Good afternoon!

Last week, I had an opportunity to spend time talking to faculty, staff, and administrators at Richland College. I wanted to share with them some of my thoughts about why community colleges are essential — even when it appears that the economy is turning around and that some people are doing well. Many others are facing challenges that we need to consider.

Here is the presentation I made at Richland College — the first in a series of JOE Talks that we will share with the District:  http://www.dcccd.edu/AU/Chancellor/media/Pages/JOE-Talk-Im-Fine.aspx.

Enjoy your long Labor Day weekend, and thanks for everything you have done this week to welcome our new and returning students by giving them assistance and advice during their hectic first week of classes.

Joe May

(Note: For the best viewing experience, please use the latest version of Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Opera, or Apple Safari.)

El Centro College

El Centro College’s Dr. Teresa Isbell (dean of planning, assessment, and research) and David Goomas (psychology faculty) have had an article published in the peer-reviewed Community College Journal of Research and Practice, titled “Computer-Assisted Rubric Evaluation: Enhancing Outcomes and Assessment Quality” (DOI: 10.1080/10668926.2014.899526). This case study examines the use of computer-assisted grading rubrics using Blackboard’s ™ Rubric Evaluation Report to compare expected performance for each criterion of an assignment to the students’ level of achievement. According to Isbell, summary reports across the curriculum can then be used by coordinators, program chairs, and deans to direct resources where needed for improvement.
On August 18, El Centro College full-time faculty attended a half-day forum at El Centro College Bill J. Priest Campus. The following faculty members presented “Ignite Talks” on their area of involvement: Beth Stall (biology) presented “Outcome Measures”; Cassandra Bowels (mathematics) presented “Supplemental Instruction”; Joe Martinez (counselor) presented “Student Focus Groups”; and Dr. Jose Alejandro (nursing) presented “Technology in the Classroom.” Following each presentation, faculty members participated in small group discussions on the subject covered. The forum was very positive; plans have been made to continue it as a faculty-driven process in the future.

The El Centro College Fall Convocation was held on August 21. The highlight of the program was meeting the new president of the college, Dr. José Adames, who was the keynote speaker at the ceremony that morning and also at the adjunct faculty general assembly that evening. Adames will officially begin his tenure on September 1. In addition, several retiring faculty and staff were honored on August 21 at a retirement celebration. Retirees present at the reception were: Al Tolentino, faculty counselor for health occupations; Diana Reding, associate degree nursing faculty; Antonio Pecina, director of college transitions and outreach; and James McCarty, associate degree nursing faculty.

Dr. Paul McCarthy, retiring El Centro College president, was honored at a retirement celebration held in the college Student Center on August 22. In attendance were Dr. McCarthy’s wife, three children and their spouses and partner, his two grandchildren, sister, and brother and sister-in-law. Congratulatory remarks were provided by DCCCD Chancellor Dr. Joe May, DCCCD Chancellor Emeritus Dr. Wright Lassiter, representatives of employee and student associations/councils, and the general audience. Mrs. McCarthy received a beautiful floral arrangement and Dr. McCarthy was presented with a custom-made plaque designed and made by Byron Zarrabi, program coordinator - welding, and members of the Welding Department at El Centro College Bill J. Priest Campus.

**North Lake College**

*Our Community* — On August 15, Lesly Castillo, college outreach and recruitment coordinator at North Lake College, attended the 59th annual Irving ISD Back-to-School Luncheon. The event, celebrating 452 new teachers and administrators, was hosted by the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce.

On August 22, Irving’s La Cima Club hosted its 8th Annual Charity Classic. The event, themed “Deep in the Heart of Texas,” included Texas food, live music, and silent and live auctions benefiting Augie’s Quest (ALS Therapy Development Institute (TDI)), ClubCorp Employee Partners Care Foundation, and Irving Cares. Executive Dean of North Lake College West Campus Mike Cooley represented the college at the Charity Classic.

