representatives, City of Garland, Garland Chamber of Commerce, and the college's officials to share in this economic development celebration. Made possible by the grant funds, the college will provide training in leadership development, lean manufacturing, AutoCAD, computer skills, language training, and FANUC Controllers to participating DCMA partners' employees. In addition, Automatic Products and Karlee will hire a combined total of 19 individuals who have participated in an eight-week, 350-hour, machines operator training program.

*Student Success* – Congratulations to Richland College Thunderduck Basketball Team and Coach Jon Felmet who recently won the NJCAA Division III National Basketball Tournament and Championship in Delhi, New York. Special congratulations go to Matt Rose and Giorden Cole who were named to the 2009 All-Tournament Team; Chibuzo Elonu who was named the 2009 Tournament's Most Valuable Player; and Coach Jon Felmet who won Coach of the Tournament honors. This tournament win brings the college's total to 12 national championship titles for Richland College student athletes throughout the years.

*Employee Success* – Congratulations to Adriana Rodriguez, director of the school of teacher preparation, who was recently named to serve on the advisory board of the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME). In this capacity Adriana will represent the North Texas region as IME conducts outreach activities and functions for the Presidential Office for the Mexican Communities Abroad Program, which represents the Mexican and Mexican-American community throughout the United States.

*Institutional Effectiveness* – President Mittelstet was invited by the American Council on Education (ACE) to write a feature article for ACE's Winter 2009 Issue of *The Presidency*, which was released during ACE's 91st Annual Meeting held in Washington, D.C., February 6-10th. The article, "Building Whole People, Whole Organizations, and Whole Communities," focuses on the importance of the college's vision in the process of teaching and learning sustainable community building, the roles Richland College's Thunder values and mind-spirit-body approach play in the ongoing success of the college's performance excellence model, and

its national role through hosting the Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education and performance excellence team visits to Richland College. The article may be viewed at <http://www.richlandcollege.edu/president.pdf>. (See article in *The Presidency* attached.)

### **Brookhaven College**

Ina Bostick, emergency medical services student, was recognized in the March Volunteer Spotlight for the Dallas Chapter of the Red Cross. She is the team leader for the Dallas West Disaster Action Team and assistant coordinator for Disaster Health Services. In addition to the Red Cross, Ina volunteers at Trinity Medical Center and with the Farmers Branch Citizens Fire Academy Association. This mother of three is also a full-time student working toward her paramedicine degree.

A former Brookhaven College student has moved on to play basketball at Midwestern State University (MSU) in Wichita Falls, Texas. This would be less unusual if the student were not 30 years old. Anthony Moore was featured in an article in the [Wichita Falls Times-Record News](http://www.timesrecordnews.com/news/2009/mar/14/no-headline---nick_time_sat_3-14/) online on March 14th, just as the MSU team was beginning the NCAA Division II South Central Regional tournament. Moore started college in his 20s, after several years out of school, when one day he and a cousin discovered the school had a basketball team. On the team, he took a turn at almost every position and finished as No. 1 in the school's history in both rebounds and steal. He is now earning a degree at MSU, studying sports management and kinesiology. You can read his story at [http://www.timesrecordnews.com/news/2009/mar/14/no-headline---nick\\_time\\_sat\\_3-14/](http://www.timesrecordnews.com/news/2009/mar/14/no-headline---nick_time_sat_3-14/). (See article attached.)

Over the course of several hours, dozens of Brookhaven College students had the chance to find out what it felt to drive drunk, and they did it in the lobby of the student services center. College police officers coordinated with several outside agencies, a safety event titled "A Pact to IMPACT: Coming Together for Change." Bart Scott, police corporal, gave a presentation focusing on personal safety. Professionals Encouraging Educational Reform Statewide brought their AWARE III DUI/DWI simulator. A full-sized car that offers a virtual, drunk-driving experience for students so that, while they are completely sober, they can feel the effects alcohol has on their ability to drive. The Dallas County Auto Theft Task Force, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, MADD, and Farmers Branch Fire Department were just some of the other entities who attended to offer useful information to students and employees.

Clarice McCoy, accounting professor, received an e-mail from one of her students thanking her for making the course platform and materials thorough and informative in her online course. "Everything was nicely laid out and everything had a purpose. Pedagogically speaking, it was beautifully done!" The compliment meant something a bit different as the student is also a professor who has taught at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.