

# Revolutionizing Student Development



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## NEW WAVES FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

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Summary Report of the Second Annual Conference  
of the National Council on Student Development

Clearwater Beach, Florida  
October 2000

*Edited by*  
*Andrew J. Matonak*  
*Ted James*





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## Acknowledgments

ANDREW J. MATONAK

Lakeland Community College

TED JAMES

Douglas College

The National Council on Student Development (NCS D) hosted its second annual conference, *Revolutionizing Student Development: New Waves for Student Development Professionals*, at Clearwater Beach, Florida in October 2000. The conference was a resounding success due to the dedication and work of the NCS D board, presenters, and sponsors.

Special recognition goes to Dr. Barbara Keener, NCS D Executive Director, and Dr. Wesley Wilson for a superb job in developing a conference program and providing an exemplary professional development experience for all participants. Also, Frank Babcock deserves a big thank-you for negotiating the fiscal details and handling the site arrangements.

The National Council on Student Development sincerely appreciates the contribution of our keynote speaker, Dr. Jack Warner, Vice Chancellor of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Primary among those to be recognized are our stellar presenters, who covered a wide range of programs and issues relevant to student development professionals from across the country.

A heartfelt thank-you is also expressed to the corporate sponsors of the conference, which include: Goey Industries, Mascot, Noel-Levitz, DLR Group, and, especially, the League for Innovation in the Community College. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the four Florida community colleges that co-sponsored the conference: St. Petersburg Junior College, Hillsborough Community College, Santa Fe Community College, and Central Florida Community College.

The National Council on Student Development would also like to express its deep gratitude to ACT for its continued support over the years and, specifically, for publishing the proceeds of the conference in this monograph.

And, finally, we acknowledge all the conference participants, who made the event a success with their enthusiasm and contributions to stimulating conversations about issues and concerns of our profession.

Copies of this publication have been sent at no charge to each member of the National Council on Student Development. Additional copies may be purchased from: Barbara J. Keener, NCS D Executive Director, University of Florida College of Education, P.O. Box 117049, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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## Introduction

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This publication arose from the proceedings of the National Council on Student Development Conference held in Clearwater Beach in October 2000. As an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges, one of the purposes of the NCSd is to promote staff and program development and to serve as a resource for student development professionals.

The theme of the conference, *Revolutionizing Student Development: New Waves for Student Development Professionals*, was designed to expose the participants to programs and services that have been judged as exemplary from across the country. The keynote speaker for the conference was Dr. Jack Warner, Vice Chancellor of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Dr. Warner set the tone for a stimulating conference as he presented the *Ten Hot Issues in Student Affairs*. His unique perspective on the field of student development not only challenged us but also energized us to face these demands on our individual campuses.

The presenters for this conference who competed for the Second Annual Shared Journey Award were selected from the many exemplary programs presented at recent NASPA, AACC, and ACPA conferences, as well as the NCSd regional conferences and the NCSd Exemplary Practice Awards. The first, second and third place award winners were selected by a panel of judges who attended each forum presented by the Shared Journey finalists. The judges were members of the Board of Directors of NCSd unless their institution had a Shared Journey finalist. Competition was keen and the point spread in the scores of the finalists was extremely close.

The First Place Shared Journey Award was presented to Julie Pitts and Renee Arnett of Johnson County Community College in Kansas for their program *LIFELINES and the Student Success Center: An Innovative Student Development Model*. Johnson County Community College LIFELINES focuses on each student's learning continuum for life, education and career. The Success Center serves as the "front door" to the campus and facilitates a services delivery model empowering students to concentrate on how each option of resource fits their personal situation, in the counseling and decision-making process.

George Poling, Dan Ash and Randy Clark of Jefferson Community and Technical Colleges in Kentucky received the Second Place Shared Journey Award for their program called *Metropolitan College: A Model of Partnership for Educational and Economic Opportunity*. The demands of managing a job, course work, and a home life are sometimes overwhelming for students. Metropolitan College strives to remove these barriers through a unique partnership among Jefferson Community and

Technical Colleges, the University of Louisville, and the United Parcel Service. Eligible participants receive free tuition, book reimbursement, housing subsidy, reimbursable loan, salary, benefits and more!

Third Place Shared Journey Award went to Jim Watson, Myrna Cabrera-Rivero, and Mary Etta Fisher of Santa Fe Community College in Florida for their program *Renewing Standards: A Collaborative Process to Facilitate Academic Progress*. Too often, “at risk” students fall through the cracks. The presentation explained how three student service offices at this institution collaborated to revitalize the student academic progress system and return at risk students to successful academic standing. Presenters shared program implementation, philosophy, strategies, interventions, and assessment procedures.

The NCSA Clearwater Beach, Florida Conference included 27 concurrent sessions. The speakers represented 16 states, and the topic areas for the juried presentation encompassed a wide variety of interests to student development professionals including: Enrollment Management, Workforce Development, Experiential Learning, Recruitment/Access, Student Success, Continuous Improvement, Student Retention, High Risk Student Success, Financial Assistance, Career Development, Service Learning, Diversity, Role of Student Development in the Learning College, Collaborative Programming, Orientation, Integrated Student Support Services, Student Leadership, Students with Disabilities/Special Needs, Student Health Services (HIV/AIDS), Mentoring, Diversity, Women in Transition, and Virtual Student Services.

