



Dallas County Community College District

Office of the Chancellor

TO: DCCCD Board Members

FROM: Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr.

DATE: August 28, 2009

RE: Weekend Memo #157

LEADERSHIP IN SIX WORDS

An article written by John Baldoni appeared on Harvard Business online recently. The thrust of the article was that career success means being able to sum up your accomplishments Haiku style. He was referring to a six-word exercise that works well as a form of inspiration. An exercise that helps one address the question – “How do I want to be remembered?”

The article begins with reference to a point in time when Ernest Hemingway was challenged to write a story using only six words. Some thought that such a task was impossible. However, it was not impossible for Papa (as Hemingway was referred to). The next day he produced the following: “For sale. Baby shoes. Never worn.” Six words – major message presented.

Ponder these thoughts that appeared in Baldoni’s article. “Claire Booth Luce, according to The Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan, once told President John Kennedy that a ‘great man is one sentence.’ Noonan writes that Lincoln’s life could be summed up as ‘He preserved the Union and freed the slaves.’ Scott Eblin adapted the concept to summing up one’s leadership legacy. ‘It takes time and effort to boil down the essence of what you’re trying to do to a short and memorable idea.’ ”

The task of reducing one’s life to a handful of words is a mighty challenge. Creating a six-word memoir can be a useful exercise in self-analysis, particularly if you apply the process to reflecting upon your goals and your results. Did we achieve what we set out to achieve? Did I (as a leader) help them and the team to succeed? Did our results stand the test of time?

The million dollar question for any leader is this: Did you leave the organization in a better place than when you found it? Sadly we have discovered that the great recession we are enduring was in part due to senior executives who did not leave their

companies better off, even though they themselves exited with pockets flush with cash.

This six-word exercise can serve as a form of aspiration. So if you are early or mid-career, you have time to make changes so that you can become the leader you are capable of becoming. John Baldoni then offers three questions to help one consider how you would sum up your work life in six words or less. I think that they have merit.

What gets you up in the morning? He writes – “What do you do and why do you do it? For some, the answer is the opportunity to work with others on a project that has real meaning. That is, it improves the quality of life for others. If this question throws you, then you need to consider what you don’t like about what you do. Is it possible to change something, or must you change careers?”

How can I help? “We humans are motivated to work for goals greater than ourselves. Leaders achieve through the efforts of others. It is imperative that they create conditions for others to succeed. They help others achieve intentions that enable the team, and by extension the organization, to succeed.”

What is my influence? “Line authority over someone on your team is a point of leverage but its effect may be limited. For organizations, particularly in challenging times with dwindling resources, leaders need to exert their influence. Such influence is built upon good examples but transmitted through effective persuasion rooted in trust.”

I believe in one of my prior commentaries I asked the question – “how do you spell leadership?” Like the author of this article stated, it is spelled INFLUENCE.

One can adapt the six-word memoir exercise to fit other needs. For example, how might you describe a challenge facing your team using just six words? An example could be: “Tough job. Committed people. Keep working.” Another example could be: “Need ideas - Sooner than later! Help!”

Leaders and managers can even make a game of it at your next staff meeting. You can encourage your colleagues to contribute their six words as a means of getting to think about the issues, the challenges, and the opportunities that you face as a college, as a service unit, as a team.

Summing up your career in six words may not produce a “eureka moment of sudden clarity,” but the exercise challenges you to think about what work means to you and how you influence the way others work. Baldoni concludes his article with six words: “Big idea. Profound thoughts. Truthful moment.”

For more information on six-word memoirs, read [Not Quite What I Was Planning: Six Word Memoirs by Writers Famous and Obscure](#).