*Our Employees* — Dr. Marilyn Mays, North Lake College executive dean of mathematics and natural science, recently had an article published in the August issue of *AMATYC News*, official newsletter of the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (AMATYC). The article is entitled “Considering the Impact of AMATYC.”

North Lake College held its Fall 2014 Blue Green (Return) Week, August 18-22. Throughout the week, faculty and staff were provided opportunities to attend professional development classes and enjoy “just for fun” sessions. On August 18, there was a campus-wide celebration to congratulate and welcome the new president of North Lake College, Christa Slejko. On August 21, Slejko delivered a State of College address, which she called “Perspectives.”

**Brookhaven College**

*Institutional Effectiveness* — For the second year, the Veterans Affairs Office at Brookhaven College made it easier for student veterans to register and complete their benefits paperwork by providing
Priority Certification sessions. These sessions are designed to help student veterans complete their paperwork and orient them to the community college experience as well as address their questions and/or concerns prior to the start of the semester. Various departments at Brookhaven College along with numerous community partners helped by being on-hand to address different concerns. College President Dr. Thom Chesney attended one of the sessions where there were 51 student veterans; the three sessions that were offered had a total of 125 attendees.

Since the Brookhaven College Office of Student Life reorganized New Student Orientation two years ago and made it mandatory for incoming students with less than 12 credit hours, the number of students participating in the sessions has tripled. More than a thousand students attended one of nine sessions offered in a two-week span. At each session, new students were welcomed by an academic dean and the vice president for enrollment management and student success. Approximately 20 offices/departments at Brookhaven College, including Student Life, Career Services, Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling Center, and academic departments, participated in the Involvement Fair at each session, where each group manned a table and spent time talking with students about the various services offered. In addition, Brookhaven College Student Government Association President Jordan Cisneros offered a brief motivational keynote at each session. To help the students in transitioning to college and learning tips for succeeding in the new environment, they were divided into small groups. Brookhaven College Student Ambassadors led these groups and took them on tours of the campus.

Community Engagement/Institutional Effectiveness — Brookhaven College served as the host site and partner for W.T. White High School and Thomas C. Marsh, E.D. Walker, and George Bannerman Dealey middle schools for their back-to-school professional development day on August 20. Suzette Vaquera-Constantine, Brookhaven College outreach and recruitment coordinator, serves as liaison for these schools. Brookhaven College’s Doris Rousey, executive dean for educational partnerships; Marilyn Kolesar-Lynch, associate vice president of development; Daffne Bennett, outreach and recruitment coordinator; and Edna Love, executive assistant to the president, coordinated the event with Nicole Niewinski, principal of Thomas C. Marsh Preparatory Academy/Middle School. Two hundred fifty teachers began the professional development day with a slide show, titled “Your College, Your Community,” depicting highlights of Brookhaven College and serving as a visual as Rousey, Lynch, and Jean Kaplan, director of college and community outreach at Brookhaven College, kicked off three simultaneous sessions for the school partners. These were followed by six targeted breakout sessions that were led by principals and Dallas ISD instructional specialists.

Employee Success — To jump start the fall semester, Brookhaven College held its annual Emerald Awards ceremony to recognize the college’s employee excellence awardees. Jon Tarell and Monique Jameison were recognized for Innovation of the Year for their Veterans Affairs Priority Certification Sessions. Debi Whitley, administrative assistant in the president’s office, was honored as Part-time Employee of the Year. Barbara Hughes, department assistant in workforce and continuing education, was named Employee of the Year. The Jean Sharon Griffith Student Development Leadership Award was presented to Beverly Neu Menassa, assistant dean of student support services. Oscar Lopez, vice president for enrollment management and student success, was named Administrator of the Year. The award for Workforce and Continuing Education Instructor of the Year went to Maria Concepcion “Conchis” Silva, English for Speakers of Other Languages instructor. The Excellence in Teaching Award for Adjunct Faculty was presented to Susan White, adjunct professor of geology. Final congratulations go to Jim Dudlo, professor of history, as Brookhaven College’s Minnie Stevens Piper Award nominee.