In addition to the juried presentations, two additional presentations rounded out the program. The first one examined three research studies on community college student development. Alfred Carter, Dean of Students Affairs from Manchester Community College (CT) spoke on efforts to advance student development within the college community. Craig Kolins, Dean of Enrollment Management at Mt. Hood Community College (OR) discussed collaboration efforts between student development and academic affairs. Martina Stovall, Dean for Counseling, Advising, and Minority Programs at Moraine Valley Community College (IL) presented research on the relationships between student success courses, academic performance, and persistence. Finally, Jim Oliver, Campus Provost from St. Petersburg Community College (FL) provided a Virtual Tour of the latest high tech, high touch campus at St. Petersburg. Following the conference, he offered tours of the facility to all participants.

## Shared Journey First Place Award

### ***LIFELINES and the Student Success Center***

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#### **Johnson County Community College (Kansas)**

JULIE PITTS

Success Center Manager

RENEE ARNETT

Community Outreach Counselor

#### **Purpose**

Over a four-year period, Johnson County Community College (JCCC) Student Services has completely transformed the entire area of student services into a learning center environment. This transition has involved both the philosophical development of *how* services are provided as well as the actual physical location of *where* services are provided.

The planning process involved over one hundred fifty staff, students, and faculty. Three vital questions were addressed: (1) What do we value in Student Services? (2) What are the processes/procedures we need to change to support our values? and, (3) What does a building or facility need to look like to support these processes and procedures?

#### **Need**

Out of this planning process, we discovered that what was valued really wasn't reflected in the way services were being delivered. The majority of activities within JCCC Student Services revolved around the enrollment process. There was more focus on enrolling students than on assisting students in their life/education/career planning process. The planning process identified that JCCC Student Services really needed to focus on student development as the foundation in the delivery of services with a clear front door for students. Cross-trained generalists as well as materials, services and resources should be easily accessible. Well-trained professionals should be able to work with students on decision making and personal issues. In addition, privacy and confidentiality should be maintained across all processing units.

As a result, JCCC completely redesigned how services are provided. LIFELINES, a new Student Services model, was designed to further enhance the *learning environment* at JCCC and to support the "dignity and growth of each individual, the uniqueness of each individual, and the fundamental right of each person to realize his or her fullest potential" (JCCC Student Services Values Statement, 1996). The new model moves beyond the traditional "one stop shopping" concept which views enrollment as the end product. Instead, the model focuses on the facilitation of each student's growth and development, encouraging learning and promoting achievement of individual goals. LIFELINES represents a student's learning

continuum for life, education and career development. Its foundation—and the first question to students—is *Where are you going and how can we help you get there?*

## **Organization**

One of the basic assumptions of the JCCC Student Services Model is that student development resources and opportunities should be the “front door” to the campus for new students. This approach acknowledges the importance of student involvement in each student’s own educational and career planning and the necessity for early “connection” with the student development model. To achieve this, the concept of a physical and philosophical “Success Center” was developed—a focal location on campus for student development activities. Believing in the efficacy of the model, six offices made voluntary moves in 1997 to obtain an additional one thousand square foot space to “try-out” the concept. The initial Success Center provided a true laboratory setting to experiment with different approaches, ideas and physical layouts. Web registration and a number of innovative technological advances were also implemented to support this new philosophical approach.

All of the functional areas to support the components of the LIFELINES model are located in the Student Success Center, opened in March 2000. The center houses all of the student development functions including: counseling and advising services, access services for students with disabilities, career services, the Career and Academic Resource Library, employment opportunities, financial aid advisement, veterans services, counseling and placement for experiential learning opportunities, as well as internships and service learning, international student services, records, registration and admissions. Although the Student Success Center is the focal location for student development activities, other areas within student services—e.g., Testing Assessment Services, Student Life and Leadership, the Gym and Lifetime Fitness Center, The Children’s Center, and the Gallaudet University Regional Center—also promote LIFELINES’ philosophical approach to student development and the whole person concept. These areas are promoted and supported within the Student Success Center as well.

## **Impact on Students**

Today, upon their first contact within JCCC Student Success Center, students are engaged in the learning process immediately. They are greeted by cross-trained Success Center Assistants who complete a minimum of four hundred and sixty hours in an extensive training program. Success Center Assistants not only respond to a student’s questions or needs but also anticipate unasked questions, integrate associated information, and explain the multifaceted outcomes of the decisions each student may desire to consider before taking action. Students have a greater understanding of options, resources and processes, which better prepares them to meet with a professional counselor or financial aid advisor. This service delivery model empowers students to concentrate on how each option or resource fits their personal situation, in the counseling and decision making process. Rather than enrollment driving the process, student development and growth is the focus, and the student is an active participant in each foundational step of the process.

## **Advice to Others**

Pat Long, Dean of Student Services, states, “as JCCC grows and continues to refine existing systems associated with LIFELINES as well as develops new ones, our initiatives will all continue to be predicated on the question of *What is best for students?*” For institutions contemplating within their departments reforms similar to JCCC’s service delivery model, our key advice is for you to begin by determining the value-based functions and services that are best for your students prior to creating systems to support them.

## **Contact for More Information**

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Shared Journey Second Place Award

## ***Metropolitan College: A Model of Partnership for Educational and Economic Opportunity***

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### **Jefferson Community and Technical College (Kentucky)**

GEORGE POLING

Program Director

DAN ASH

Executive Director

RANDY CLARK

Program Director

### **Purpose**

Metropolitan College is a consortium comprised of Jefferson Community and Technical College, the University of Louisville, and United Parcel Service (UPS). With support from Louisville, Jefferson County, and the state of Kentucky, the program seeks to remove barriers and maximize the chances for participants to achieve their educational and career goals by providing comprehensive educational and employment opportunities.

