



Dallas County Community College District

Office of the Chancellor

TO: DCCCD Board Members

FROM: Dr. Wright L. Lassiter, Jr.

DATE: February 13, 2009

RE: Weekend Memo #133

MODERN THINK PREVIEW

Back in early November, I wrote and talked at length about the second round of the ModernThink survey. If you will recall, our initial survey participation in 2007 was a real milestone. It marked the first opportunity that the District had taken toward developing an organization-wide profile of our employee opinions and climate in more than a decade. In following up with a second survey in 2008, I knew that significant progress might be hard to see. However, the interest and activity levels around the first year results made that short-term follow-up all the more important in confirming our progress.

Rich Boyer, the CEO of ModernThink, continues to work closely with us, and joined the Chancellor's Staff on February 6 for a discussion on the results of the 2008 survey. While you will be receiving more detailed location-based information on February 17th, I wanted to give you my overall perspective on this work as a part of today's Weekend Memo.

I am pleased that our participation increased, and that we held steady with 6 out of every 10 employees who participated confirming a positive perspective on their work and the work of the District.

These are some key points of this second survey to celebrate:

- *1,547 surveys were returned. While I was quite happy to see a 2007 response rate of 39%, the 2008 response rate of 56% was extraordinary. With more than 75 questions for the 2008 survey (compared with 64 in 2007), this response rate demonstrates your interest and commitment toward making the DCCCD a great place to work!*
- *The timing of the 2007 survey was consistent with the opening of the fall semester – one of our busiest times! With the delay in the 2008 administration of this survey, we experienced a 20% increase in faculty and administrative participation, as well as a 12% increase in professional support staff survey completion.*
- *Each location is well-represented in the data, and:*
 - *Females completed the survey at significantly higher rates than male employees.*
 - *Employees in the age range of 55-59 years completed 219 surveys, representing 14% of the overall participation.*
 - *Employees serving between 5-10 years with the DCCCD represented 31% of all survey responses.*

Your answers continue to identify a very positive institutional perspective. I continue to be pleased with the strong commitment to our organizational mission, and the pride that you take in performing and representing this work. The overall perspective for departmental interactions has moved in a positive direction as well.

For 2008, we were able to customize the survey more specifically in the area of leadership, and I am confident that we can continue to make progress in these critical areas.

Our overall average score for this effort showed that 62% of DCCCD employees felt positively about their individual job, the experience in their workgroup and their connection to the larger organization. Since our initial survey, the overall institution-wide average has not changed significantly, however there have been some individual location advances. The departmental average has increased marginally.

While my notes for you today are purposefully general – and positive – I must say that not all questions or categories were quite as positive as our initial survey year. Many differences are small, but where there are changes of significance, I hope that we will all stop to open our minds to the possible areas for improvement. The impact of such survey efforts is only as good as the use to which we put those results! Remember – “the largest room in any house is the room for improvement.”

Now the hard work begins, as your location administrator begins to review the reports in detail and to share a variety of information with you. With two years of data now available, I am hopeful that you will join me, and the respective leadership teams, in looking forward to some increased opportunities for identifying the trends and areas for improvement. Some of you may be invited, by your location chief administrator, to participate in extended location discussions about this work, and I hope that you will be an active participant in those efforts.

The Board of Trustees will receive a district-wide overview at their March 3rd work session, and after that presentation by Rich Boyer, I will provide some additional details for your information. While we do not intend to participate in another survey during fall 2009, the Chronicle of Higher Education has launched a similar national survey effort, which will include community colleges this year. Our future participation in such a national survey might provide some additional external benchmarking to complement other internal improvement efforts.

As we continue to identify ways to best meet the needs of the students of Dallas County, I am pleased to serve with such a strong cadre of team members committed to success! I thank you most sincerely for your support, cooperation, assistance and efforts to craft a more collaborative institutional culture and practice.

Eastfield College

In conjunction with Black History Month, Eastfield College Student Programs and Resources presented an informative lecture on the “Buffalo Soldier.” The nickname was given to the U.S. 10th Cavalry Regiment of the United States Army. Formed in 1866 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, “Buffalo Soldier” was a name given by the Native American tribes against whom they fought. Local historian, Wendell Prince of Lancaster, Texas, told their story to students and staff.