Eastfield College

Advancing Student Success — Almost 1,800 students were assisted by Eastfield College employees during the first two days of the fall semester, August 25-26. Faculty and staff volunteers manned 4-1-1
information tables positioned throughout the campus and helped direct new and returning students to classrooms, division offices, financial aid, restrooms, and other areas of the college. They also provided campus maps as well as information about upcoming campus events.

Fostering Employee Success — Kimberly Lowry, executive dean of student and enrollment services at Eastfield College, has been appointed to serve as the community college representative for Region III of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. This national organization promotes the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. Lowry's two-year term runs through March 15, 2016. As part of her duties, she will attend Region III board meetings, provide a board report three times each year, and maintain fiscal responsibility for regional funds. NASPA provides professional development, advocacy, and research for 13,000 members in 25 countries and 8 U.S. territories.

Meeting Community Educational Needs — Eastfield College has teamed with Richland College to offer a new Criminal Digital Forensic Investigations certificate designed to prepare students for a future career in a specialized area of criminal justice. With this certificate, students will be provided the knowledge and skills to qualify to become a Texas private investigator; it will also serve as professional development for those already employed in related careers. Students will be taught and trained in the basics of gathering and analyzing evidence. Local, state, and national law enforcement agencies along with private detectives, attorneys, and judges rely heavily on the work of professionally trained forensic specialists. Fifty percent of the courses in the Criminal Digital Forensic Investigations certificate program are each being taught using the curriculum and faculty of Eastfield College and Richland College.

Mountain View College

Employee Success — Mountain View College is proud to announce that Marcy Miller (Graphics Department) and Randy Clower (videographer) recently placed in the top three in the following categories of the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations (NCMPR) District 4 Medallion Awards: print advertisement, single ad; college promotion video; and folder. Category winners of the gold, silver, and bronze awards will be announced at the NCMPR District 4 Fall Conference, which will be held in Oklahoma City, OK, September 28-30.

Trinidad “Trini” Garza Early College High School at Mountain View College

Student Success and Community Outreach — Mountain View College proudly announces that Trinidad “Trini” Garza Early College High School has been named by The Daily Beast as one of the “Top High Schools 2014.” This is the news reporting website’s first high school list. Rankings were based on six indicators gathered from school surveys to compare public high schools in the United States, with graduation and college acceptance rates weighed most heavily. Other criteria included: college-level courses and exams, percentage of students with free or reduced-price lunch, and SAT and ACT scores — another mark of how well a school prepares students for college.

Cedar Valley College

Our College — On August 22, Cedar Valley College hosted the successful “Commit to Success New Student Orientation!” on campus from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. The event featured carnival games, door prizes, scholarship awards, information sessions, and lunch with faculty and staff. The more than 750 new students who were welcomed to Cedar Valley College had the opportunity to meet college President Dr. Jennifer Wimbish and members of the administration, faculty, and staff. They were also provided a tour of the campus prior to the first day of class.

Our Community Outreach — On August 25, Cedar Valley College staff volunteers and Anna Mays, vice president of student services and enrollment management, participated in the Lancaster ISD Back to
School Red Carpet Welcome meet and greet the students and parents event. Mays was interviewed, along with Texas State Board of Education representative Mavis Knight and the Lancaster ISD Board of Trustees, at George Washington Carver Sixth Grade STEM Learning Center. Lancaster ISD Superintendent Dr. Michael McFarland partnered with Cedar Valley College, faith-based organizations, and local political and city officials to welcome Lancaster students (along with their parents) back to school.