### **Need**

UPS offered a challenge to education and community leaders to develop an education/employment program that would address the need for additional employees as UPS prepared to expand its overnight delivery division. At least three factors were working against UPS in recruiting and retaining the large number of employees required. First, the population of the Louisville metropolitan area is—and will likely remain—stagnant in the foreseeable future. Secondly, because of the low unemployment rate in the area, competition for young adult workers is extremely high. And finally, the work setting for which employees were needed is part-time, in the middle of the night, and in a climate that mirrored the cold of winter and the heat of summer.

The educational institutions in Louisville were in an unprecedented position to explore new cooperative educational ventures. The leaders of the public educational institutions believed they could develop a program that would significantly contribute to the workforce needs of the community, individual employment needs of participants, and offer an education to those who may not otherwise have the opportunity to attend college. If they developed such a program, then UPS, the educational institutions and the community at large would benefit.

## **Organization**

The presidents of the educational institutions assembled their respective campus leaders to construct a program that would provide a comprehensive educational program allowing students to pursue whatever academic program they desired, while offering special programs that addressed specific community workforce needs. Complete tuition deferment (not reimbursement), along with other features designed to assist those without resources to pursue a college education was included. Work and education were coordinated in order to maximize the opportunity for success and remove traditional barriers. Full and appropriate uses of technology were sought to enhance and better prepare students for their future work environment. Residential opportunities were organized to provide living/learning arrangements for participants regardless of the institution in which they were enrolled. The program included a work experience which encouraged retention and pursuit of educational and professional development while working at UPS. Finally, an aggressive career placement service was provided for all participants.

## **Impact on Students**

The demands of managing a job, course work, and home life are often overwhelming and this program provides students with unprecedented opportunities. In addition to their weekly paycheck and full benefits, participants received free tuition, housing subsidy, free transportation on the local transit system, and reimbursement for required textbooks. A full complement of student services was available to assist with student success. Students could also apply for a reimbursable loan program. Retention from semester to semester is high, and work retention rates for UPS have risen dramatically.

## **Advice to Others**

Obtaining suitable partners is paramount. Seek out partnerships with education and business leaders who are willing to take risks and who view uncertainty as an opportunity to advance. Then establish and stick to the principles and values that drive the program. Our leaders had the insight to realize that post-secondary education and business must adapt to one another to meet the educational and workplace needs of the future. It is crucial that we complement one another's strengths rather than compete, and most importantly, we must continually seek out solutions that benefit the greatest number of participants in the partnership.

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Shared Journey Third Place Award

## ***Renewing Standards: A Collaborative Process to Facilitate Academic Progress***

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**Santa Fe Community College (Florida)**

**MYRNA CABRERA-RIVERO**

Coordinator, Center for Multicultural Students

**MARY ETTA FISHER**

Registrar

**JIM WATSON**

Director, Student Development Programs

### **Purpose**

Too often, “at risk” students fall through the cracks. The Standards of Academic progress program is an intervention for academically at-risk students developed at Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) in Gainesville, Florida. The program involves a collaboration among student services offices and aims to revitalize the student academic progress system and return at-risk students to successful academic standing.

### **Need**

It is not uncommon for students to come to the community college unprepared to deal with the rigors of college life. A significant number of students end up placed on academic progress probation. Students in probation status present the institution with a struggle between commitments to developmental processes and the management of limited resources.

The need for the Standard of Academic Progress Program arose from a perception that more effort on the part of the institution was necessary to identify the barriers for students in extreme academic difficulty. It also grew out of a belief that students must be held accountable for their academic behaviors and not allowed to drift without direction.

### **Organization**

Probationary status refers to students performing below the college’s academic minimum standard. A student’s academic standing at SFCC is determined by the relationship of hours attempted to grade points earned. Students can go from a position of good standing to academic warning, probation, or suspension within one term. For the student that wishes to override suspension, there are three major components to the program: meeting with a counselor, a contract for a limited number of classes, and participation in a Standard of Academic Progress Class.

To override a suspension, the first step is for a student to make an appeal to a Counselor. This meeting provides the opportunity to look at what is contributing to

the student not meeting her/his goals. Often, it is the first time the student has talked with someone from the college about their academic difficulties. Sometimes the counselor will determine that it is in the student's best interest to wait out their suspension. All students wishing to override their suspension, or returning to school after a suspension, must meet with a counselor.

The second intervention is negotiating a plan that will benefit the student in the following term. The plan requires that the student take a specially designed class for suspended students, plus one other class. It may also include additional requirements. Creating the plan is a collaborative process between the student and the counselor.

The third part of the program is the Standard of Academic Progress Class. SLS 1531 is designed to help students to become more successful. Comprised solely of students suspended from the previous term, the intervention is a college level course that provides elective credits. Each class assignment becomes one part of a larger Personal Portfolio. The final Personal Portfolio becomes an individual success plan for the student to follow. The class allows the student to develop new skills, while the companion class provides an environment in which to practice. An additional goal of the program is that the Counselor, Standard of Academic Progress Instructor, and Academic Instructor will participate collaboratively to create a learning community for the academically at risk student.

### **Impact on Students**

The typical student participating in this program was male, Caucasian, between the ages of 20 and 24, who had graduated from a high school outside of the College's service district, and who qualified for suspension or dismissal during his 4th term of attendance at SFCC.

The program is a work in progress, but preliminary results are encouraging. The process helps suspended students to confront their academic failures, become more learning-centered, make systematic behavioral changes, and to discover resources available to help them at SFCC. Although more data needs to be compiled and analyzed, it is believed that students in earlier stages of academic difficulty would also benefit from similar interventions.