North Lake College

Our community – On August 19th, North Lake College was host to visitors from Tanzania and Uganda, as part of a consortium for higher education titled “Africa for the Future.” The group operates as a forum of discussion and action of best practices concerning issues in African higher education. “Africa for the Future” was formed in 2008 in response to a call from the Vatican for more attention to higher education initiatives in Africa. Beverly Bower and Marc Cutright of the UNT BJP Center for Community College Education and Larry Darlage and Ernest Thomas, presidents, Tarrant Community College, were among those who attended. President Dr. Herlinda Glasscock, North Lake College, hosted the guests and provided them with a tour of the college.

Our students and community – North Lake College’s new general purpose building (G-Building) has opened its doors just in time for the fall semester. The new building consists of three floors. The bottom floor includes classrooms and facilities for a television studio, art labs, 2D arts programs, industrial design, lecture halls and new offices for the visual and performing arts staff and faculty. The middle floor is home to classrooms and the human resources department. The top floor is home to the college president and her administrative team.

Our employees – Dr. D’Ann Madewell, North Lake College English faculty, was selected as one of 15 panelists for the ACCUPLACER Diagnostics (AD). From September 11th-15th in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., the ACCUPLACER program will conduct a large-scale standard setting study. The purpose of the study will be to review items for the upcoming AD tests and, as a result of that review, make a recommendation for the placement of the cut scores on the diagnostics score sale.

Cedar Valley College

The Educational Art Gallery at Cedar Valley College has just opened a new show featuring the digital works and paintings by renowned contemporary artist Andrew Stalder. Although this Texas native has a background in painting and drawing, he dabbles in digitally produced art and is very interested in modern and contemporary art theory and criticism. Recently, he has used things like digital photography and digital image manipulation to create mixed-media works that often combine painting and photography. Stalder’s works can be viewed Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Saturday hours are 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

On August 17th, members of the Cedar Valley College family kicked-off the new school year with an engaging professional development day – “Achieving Success.” This year’s event included a state-of-the-college address by Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, president, plus sessions that focused on best practices in teaching, the new common book project, and team building strategies for professional support staff. One of the morning’s highlights was the informative panel discussion about the college and the upcoming SACS reaffirmation process. Attendees also had an opportunity to view a demo of the new college website scheduled to launch on September 1st.

On August 21st, colleagues will meet to discuss different strategies and tactics for building communities at Cedar Valley College. Keeping with the “Achieving Success” theme, Dr. Jennifer Wimbish has invited the entire campus to come and contribute to the success of all students. Other events have been planned during the fall semester to help connect students, faculty, administrators and staff.

El Centro College

On August 13th-14th, the El Centro College Honing Outcomes and Learning Assessment Committee (HOLA) hosted two district-wide workshops on student learning assessment and curriculum mapping. Dr. Alexei Matveev from Norfolk University in Virginia delivered the six-hour workshops at the new West Campus location of El Centro College. The events were sponsored through a District Retention

Award, and over half of the 115 workshop participants came from other colleges in the District. HOLA is planning to bring Dr. Matveev back to Dallas again in October to discuss student learning outcomes assessment for student service areas.

The H. Paxton Moore Fine Art Gallery will open its fall 2009 season with “Elegant Equations” work by Ronald Watson & Gordon Young on August 17th-September 12th. This exhibition will feature works of elegant sculptures in wood and mixed media materials by artist Ronald Watson, TCU chairman/gallery director, department of art and art history of Fort Worth, Texas; and mysterious mixed media collage works by Gordon Young, Dallas artist and Richland College professor of art. A reception will be held on Saturday, August 29th, from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. with a gallery talk by the artists at 6:00 p.m. The gallery will be open Saturday, September 12th from noon-4:00 p.m. in conjunction with the *2009 Dallas Art Dealers Association Fall Gallery Walk*.

On August 18th, Paul McCarthy and Carla Ranger spoke to a group of parents at Roseland Homes about the importance of building the expectation that their children will attend college. The program was part of the Family Fresh Start Initiative sponsored by Central Dallas Ministries. McCarthy sketched his experiences growing up in a family whose parents did not graduate from high school, yet instilled in him the desire to attend college. He also tried to dispel the myth that a college education is financially out of reach for all but the most affluent families. Carla encouraged parents to be involved in their children’s schools from the start, in the importance of knowing their rights and responsibilities, and in preparing their children early for college study.