In conjunction with Eastfield College’s celebration of Black History Month and the college’s Speakers Series, Reverend Marcia Dyson addressed “Why We Can’t Wait: The Need for Social Transformation” on

February 9th. Rev. Dyson is a political strategist affiliated with the Center for Social Justice Policy at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Her topic was timely and benefited students in all majors, particularly in sociology, history, government, psychology, social work and religion. She shared her wisdom and insight regarding national and international issues with over 150 students and staff. The event was co-sponsored by Student Programs and Resources and the college Office of Access and Equity.

Javier E. Olguin, executive director of the Pleasant Grove campus, was recognized on January 31st by the Southeast Dallas Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (SEDHCC) in Pleasant Grove with a distinguished member award. Olguin is a founding board member of the Chamber formed this past year. The SEDHCC has grown to a record high of 105 institutional members in its first year of operations and has future plans to develop a scholarship fund for the Pleasant Grove campus and DCCCD colleges. In addition, the Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education (TACHE) held its *34th Annual TACHE Conference* February 1-4th in Austin to coincide with the 81st Legislative Session. As part of their annual presidents and dignitaries reception, Olguin was honored with the “Outstanding Service and Accomplishments” award.

“Life on the Nile,” an exhibition by Awad Abdelgadir and produced by Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, is currently on exhibit in the Eastfield College Library. One of the world’s most important rivers and home to one of the world’s earliest civilizations, the Nile flows northward through Sudan and Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. This exhibition provides a vivid introduction to the people and daily life of a Nubian village, Az-Zawrat, which lies on the banks of the Nile. Created by a native of Sudan, “Life on the Nile” uses color photographs, concise texts and samples of ceremonial clothing, basketry and natural medicines. The exhibit transports viewers to a fascinating world dramatically different from their own, and was developed to be informative and interesting to a diverse audience, particularly elementary and middle school-age viewers. Humanities Texas develops and supports diverse programs across the state, including lectures, oral history projects, teacher institutes, museum exhibitions and documentary films. The exhibit continues through March 3rd.

North Lake College

Our Employees – Enrique Otero, psychology faculty; Crystal Larthridge, senior placement specialist, and Lesly Castillo, college community outreach coordinator, were guest speakers at the Irving ISD Business Exchange Day program on January 30-31st. Each year, North Lake College faculty and staff participate to help educate and motivate students to excel in school and pursue college. Lynda Edwards, dean of educational partnerships, serves on the Business Exchange Day planning committee.

In January, a book by Ivan Dole, North Lake College developmental reading faculty, was published by Wadsworth, a leading publisher of books, online and multimedia solutions for the humanities and the behavioral and social sciences. Connect: College Reading motivates students to improve their reading comprehension by helping them identify and draw on their strengths whatever their learning style.

Dr. Darryl Howard, North Lake College Religion faculty, was the keynote speaker at the annual MLK Luncheon held on January 19th. The event, which honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was sponsored by the Irving chapter of the NAACP. The title of Dr. Howard’s address was “The 7 Virtues That Must Define the Content of Our Character as We Bring about Change We Can Believe In!”

Our Community – On Saturday, February 7th, North Lake College presented DESTINATION: SCIENCE, a program to promote science as a discipline to female high school students. Approximately 100 enthusiastic students from Irving High School and Union Bower Alternative High School attended. Cindy Simmons, biology adjunct, Fredella Wortham, chemistry, Len Kubicek, geology, and Viola Ruck, physics, conducted rotating sessions in their subject areas. During the program, parents attended a college

orientation session conducted by Lynda Edwards, Jessica Thompson and Maria Delgado of Educational Partnerships.

El Centro College

The Professional Development Committee of the DFW Realtors Leadership class, in association with the DFW Realtors Association, visited the Food and Hospitality Program and toured the Allied Health and Nursing Building on February 6th. The committee works to make their colleagues aware of the higher education opportunities in downtown Dallas.

On Thursday, February 5th, the El Centro College health center and students of the Fellowship of All Christians campus organization co-sponsored the 5th Annual Close To The Heart Blood Drive with Carter BloodCare. This drive is held annually in recognition of February being both African American History and American Heart Health month. It is meant to highlight the contributions made to health care by African Americans, the value of service to the community, and the importance of heart health for everyone. On this occasion there was a tremendous turnout of 49 blood donor candidates, many of whom also signed up for the bone marrow donor registry. Thirty-three pints of blood were collected, meaning that the drive donation total will actually help nearly 100 deserving recipients in our community.