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# ***Special Programs: A Model for Recruiting, Transitioning, and Graduating Underserved Students***

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**St. Petersburg Jr. College (Florida)**

**TONJUA WILLIAMS**

Director, Office of Special Programs

## **Purpose**

St. Petersburg Junior College (SPJC) wants students to be academically successful. That's why the Office of Special Programs offers a variety of programs geared toward students in middle school through college. The goals of the Office of Special Programs are to (1) increase students' and parents' awareness of the importance of a college education, (2) increase the number of under-represented students who graduate from high school and enroll at SPJC, (3) enhance students' access to college by increasing the "college readiness" of high school graduates, (4) increase the number of under-represented students who graduate with a degree and/or complete academic programs, and (5) reduce the number of students who leave college before realizing their educational goals.

The purpose of developing the model was to decrease isolated efforts of recruiting and retaining under-prepared students, to improve communication and cooperation among staff and various programs, to avoid duplication of recruitment/retention activities and gaps in services provided, and to improve the use of college and community resources targeted to recruit and retain under-prepared students

## **Need**

The college wanted to offer seamless support to under-prepared students as they move through secondary and postsecondary education. The college was experiencing a problem of one department not knowing that another department was attending the same recruitment fair or offering the same workshops within the same week or semester. The new model was necessary to improve communication between support services departments and avoid duplication of recruiting/retention efforts. By improving and expanding the utilization of college and community resources, the college could serve more students and avoid students falling between the cracks.

## **Organization**

Top-level commitment provided inspiration, incentive and organizational support. The staff was involved in every stage of the implementation, which allowed staff to voice their fears, concerns and make suggestions for improvement. The staff from Financial Aid, Enrollment Management, Program Directors, Student Services (advisors/counselors), SSS Program, College Reach Out Program, Pathway Program, Center of Excellence participated in the implementation. The staff from compatible

programs at the college and in the surrounding community (Workforce Development Board, Pinellas County Schools, Community Centers, etc.) were invited to monthly meetings to build camaraderie and joint projects/ideas.

### **Impact on Students**

Since the model was implemented, the college has improved attendance and participation in program activities. Students improve as they move within the model and became familiar with staff and expectations. Students receive consistent support and training early in their education and training is reinforced throughout education. Consequently, more students are provided support services.

### **Advice to Others**

It is important to gain support from top-level college administrators. Schedule meetings with key student services departments (Student Services, Enrollment Management, Recruitment/Retention Department, Special Programs, etc.) to discuss goals and activities for the year, then schedule/plan joint activities where applicable. Contact key community based organizations and others to organize joint efforts and initiatives. Maintain regular contact with various departments to work together on workshops, activities and other initiatives. Finally, don't give up! Collaboration works!

### **Contact for More Information**

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# ***A Virtual Visit: Positioning Your Community College Student Services Program for the Workforce Investment Act of 1998***

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## **Central Piedmont Community College (North Carolina)**

**MARGE WILSON**

Associate Dean, Education Support Services

**NICK GENNETT**

Vice President Education Support Services

**MEL GAY**

Dean, Student Development Services

**DEBBIE BOUTON**

Director, South Campus Support

### **Purpose**

Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) is a major player in the One-Stop Career System which supports the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). The College's involvement has been strong and fundamental to the local development of these new community-based career centers. Our College is integral to the One-Stop System although the way in which we participate has evolved and changed significantly since the opening of the first center in September 1998. The purpose of this initiative is to expand the College's role in the Workforce Investment System. We are collaborating in new ways to support key institutional goals related to Student Services Programs. Key aspects of our One-Stop involvement are student recruitment/enrollment, student tracking and case management.

### **Need**

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) has influenced the shape our College gives to student support services. Simply, WIA has changed the way we do business. Our motto, the motto of the five major WIA partners, is: "a client of one is a client of all"; indeed, referring to our students as clients was, in itself, a measure of the "new direction" we embraced in participating in WIA. Our definition of student has changed to view students as clients and include in that definition all adults in our service area.

### **Organization**

The most crucial part of the college's response to WIA is the commitment of key student services personnel. Major commitments of time and expertise have been devoted by the Vice President for Education Support Services, the Dean of Student Development, the Director of the Student Career Center, the Coordinator of Short-Term Training along with others from the College's Counseling/Advisement and Student Financial Aid. Additional College staff provide assistance to the One-Stop Centers on an as-needed basis.

Over the past six years CPCC had the good fortune to play a major role in the transition of the Private Industry Council (PIC) into the Workforce Development Board (W.B.). This involvement has included participation in the writing of the One-Stop Implementation grant, the initial One-Stop operations plan and staffing plan. We used our Multi-Skills Center as a prototype for developing collaborations with our major One-Stop partners in the student services area. We then expanded our initiatives to the One-Stop Centers.

The outcomes of these activities include CPCC staff working at the One-Stop Career Centers and college technical expertise being provided on an as-needed basis to the One-Stop. For example, the One-Stop wanted to develop a mailed survey for its clients; a representative from the College's Planning and Research Office provided a workshop for One-Stop staff to assist in the development of the document and a plan for implementation. Also, the College markets Short Term training programs at the One-Stops using a career development model and the College initiated a JobLink/CPCC Advisory Group. In North Carolina One-Stops use the title "JobLink"; this group includes College representatives (mainly from student services units) and the JobLink directors. In addition, two appraisal documents were developed for evaluating a community college's ability to respond to the Workforce Development Act.

### **Impact on Students**

Most importantly we have expanded our definition of student. We are now focused on a much broader view of potential students. Therefore, the opportunity for workforce-focused education is available to many more potential students in our service delivery area. We have shifted from an emphasis on serving only enrolled students to all adults in our service area. For example, our Career Services program is open to the general public and the state employment service has a presence on all our campuses.