On August 20th, Paul McCarthy attended the *Bonton Celebration and Wall Raising Ceremony*, a joint venture of Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity and H.I.S. BridgeBuilders. BridgeBuilders is an El Centro College partner. Among the speakers were Mayor Tom Leppert and Janet Huckabee, former Arkansas First Lady and Habitat Board member.

Richland College

Sustainable Community Building – “Healthy environment” – Richland College facilities services has developed new *green* entryway maintenance procedures to maintain all college entryways according to the green seal environmental standard for cleaning services. These procedures include: keeping outside entryways clean and free of debris through daily cleaning, ensuring the use of walk-off matting both inside and outside building entryways, and conducting daily vacuuming, or more frequently when necessary, to prevent migration of contaminants into campus buildings.

Student Success – Richland College’s African American Connection (ACC) is hosting a “Welcome Back” reception in early September. The ACC’s mission is to foster a spirit of success and empowerment for all students and employees, particularly those of color, and to inspire local positive change with a global impact. ACC is a support network for black students and employees to emphasize the importance of education, foster recruitment and retention, promote and celebrate creativity and leadership of black students and employee, provide a direct channel for disseminating ideas, recommendations, and suggestions to the college’s administration, and to share information with African American organizations at sister DCCCD colleges.

Employee Success – Congratulations to Lorrie Anderson, Richland College academic advisor, on being honored with the college’s 2009-2010 Jean Sharon Griffith Student Development Leadership award, an award recognizing individuals who significantly contribute to student development and student success. As coordinator of career advisors, Lorrie has enhanced career services for students through being instrumental in selecting Choices software for career assessment, developing information on the

college's advising website, and training non-career advisors in how to best assist students with career issues. She also serves as lead advisor for credit health professions program, trains other advisors regarding health professions information, and has served on the District's transfer services committee.

Institutional Effectiveness – Richland College Council on Teaching and Learning has created a Teaching Resources website (TRW) to support the work of full-time and adjunct instructors, online and offline. The TRW contains many documents on student engagement, including tips for the critical first three weeks of a semester. The website can be viewed at <http://www.richlandcollege.edu/tr/>. (See website information attached.)

DCCCD Campus High Schools

In Richland College's spirit of building sustainable local and world community, ten (10) **Richland Collegiate High School (RCHS)** students, enrolled in Professor Ambronita Douzart's August term history class - Civic Responsibility, completed action research projects involving experiences in the community. The class created monthly budgets for families, participated in service learning projects, and researched the history of their local communities. The RCHS students also developed websites for non-profit organizations, interviewed faculty members, and developed a Facebook group called *Responsus Civicus* that addresses topics dealing with civic responsibility. The *Responsus Civicus* group also designed its own logo/insignia for future use.

The **Early College High School (ECHS) at Mountain View College** will be planning ceremonies this academic year for its first group of senior graduates. Approximately 75 seniors will graduate with high school diplomas, but most will also have obtained their associates degrees. The ECHS is operating at full capacity for the first time this year and serving about 400 students, grades 9th-12th.

Brookhaven College

Thanks to a new agreement, Brookhaven College students and faculty members may now study and conduct research at the Tianjin International Cultural Institute (TICI) in China. Zhou Yu Wei, president of TICI, visited Brookhaven College on August 21st, toured the college, and met with Dr. Richard D. McCrary, interim president, Rodger P. Bennett, interim vice president for instruction, Dr. Aaron Ostrom, executive dean for special projects, and Elaine Cheng, math professor, who assisted as translator. Both presidents signed the agreement, which will allow the exchange of students and faculty members between both schools through August 31, 2014. Faculty members may choose to conduct research or lectures at the partner institution for up to two years. Exchange students may study for up to one semester. TICI boasts small class sizes, a variety of study programs and a focus on Chinese language and culture.