Jennifer Pereyda, part-time departmental assistant in the Learning Support Services division, was selected as the recipient of the *DCCCD Retiree Association Scholarship Award* for the 2009 spring semester. She was chosen from among 31 applicants. Each applicant had to submit a one-page typed essay clearly detailing their future academic goals and career plans. Jennifer's career goal is to earn her doctorate in sociology and social work and work in a social service setting, preferably a nonprofit organization. Her long-term goal is to one day own and operate a non-profit organization that benefits and empowers impoverished women or families.

Film director David Wilson came to El Centro College on February 10th for a special presentation to faculty, staff and students under the sponsorship of the college's Title V program. A 28-year-old African-American journalist, Wilson ventured into his family's past to seek answers to America's racial divide. His acclaimed documentary, *Meeting David Wilson*, allowed him to discover a plantation in North Carolina where his family was once enslaved. It is owned today by a 62-year-old white man, also named David Wilson, who is a direct descendant of his family's slave master. Wilson's documentary has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Reader's Digest*, among others.

DCCCD Campus High School

Thirty-three students in the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) attended the state conference in San Marcos last weekend. **Middle College High School of El Centro College** is the TAFE President for schools in Educational Service Center Region 10. The Middle College "Steppers" performed and competed last Saturday in the "Stomp Out Teen Violence" program at Southwest Center Mall and that evening competed in the Martin High School Step competition.

Delaney Sparks, Caroline Creaseman, Leslie Castañeda, Robert Cornelious, Christa Vielma, and Maryann Aguinaga, **Richland Collegiate High School** juniors, recently participated in Community College Day in Austin. Gerald Napoles and Wilfred Manyango of the college's SPAR staff led the Richland College Student Government Association (SGA) officers along with Eastfield, Cedar Valley, North Lake, and Brookhaven SGA representatives. The students met with state legislators, attended a legislative session, and noted that a highlight of the event was the opportunity to interact with Chancellor Wright Lassiter and State Senator Carol Kent.

Zoyie Moore, office manager, and Joann Munoz, data clerk, both with the **Early College High School (ECHS) at Mountain View College**, recently attended a week-long training session at the Dallas Independent School District administration building where they were trained to utilize CHANCERY, an online attendance program. The new system will allow the ECHS to expedite taking attendance and eliminate a significant amount of paperwork and expense to the district each year.

Cedar Valley College

Student Success – The African American Males Initiative speaker series continued this week at Cedar Valley College with guest speaker Tre Black of TreCo Investments. In addition to operating TreCo Investments, a real estate management firm, Mr. Black is involved with several civic organizations. He currently serves on the boards of Dallas iMedia, Park South YMCA and the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce. He also served as treasurer for Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkin’s campaign. The series continues next week with Dr. Ron Hay, and the following week with Greg Fields and Robbie Owens, husband/wife television personalities.

Samuel Muentes and Daniel Snyder were selected to serve on the District’s IT Strategic Planning Committee as student representatives. The student representatives are nominated by the college and selected by the Vice President of Student Development Council to serve a term of one year. Additionally, they are eligible to receive a scholarship for their service. Sam and Daniel are students of the college Computer Graphics Program, and support students and faculty as lab assistants in the Student Resource Center (SRC). They are founding members of “*The eXperience multiMedia Project – XMP*” hosted by the SRC.

The Real Estate Department at Cedar Valley College recently received approval from the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) to teach the following online Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) courses: TREC Legal Update MCE, TREC Ethics Update MCE, and Sustainable Housing and Building Green - What Agents Should Know.

Fidel Guevara, director of recruitment for Cedar Valley College, will be interviewed by television station Univision 23 and be aired on Saturday, February 28th at 10:00 a.m. Fidel’s interview will announce plans for the upcoming event Las Llaves del Éxito College Fair. Las Llaves is a partnership between the DCCCD and Dallas Independent School District, and designed for 11th through 12th grade students to assist them with preparing for college. This year’s program will take place on Saturday, March 7th from 8:00 a.m. until noon on the campus. Admission is free and open to the general public.