Our Resource Development — Cedar Valley College Resource Development representatives Gerald Andrews and Monroe Mayes attended the first-ever Black Enterprise Top 100 Reception and the State of Black Business Forum, conducted by the Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce (DBCC) on August 26-27, at the Omni Dallas Hotel. The events were sponsored by Wells Fargo and Park Place Motorcars Dallas. The Black Enterprise Top 100 Reception honored DBCC members and business owners who are recognized on the prestigious Black Enterprise Top 100 list. The honorees were Roland Parrish - Parrish McDonald's Restaurants, Ltd.; Al Black - On Target Supplies & Logistics; and Charles Grigsby - Facilities Interiors. Invitees included elected officials, sponsors and guests, the DBCC Board of Directors, and select Chamber members. The State of Black Business Forum informed Chamber members and the community on the climate and condition of African-American business in Dallas. It also provided a statistical overview of the state of black business, the numbers and trends in various industries, and potential economic growth opportunities. Keynote speakers for the Forum were Colette Holt, principal, Colette Holt & Associates, and Bishop T.D. Jakes, The Potter’s House.

LeCroy Center
STARLINK (State of Texas Academic Resource Link), housed at the LeCroy Center, recently partnered with SUNY (State University of New York) Center for Professional Development to offer discounted STARLINK memberships to its 64 campus locations throughout the state of New York. STARLINK will be presenting a webinar to those SUNY member institutions on September 11, introducing them to the new STARLINK website, services offered, 24/7 access to STARLINK’s online library, and professional development opportunities.

District Service Center
District Service Center Facilities Management interns have received accolades! Architectural intern Erika Cooper received her master’s degree in architecture from Prairie View A&M University on August 9. Engineering intern Ivan Hernandez received a $1,000 scholarship from the Dr. Emmett J. Conrad Leadership Program on August 14 during its 21st Annual Intern/Sponsor Recognition Luncheon. Hernandez is a mechanical engineering major at Texas Tech University. Cooper and Hernandez are both participants in the Leadership Program. In addition, Facilities Management received a State of Texas Certificate of Appreciation from Texas State Senator Royce West recognizing its sponsorship of the Program.

Richland College
Sustainable Community Building — On August 7, Rose-Mary Rumbley, popular presenter in the Richland College Emeritus Program, one of the most sought-after Dallas speakers, and fourth-generation Dallas citizen, took Presbyterian Village North residents on a bus tour of Dallas — traveling across the city, showing residents interesting landmarks, and relating the stories behind them. Tour stops included: Klyde Warren Park; Dallas Baptist University (DBU) campus, where the Rumbley Room honors her DBU speech/drama teaching legacy; Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery; Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge; and Highland Park. Rumbley will return to Presbyterian Village North for a Veterans Day presentation, “God Bless America,” on November 10, as part of Richland College’s Emeritus Lectures at Retirement Communities series.
Student Success — Congratulations to Liz Nguyen, Richland College dance student, on being selected as an apprentice with the 8&1 Dance Company, under the direction of Jill Rucci, who formerly performed with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in New York City. Eight & One is a modern, jazz-based dance company with the mission of dance, work, rehearse, perfect, perform, and entertain. Nguyen also studies with Gina Sawyer, Richland College dance professor, and has performed with the Richland College dance program.

Employee Success — Congratulations to Dr. Jennifer Jones, psychology professor, on being honored with the 2014 Excellence in Teaching Award for Full-Time Faculty during the all-college Convocation on August 19. Having taught at Richland College since 2010, Jones has also been actively involved in the implementation and assessment phases of the Richland College Quality Enhancement Plan, “Learning to Learn: Developing Learning Power.”

Institutional Effectiveness — Richland College Office of Planning, Research, Effectiveness, and Development staff presented the senior leadership team survey data and analysis results from the most recent surveys of students, faculty, and staff. These surveys included the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, Richland College Graduate Exit Survey, and Noel-Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey. The senior leadership team will create action plans as next steps in addressing opportunities for improvement from survey data, as well as communicating results to the college community.