Brookhaven College staff members from the Business Services Office arranged a table in the main lobby to help students understand the Higher One card. Amber Howell, cashier, has been helping students at the table from 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. each day for the last week of registration and this first week of the fall semester. She has been answering questions and helping students get cards, working to update addresses, and assisting in activation of the cards. Steve Hughes, assistant director of business operations, when needed, has assisted Amber with the table. The addition of the Higher One table has saved time in the Business Services Office and helped the online registration area and student orientation, where students often look for answers.

The Visual Communication Department at Brookhaven College hosted a reception for the opening of a new exhibition on August 24th. The exhibition, titled "focus2 Brand Development: A Twenty-Year Retrospective," will be on display through September 18th in the Atrium Gallery. Todd Hart is co-founder of focus2 Brand Development, and his work has been published in numerous design books

and exhibited all over the world. In addition to spearheading focus2, Hart shares his knowledge with future designers by serving as an adjunct professor at the University of North Texas.

Dr. Richard D. McCrary, interim president, at Brookhaven College's convocation announced Sheri S. Van Court, professor of English as a Second Language, as the winner of the Minnie Stevens Piper award for the district level. Sheri Van Court was short on words with a heartfelt thanks to the college for the recognition of her 17 years of teaching at Brookhaven College. The three college-level nominees were Patti Burks, professor computer information technology, Adrien Cuellar-McGuire, professor of humanities and cultural studies, and Sheri S. Van Court, professor of English as a Second Language. Return Week also included good news from the "Grilling for Greenbacks" annual barbecue. The sale of lunch offerings raised \$1,012.00 for the Memorial Garden being established by a task force led by Carrie Schweitzer, assistant to the president, and Lisa Erich, professor of art. The garden will provide a quiet and beautiful on-campus setting to remember employees who have died.

Mountain View College

More than 600 students participated in student orientation activities at Mountain View College on August 20th-21st. Following a brief welcome by President Felix A. Zamora, students engaged in breakout sessions and workshops pertaining to admissions processes, financial aid, student clubs and organizations, adjusting to college life, improving study habits, and much more. Entertaining and informative presentations were delivered by Nathan Cole, Cathy Edwards, Glenda Hall, Regina Garner, Viola Bagley, Mark Gomez, Christa Jones and Dr. Kizuwanda Grant. Students also enjoyed a performance by the college dancers under the direction of John Merryfield, dance instructor.

The Mountain View College Human Resources Office welcomed Ronald Rappaport, guest speaker and financial consultant, on August 21st. Rarraport represents VALIC Financial Services, and his presentation was designed to educate employees and provide helpful tips regarding cash management, investment planning and tax planning. All of the college's employees were invited and each received professional development credit for having attended.

Mountain View College recently welcomed four new faculty members for the 2009-2010 academic year. Dr. Ryan Pettengill and Dr. Deb Yoder, new faculty, will join the Arts, Humanities and Social Science Division. Dr. Pettengill comes to the Dallas area from Lansing, Michigan, and earned his Ph.D. in history from Michigan State University in 2009. Dr. Yoder, who has previously taught psychology at Mountain View College, earned her Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of Texas at Austin Community College Leadership Program and has two master's degrees in counseling and kinesiology. Markay Rister, who joins the Communications and Teacher Education Division, has 20 years of teaching experience in high school English and journalism and as an adjunct English instructor for Western Texas and Navarro colleges. New faculty member Denise Shipley of the Science, Allied Health and Physical Education Division earned a master's degree in biology from the University of Texas at Arlington, where she also taught biology as an adjunct instructor.