The sharing of databases with other employment/career and training agencies allows more direct service to students. Rather than being sent from agency to agency for information, a client can be served by any JobLink staff member regardless of the home agency. Our new campuses are designed to provide space for community-based activities.

### **Advice to Others**

For a guide to positioning your student services programs for the Workforce Investment Act you may use the attached documents. These documents provide both a framework for approaching WIA and specific suggestions on how to accomplish a successful alliance with your local One-Stop Career System.

### **Contact for More Information**

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# ***Leadership Development as a Tool for Retention: Ideas That Won't Break the Bank***

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## **Bronx Community College (New York)**

**BRENDA A. SCRANTON**

Vice President, Student Development

**JENNIFER MISICK**

Executive Assistant to the Vice President

**KIRK DALEY**

Director of Student Activities

**JULIAN ROSADO**

Student

### **Purpose**

Bronx Community College is involved in restructuring and re-engineering the institution in response to changing conditions. An expansion in the diversity of our students is one of the reasons the Department of Student Development is reviewing the programs and practices within our department.

The purpose of the leadership development project is to create a structure that would introduce a major reform effort by providing out-of-class leadership and development experiences for non-traditional college students at Bronx Community College. It was assumed that activities for non-traditional students would offer a “cultural overhaul” and enable students to assume responsibility for their own learning, assume responsibility for their own choices, recognize options and choices, participate in collaborative activities, and think about his/her own learning experiences.

### **Need**

The leadership development project was initiated because traditional training methods, in student activities, when working with non-traditional students were not successful. For instance, students did not see the importance of being on time for meetings nor the benefit of attending meetings on a regular basis; therefore, a non-traditional intrusive approach was developed. Concepts of simply thinking “out-of-the-box” were not sufficient. A paradigm shift was required in order to depart from traditional references about how students engaged in leadership activities.

### **Organization**

Each year the newly elected members of the Student Government Association and the Inter-Organizational Council (clubs) are invited to participate in a three-day Leadership Training Workshop. In addition, these students participate in at least two follow-up training activities during the academic year. Through this experience, we found that we had unintentionally created a new learning paradigm for non-traditional students at Bronx Community College.

This paradigm included an educational process that was intrusive, interactive, and powerful. Activities for non-traditional students centered on leadership activity development and planning, cultural exposure, club formation, and program evaluation. Helping students perfect college student behavior, “getting the hang” of becoming an advocate for other students, public speaking, and program development were also included in the training.

### **Impact on Students**

The institution noticed that the retention rate of student leaders increased with the leadership development training. Further, the grade point averages of student leaders increased. However, students, when asked, identified the following acquired abilities: (1) the ability to be more independent, (2) the ability to see the “big” picture, (3) the ability to effectively participate in conflict resolution, (4) the ability to network, and (5) the ability to present ideas in a public forum.

### **Advice to Others**

This project would not be successful unless you have a supportive administration. The Student Activities Director must understand and be committed to working with non-traditional students. The institution’s philosophy of shifting to one that is learning-centered (i.e., convenience of students and not faculty/staff) is important. The Chief Student Affairs Officer must assume responsibility for reinforcing the basic principles developed in the context of shared values among key players. Finally, activities that proved to be the most successful were those that employed the methods of being deliberate, intrusive and interactive. We call it the “Velcro” approach.

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# ***Crossroads: A Year of Experiential Learning, Career and Education Planning for Undecided Students***

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## **Middlesex Community College (Massachusetts)**

EVELYN CLEMENTS

Vice President for Student Development

DENNIS MALVERS

Associate Dean of Student Development

### **Purpose**

Community colleges have a commitment to service the needs of a wide variety of students. There is one segment of the population that often gets lost in the shuffle when it comes to making positive steps toward career and education planning—the undecided student. Middlesex Community College developed a program specifically for these undecided students. Unlike college preparatory or 13th year programs that focus on bolstering academic credentials and confidence, this program focuses on actual work experiences in professional settings to help students clarify their values, skills and interests.

### **Need**

Too many of these students feel pressure to follow their peers in continuing directly on to college after high school graduation. Many of them return home after a difficult and draining first semester or freshman year with a bruised self-esteem and an empty bank account. They simply are not ready.

### **Organization**

Following a market survey of area parents, students and guidance counselors, and two years of collaborative planning and discussion with faculty and other administrators from across the College, the Student Development staff worked to develop Crossroads. The program was specifically designed to address the issues of career and education planning for undecided students. Crossroads is a one-year, non-credit, experiential program for students who have just graduated from high school, or for those who have completed one year of college and want to take a break. The program is designed for students who have the ability to succeed in college but who lack the goals and direction needed. The program is completed funded by student tuition.

Prospective students must complete an application, an essay, submit high school transcripts, S.A.T. scores and/or college placement test scores, three references, and participate in a personal interview. Those selected must demonstrate an ability to complete college work, an interest in experiential learning, have a motivation for learning and an ability to maintain professional behavior in a work setting.

The program covers a full academic year. At the beginning of the fall semester, students participate in an intensive three-week orientation program. They work on a variety of career assessment instruments, discuss their goals and career aspirations,

and participate in a team-building retreat through an overnight experience off-campus where they build commitment and mutual respect.