Brookhaven College

Oscar M. Lopez, vice president for enrollment management and student success, traveled to Washington, D.C. to accept an award in honor of Brookhaven College. The college was named one of the nation’s top six of 635 institutions for the 2007-2008 academic year to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll (PHECSHR). The heavy crystal award was presented February 9th at the annual meeting of the American Council on Education. Brookhaven College was recognized with two other institutions in the category for “Special Focus: Service to Youth from Disadvantaged Circumstances.” The college, alongside Duke University, N.C., and University of Missouri-Kansas City, MO; California State University, Fresno, CA; Emory University, Atlanta, GA; and Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, earned top honors in the category for “General Community Service.” The award is the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement. Yasaman Contractor, coordinator for Student Programs and Resources Office, and Huang Dai, student, who was named the Goldblatt Scholar for community service, also attended the event. The PHECSHR, launched in 2006, recognizes colleges and universities nationwide that support innovative and effective community service and service-learning programs. The Honor Roll is a program

of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and is sponsored by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, the U.S. Departments of Education and Housing and Urban Development. See online: http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/newsroom/releases_detail.asp?tbl_pr_id=1210 (See article attached.)

Jane Rowe, professor of child development, recently was selected as a recipient of an award from ChildCareGroup of Dallas at the group's annual meeting and luncheon on February 5th at the United Way of Metropolitan Dallas headquarters. Dr. Rowe was honored for her outstanding support of the programs and services of ChildCareGroup.

"The Ancient Maya: Art and History" was the topic of a special presentation by Adam L. Herring, Ph.D., associate professor of art history at SMU. Just less than 100 students gathered to hear the presentation, given during Edleeca Thompson's humanities course, "Mexico: A Cultural Perspective." Herring shared a brief history of the Maya people, an outline of where they lived, and focused on the cultural information that can be gathered from their art.

Brookhaven College has taken American Heart Month to heart this February with a variety of observances and activities. Dozens of employees wore the color red on February 6th for National Wear Red Day. The special day of wearing red is designed to raise awareness of the fact that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women. Mildred Kelley, college nurse, is sending college-wide e-mails with heart and health facts throughout the month. The college also is hosting a blood drive on February 17-18th with Carter BloodCare staff members bringing their mobile unit to the college.

LeCroy Center

The staff of the LeCroy Center celebrated its first win in the new "Learning Technology Innovation of the Year" award for 2008-2009. This special award was a recommendation from the distance strategic planning process (2007-2008) and focuses on innovations in learning technology for student success. The Digital Resource Repository Team received this prestigious award last Friday, February 6th, at the district's 2008-2009 awards program, in Dallas. The repository project provides a unique searchable database of more than 2500 video segments and interactive Flash activities for faculty use and licensing to Dallas TeleLearning national clients. This unique project was a collaborative effort between the DCCCD and San Bernardino Community Colleges in California. Team members included Craig Mayes and Bob Crook (team leaders), Rachelle Howell, Glen Kuck (San Bernardino Community College), Kay Hampshire, Thomas Upton, Noel Cavazos, Craig Wright, Sal Chavez, Janet Fulton, Becky Stinson, Valerie Cavazos, and Sue Parks all from the LeCroy Center. For this first-time award, 12 teams from around the district were nominated.

Pam Quinn and Robert Rosenbalm attended the recent conference for the Council for College and Military Education in Honolulu. The DCCCD/Dallas TeleCollege and Eastfield College are partners in both the Navy College Program Afloat for College Education, and the Navy College Partnership program which serve sailors worldwide on bases and at sea. In addition, they met with representatives from the Coast Guard and the Air Force to try to expand into new programs in those services.

Staff of the LeCroy Center and friends around the district helped Andrea Jenkins (Dallas TeleCollege) celebrate more than 20-years in the district, as she prepares for retirement to the San Antonio area later this month. Andrea, who has worked at both Richland College and the LeCroy Center, was instrumental in helping the beginning phases of the Dallas TeleCollege, and served as the DTC first registrar.

Richland College

Community and Economic Development – Approximately 70 Garland High School Achievement Academy students and their parents visited Richland College on February 7th. This predominantly Latino group holds the distinction of having the largest number of college-bound students among several similar programs at Garland High School. Hilda Della-Sera, the college's rising star coordinator, shared instructions on how to access funds for college; Jacobo Kupersztock, adjunct biology instructor, spoke about the architectural marvels of their indigenous ancestors; and Luz Villegas, director of community programs, talked about the value of higher education. Rising Star and Richland Collegiate High School student volunteers provided campus tours and awarded door prizes to participants.