Mountain View College will proudly host Professor Lupita Murillo Tinnen's art exhibition, "Looking Inward," from August 24th through September 18th in the Kiva Gallery. As part of the Larry Felty lecture series, Professor Tinnen will deliver a lecture on September 10th at 9:30 a.m., followed by a special reception in the Kiva Gallery at 12:30 p.m. Professor Tinnen is chair of the photography department with the Collin County Community College District. Much of her work addresses issues faced by the Mexican immigrant community. Her stunning large-scale color photographs are sure to convey a wealth of cultural and social insight. Professor Tinnen's lecture will address a variety of intriguing issues raised by her work. The exhibit and reception are free of charge and open to the public.

Eastfield College

The fall 2009 Eastfield College new student and family orientation sessions were held August 18th and August 22nd. New students and their parents/families participated in open sessions geared toward specific majors and steps available to assist students in choosing their major/career choice. Staff from admissions, advising and school outreach welcomed more than 500 new students and their parents to campus for these sessions. This year's program included the "Road to Success" skit moderated by Courtney Carter, speech faculty, and James Casarez, student, highlighting avenues to make the first-year experience for our new students a successful beginning to their educational journey at the college. Dr. Jean Conway, interim president, welcomed the enthusiastic crowd of new students to the campus and to the program's offering. Presenters included student services staff, faculty, administrators and instructional deans. A host of student volunteers from departments across the campus served as guides for students and their parents as they moved from session to session. Each new student received a college flash drive wrist band filled with an array of service information all geared to make this year a great beginning for them. At the end of the program, students were able to meet with student club representative, get backpacks and book bags, and enjoy the jazz band's performance lead by Oscar Passley, music faculty.

The Military Veterans orientation held at Eastfield College recently consisted of providing an overview to our military students on the various programs through the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). Military students can receive educational benefits to assist them as they pursue college, and in some cases can receive housing and book subsidies. With the new Chapter 33 Post 9/11 program effective this year, the college wanted to provide an informative and interactive workshop for students and their families to attend and receive answers on utilizing their benefits and cover the steps to enrolling in college. Military students rely on their educational benefits processed through our office to receive their monthly stipends from the VA. These stipends can range from between \$500-\$1,500 a month. Terry Benford, Veterans Affairs certifying official, conducted four sessions over a two week period. Ms. Brenda Hardaway, assistant director of financial aid and VA certifying official, coordinates the veteran services at the college under the direction of Dana Mingo, director of student financial support and services.

Moving on recommendations from the director and nurse in the campus health center, the Eastfield College Executive Council approved pro-active measures to limit the spread of H1N1 influenza outbreaks this upcoming year. Health Center staff drafted a document which gave a summary of updated H1N1 influenza information to pass along to the council along with initiatives to be put in place at the college. The health center put out flyers, posters and information on the college website regarding the prevention and treatment of influenza. Plans are under way to place updated information on campus LED monitors. They also purchased more than 120 hand sanitizer stations that were then installed at both campuses. These stations were placed in various strategic traffic areas throughout the campuses. The health center is scheduling general flu vaccinations for the fall semester as another countermeasure to the spread of the flu. It will continue to publicize other local flu vaccine locations throughout the fall semester. Kudos to Donnine Balance, director, and Cynthia Taylor, nurse, for their efforts and work this summer in preparing both the college and Pleasant Grove campus for this year's flu season. Prevention and containment will be key factors in dealing with community H1N1 flu outbreaks.

Congratulations to Ramiro Guitierrez, Eastfield College auto body faculty, who along with his team won the United States Tennis Association Dallas Men's Adult League in the 3.5 level championships this past spring. Guitierrez, along with Terrance Wickman, visiting scholar, and others ended up being the number one team out of all clubs in our city. The team went for the state and played against other

cities but lost one match which ended the dream for them. Guterrez says that Wickman played a very important part of the team's success. Guterrez played singles and doubles matches during the regular season and the championship weekend. And, as a product of continuing education sports, took his first tennis class at the college with former coach Christopher Geymen.