Following orientation, students are placed in workplace internships that match their career interests. Each student spends two days per week at a workplace site (most of which provide a salary), and two other days per week at community service projects. On Fridays, the group meets together on campus in a seminar that covers such topics as self-assessment activities, cooperative learning instruction, the college selection process, and time management. Students have the option to enroll in two courses at the College in lieu of community service projects, if they choose. In the spring semester, students are placed in a second workplace internship site and an alternate community service experience. They work during the spring semester in preparing college applications and discussing such topics as decision-making and budgeting. Students also develop a portfolio that is valuable in the college application process.

### **Impact on Students**

The program has been in operation for two years, and students as well as their parents have been pleased with the outcome. One student participant came to Crossroads after graduating from a small private high school, enrolling in a local university, and switching majors four times. He said, "I know I could have done some of these things on my own, but I also know that I wouldn't have. Crossroads gave me the structure and support I needed to define my goals and go for them." Another student came to Crossroads after graduating from high school in an affluent community. Her grades slipped during her junior and senior years, and she needed some direction. She was accepted for college after completing Crossroads and said, "I'm so ready to start college now. Half my friends who started right away are transferring or dropping out. I'm so glad I decided to do Crossroads first."

### **Advice to Others**

The program is not without challenges. Sustaining salaries and marketing costs through tuition, and building enrollment numbers in an area of the country that has numerous colleges and universities nearby has not been easy. We have suspended the program this year in order to review those issues over the next several months, and we may modify the program to lower costs and provide more flexibility for the coming year. Nevertheless, the commitment to the program remains high, and the concept is solid. As one father said to us recently, "Every prospective college student should experience a program like Crossroads before enrolling in college. It helps to develop goals and gives students substantive experiences that literally change their lives." We completely agree.

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# *The Career Development Program: Addressing Career Needs in the 21st Century*

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Northern Essex Community College (Massachusetts)

ROSE DITTMER

Assistant Dean, Career Development Center

## **Purpose**

Northern Essex offers a comprehensive one-stop career resource for current and prospective students, as well as for alumni and other community members. Employers today seek to recruit and hire knowledgeable, experienced, flexible staff that are able to think critically and communicate well. Providing business, industry, and the service sector with such candidates is part of the mission of the Career Program at Northern Essex.

The Career Program at Northern Essex Community College is housed in the Career Development Center and is one of those far reaching programs which has the potential to touch all students and actually mentor all students from their initial inquiries into NECC through their academic and work experience while in school to their graduation and beyond. Illustrated below are the explanation of the program and a synopsis of its many streams. The variety of options existing under the one umbrella allowed a myriad of opportunities for both those seeking career direction or those well on their way in their established career tracks.

## **Need**

Reflecting latest trends in the workplace and in academic arenas, the NECC program is renaissance in nature and has something for everyone. Both traditional and non-traditional college students are the beneficiaries of this menu of life-changing experiences and may avail themselves of Career Counseling, Internship/Cooperative Education, Community Service Learning Experiences, School To Career, Women's Network, and Part-Time and Full-Time Placement. Within these areas the program serves students and clients in all fields and in varying stages of development. Streams within the program address the traditional college age students, the non-traditional age first time entry students, students in the Leadership Development Program, students with disabilities, ESL students, and secondary school students. These students enjoy a full range of possibilities and may be introduced to careers in high tech, fast-paced industries to traditional people-oriented programs through to careers in community service and all the areas on the job continuum. Faculty and staff also participate in Career Programs as appropriate for professional development.

## **Organization**

The Career Program offers one-on-one counseling sessions, group discussions, workshops, seminars, in-class presentations, portfolio development, student internships, and teacher externships. Other Career activities include Career Fairs,

Community Service Career Fairs, and Career Fairs for Students with Disabilities, Career Round Tables, one-on-one recruitment, and in-class employer presentations both in panel and individual discussions. The Career Program also conducts Portfolio Workshops for graduating students who may not have had the opportunity to attend those offered in regularly scheduled Career Programs. The Career Program staff also works closely with faculty and staff to incorporate career information and assistance within course frameworks. Career focus is also included as an integral piece of the NECC Orientation Program.

The Career Program at NECC has been centralized in the Career Development Center and is a model for the one-stop shopping career concept. The Career Program staff has been very active in the statewide School To Career Programs offering mentoring of new programs in high schools and colleges. The NECC involvement with School To Career represents a unique partnership with School to Career statewide programs. Through a regional consortium of national corporations the Career Program staff have been able to recruit additional business and education partners across the Merrimack Valley area to collaborate on programs which will offer students rotational internships in participating companies with potential for later full-time placement if appropriate.

Traditionally aged students are able to participate in a wide variety of work-related areas, such as Cooperative Education, Resume Packaging, Interview Skill Development, Communication in the Workplace, Workplace Appropriate Behaviors, Ethics in the Workplace, Conflict Resolution, Team Building and Portfolio Development.

The center serves a growing clientele of students who are very often engaged in the academic world while simultaneously working on a full-time basis. Many of these students would very much like to try out a new career track. For these students, the Career Program offers workshops and site placements in the evenings or on the weekends in participating companies.

The Community Service Learning opportunities offer very different types of career and volunteer options and allows students to learn that many of their talents can be used in these agencies. Students working in these sites learn many things quickly, but in a nurturing environment.

These opportunities also offer students the chance to give something back to their communities through additional volunteer work as they realize the great needs that exist in the community service world.

An outgrowth of the Community Service component of the Career Program is the involvement with The Student Leadership Development Program and The Presidential Ambassadors' Program. Students in these programs are required to attend a number of workshops on topics presented by the Career Program team. This connection offers student insight into leadership strategies necessary for all career positions and also reinforces the servant leader concept upon which the program is based.