Employee Success – Congratulations to Professor Bill Slonecker of Richland College's Engineering Technology and Emerging Professions program on being honored as the 2009 Outstanding Humanities Educator by the Community College Humanities Association, Southwestern Division, during the *North Texas Community College Consortium's 16th Annual Humanities Spring Conference* on February 6th. Bill was honored for his years of service in promoting the humanities and in recognition of the History of Dallas course he has taught at the college for years.

Student Success – This week's Richland College Student Wall of Honor features Samie Sabet-Sarvestani. Growing up in Iran as a member of a Baha'i family, Samie and his family endured discrimination ultimately causing them to flee to Turkey. As refugees and after being interviewed several times by the United Nations and the American Embassy, Samie and his family were allowed to immigrate to Dallas, where he began his studies at the college in spring 2007. Samie works two part-time jobs and is completing a 96-hour internship in a CVS pharmacy. Despite this grueling schedule, Samie maintains a 3.8 GPA, is a member of Phi Theta Kappa, and is a DCCCD scholarship recipient. He has completed the college's Pharmacy Technician program and passed the test to become a certified pharmacy technician, with future plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in medical technology and a graduate degree in pharmacy.

Institutional Effectiveness – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has selected Richland College's 2009-2011 Category C Intensive Summer Program proposal for a grant of \$153,000 to help fund the college's Closing the Gaps strategies, P-16 initiatives, and college readiness initiatives. The funding will provide \$750 per student per year, plus \$2,000 per intern for up to three interns per year.

Mountain View College

Mountain View College welcomed Dr. Sheron Patterson on Thursday, February 12th, as part of a guest lecture series associated with Black History Month. Dr. Patterson engaged students, faculty and staff with a presentation entitled "Finance of Romance." Dr. Patterson is the senior pastor of Highland Hills United Methodist Church in Dallas. She holds the distinction of being the first African American woman to be ordained in the United Methodist Church in the North Texas region. These extraordinary accomplishments landed Dr. Patterson a place of honor in the National Women's Museum. Additionally, she is the author of eight books, a frequent columnist for the *Dallas Morning News*, and has been featured on CNN.

Jerry Scheerer, dean of research and planning at Mountain View College, released The MVC "2007-2008 Institutional Effectiveness Report Card" on Tuesday, February 10th. The "state of the college" message reports to stakeholders and constituencies the fulfillment of the college's strategic plan, mission, and goals. This is the second consecutive year in the college's commitment to systematically documenting evidence regarding continuous evaluation and improvement of programs and services. The report card can be viewed on the Mountain View College Research and Planning web site at <http://www.mountainviewcollege.edu/sites/ie/default.aspx>.

On February 4th, thirteen students and Mountain View College staff members joined 1,500 community college students, administrators and trustees from around the state at the state capitol for Community College Day in Austin. The Dallas County Community College District was represented by Trustee Kitty Boyle, Chancellor Wright Lassiter and a total of almost 150 students from throughout the district. Community colleges were recognized in resolutions in both the House and Senate. Students discussed topics such as additional funding for DCCCD, college readiness issues, textbook costs, and increases in financial aid dollars. Students and staff who made the trip from the college included: Rebekah Sipriano, student programs and resources; Sarah Conine, Student Government Association (SGA) president; Lorena Colunga, SGA treasurer; Juan Santoyo, SGA parliamentarian; Alyssa Rivas, SGA historian; Bryant Collins, SGA member and Green Team Committee chair; Walkener Toilolo, SGA member and community service committee chair; Jonathan Saavedra, SGA member; Belem Perez, SGA member; Jaquel Thomas, Black Student Organization (BSO) president; Rodney Gatson, BSO vice president; Christie Gatson, BSO activities coordinator; and Richard Dews, Mountain View College student.

David Barrientos, Mountain View College School Alliance coordinator, recently made important recruiting visits to Grand Prairie and Moises Molina high schools. On February 11th, Barrientos visited Moises Molina High School to discuss with students a myriad of topics including college readiness, admissions procedures, financial aid options, and specific academic programs. On February 7th, Barrientos attended one of the largest parent conferences offered in North Texas at the *Title I Parent and Community Conference* at the Grand Prairie High School Ninth-Grade Center. Nearly 3,000 parents and students were in attendance.