Another stream of our program is our work with students with disabilities. The Career Program is able to assist students with special needs who seek to enhance their skills and polish their interview strategies in order to realize the best possible opportunities in the workplace.

The Career Program also targets high school and middle school students assisting with career exploration in terms of career fairs, career panels, and group training on workplace appropriate topics similar to those outlined above. This outreach has created a direct continuum for high school students who move into a college experience and, in particular, the NECC experience.

### **Impact on Students**

One of the innovative accomplishments of the program is the one-stop shopping concept that centralizes all career opportunities and houses the various streams in one area. The centralization was a positive move which allowed staff to work with students from their initial inquiries about “what can I do with my life” through their search for internships and cooperative education positions right into their first career placement and continued professional development. The Career Program has impacted over 30,000 students, faculty and staff both on the NECC campus and in external area schools throughout the region. Participating faculty and staff have been able to impact at least another 6,000 students.

Students have enjoyed a wide variety of training, including Resume Packaging (hard copy and electronic), Cover Letter Design, Portfolio Development, Interview Skills (job interview and informational interview, as well as mock interview practice), Communication, Team Building, Conflict Resolution, Ethics in the Workplace, etc.

Students, faculty, staff, and external clients have participated in numerous internships, externships, and placements both full and part time. Placements sites have included business, industry, allied health, education, biotech, high tech, media of all types, arts, humanities, service industries, and virtual industries, to name a few. Over 75 percent of Co-op placements eventually result in full-time placement for the students.

The NECC Career Program has become the resource of choice for all programs in the school and for most in the community with consistently renewed grants for this stream of the Career Program.

Career Program stands as a model for most programs beginning to develop this type of one-stop shopping and outreach. The NECC Career Program has something for everyone and is easily accessed through the one-stop shopping concept.

### **Advice to Others**

Our recommendation is to centralize all career activities in the Career Program Office to allow a one-stop career shopping experience for all students and staff. This gives students the opportunity to experience a variety of internships, externships, and

a direct connection to hot jobs and state-of-the-art training in the work world. The program combines the best of resources, staff, and work-site opportunities to capitalize on the growing trend for workplace.

Growing out of this one-stop process, the NECC Career Program staff facilitates all career training for students and staff in area middle and secondary schools. This connection to pre-college students provides a continuum of direct and indirect services, as well as recruitment information and retention incentives.

Another key to the program's innovative approaches to the holistic approach of the Career Program is collaboration. With the outreach of the Career Center within the college community, the program collaborates with every department and/or division. The Career Program staff works with faculty and staff within course frameworks to bring appropriate career information to students in every major.

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## ***Building Bridges to Success***

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### **Galveston College (Texas)**

**GAYNELLE HAYES**

Vice President, Student Development Services

**JERI LYONS**

Program Director, Building Bridges to Success

### **Purpose**

The Building Bridges to Success Program is a student support services program designed for first generation, low-income/economically dependent, or disabled matriculating students who need additional assistance and innovative curricula to ensure their success as they persist and complete their educational program.

### **Need**

Galveston, Texas is located along the Texas Gulf Coast. Galveston Island stretches thirty-seven miles long and three miles wide at its widest point. The population of the city is approximately 61,000. Seventy (70 percent) of the population can be described as 'renters' and 'single-family households'. In 1997, the average median household income for the city of Galveston was approximately \$21,867 as compared to \$55,682 for the county. The poverty level in Galveston is very high when compared to both county and state. For example, the data reports that 38.6 percent of the city's household lived below the poverty level as compared to 15 percent for the county. The level of poverty in the city of Galveston can be attributed to many of the economic, social, and educational problems.

Although a community represented well by institutions of higher education, the disadvantaged population in Galveston has grown tremendously in the last 20 years. For example, one-third of the students enrolled at Galveston College in 1999–2000 were first-generation college and PELL grant recipients; 261 were single parents, and 85 percent of the freshmen were required to enroll in one or more developmental courses. The problems of unemployment, underemployment, high school dropout, teen pregnancy, and juvenile crime have placed major stress upon the social service safety net provided by the Galveston community.

### **Organization**

The College's role as a principal community resource is to respond to both individual and collective needs through the provision of educational opportunity and commitment to community development. In order to assist all residents in the Galveston Community to progress and achieve self-sufficiency, Galveston College was awarded its first federally funded/TRIO grant in August of 1997. This award provides the opportunity for Building Bridges to Success to become a motivating tool designed specifically to assist low economic individuals to succeed in post-secondary education. There are several "student centered support services" available to the Building Bridges to Success participants.

The program offers Academic Advising, Course Selection, and Special Accommodations to assist students with the examination and selection of appropriate courses of study, educational degree plans, and study skills classes, including accommodations for participants with special needs. Academic Tutoring is available to provide instructional support for remedial and credit courses. Master tutors are local community professionals who are actively employed or retired, and peer tutors are program participants who demonstrate academic excellence in selected content areas. Career Counseling and Exploration activities provide access to career options, employment trends, and career interest inventories. Personal Counseling and Referral Services is designed to direct students to services provided by other on-campus departments, local community agencies or organizations, and/or private clinicians.

The program offers Admission and Financial Assistance to students interested in transferring to four-year colleges and universities. The Mentoring Program promotes student success whereby each program participant is matched with three mentors: (1) campus mentors (volunteers from the College's faculty and staff), (2) peer mentors (selected program participants), and (3) community partners/career awareness mentors (local community professionals representing various career areas). Cultural Events and Academic Programs provide an opportunity to attend a variety of activities, including student leadership conferences, campus visits to four-year colleges and universities, research symposiums, and cultural performances.

Monthly Group Meetings and Community Service provide the opportunity to attend monthly group meetings and access information about healthcare, social services, employment opportunities, self-worth/self-esteem, diversity awareness, tutoring/student success, etc. Community Service provides an opportunity to volunteer for community service projects, i.e., voter registration, community beautification, beach clean-up, etc.

### **Impact on Students**

Program participants benefit from Building Bridges to Success because it provides student support services that promote academic excellence and provides access to a college education for individuals who have been targeted as high risk. Student Retention rate for students participating in the program was 78 percent from spring 1998 to fall 1998. Course completion rate was 69 percent. The graduation rate was 90 percent and the transfer rate was 100 percent.

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# ***Assessing Your “Isms”: Exploring Diversity Through Core Values***

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**Richland Community College (Illinois)**

**SHERYL BLAHNIK**  
Counselor/Associate Professor

**MARCUS L. BROWN**  
Counselor/Instructor

## **Purpose**

As our world grows and changes, so do the worlds of each student in our communities and College. We can provide experiences for our students to assist them with exploring sensitive issues in a safe and engaging atmosphere. Change of attitude is difficult, but not impossible. Through these workshops, students have the opportunity to get to know each other, explore prejudices, stereotypes, and differences, consider different points of view and discover common ground. The dialogue and exercises become the springboard for students to examine or reexamine their own value systems and transfer those systems into meaningful, action-oriented results.

## **Need**

Decatur has been portrayed both locally and nationally as a “racist” community. The upheaval in our community during the past several years began to be felt by the College that serves approximately 3,000 students (14 percent minority, 86 percent majority) each semester. This upheaval has led student development professionals to partner with Richland Community College faculty, public and private elementary and secondary school teachers, and community organizations to engage students in assessing their “isms” through the use of core values.

## **Organization**

In 1997, Richland Community College established a goal of “Promoting a college which values diversity in people, ideas, and experiences.” Student Development professionals decided that the College needed to move from “talking the talk” to “walking the walk.” Through the leadership of these professionals, and the financial backing of an “in-house” staff development grant, a team of faculty, student development professionals, and students developed and produced an “in-house” video and supporting materials on “Talking about Diversity.” The video and materials were designed to promote dialogue about difficult issues surrounding the “isms” that students face. During the 1998–1999 school year, RCC counselors Sheryl Blahnik and Marcus Brown piloted the “Talking about Diversity” program in ten different classes/workshops with a total of 215 student participants.

The initial project became the springboard for the *Assessing Your Isms* project, which has now been institutionalized by the College. *Assessing your Isms* uses a variety of experiential learning activities geared for particular audiences and age levels.

### **Impact on Students**

At the conclusion of the class/workshop, students are asked to write a paragraph about their personal reactions. The overwhelming reaction to the simulations/exercises is one of enlightenment. Students reported seeing the world through different eyes and having a deeper understanding and appreciation for others. Young or old, the impact of the activities is clearly a wonderful beginning point for additional dialogue regarding diversity and the ways each person can individually be accountable for their own role in welcoming others, in understanding others and in being inclusive rather than exclusive.

### **Advice to Others**

Exploring “isms” can be difficult and emotionally intense. Presenters must be open-minded and must convey a nonjudgmental attitude toward participants’ opinions and ideas. Ground rules should be developed by the group and written on a flip chart for ready reference. Pre- and post-assessments can be used to determine if outcomes are achieved.

Purchase of some pre-packaged activities will aid in the implementation of the program. Once a basic activity has been mastered, it can be refined and modified.

It is recommended that activities be co-facilitated to keep the dynamics and discussion moving smoothly. Working with large groups will reinforce the need for co-facilitators. Facilitators should have experience with group facilitation, an understanding of group dynamics, be able to think quickly and feel comfortable redirecting an activity, if necessary. A good sense of humor helps with group processing.

Information regarding supplies and materials for use can be found at <http://www.richland.cc.il.us/staff/sblahnik/diversity.html>

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# ***A Pre-Enrollment Orientation Program for Student Retention and Success***

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## **St. Louis Community College–Forest Park (Missouri)**

MARLENE RHODES

Chair, Counselor

SANDRA KNIGHT

Counselor

### **Purpose**

The purpose for implementing at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park a Pre-Enrollment Orientation Program for first-time college students was in response to a need to recruit students to pilot a collaborative, coordinated studies, learning communities program for students reading at the developmental and college levels.

### **Organization**

Organizationally, the 1.5 hour Pre-Enrollment Orientation session created a context for counselors to: (1) welcome new students; (2) provide video information and orientation kits about the learning communities, college resources, counseling/college services, co-curricula activities and tips for college survival; (3) administer brief assessments of career decisions, learning and study strategies and learning styles; (4) interpret college placement test results; (5) recommend a schedule for semester courses; (6) provide registration procedures and financial aid information, if applicable; (7) respond to questions, clarify criteria/requirements for college programs; and (8) screen prospective students for the various learning communities.

### **Impact on Students**

The impact on students was significant. Fully 83 percent of student participants responded at 4.0 (Excellent) on the evaluation scale to the following two survey questions: (a) The counselor provided me with helpful information, and (b) The New Student Orientation (NSO) made me feel more comfortable about coming to school. Eighty-four percent of the participants responded at the 4.0 scale to the following item: (c) The counselor made me feel welcome; and (d) The counselor made me feel comfortable about the registration process.

The follow-up assessment data revealed that 79 percent of the new student population returned for Spring semester wherein the average return rate for new students was 63 percent. Those retained had a 2.13 GPA at the end of the Spring term compared to 2.11 GPA. Developmental students tended to have the greatest academic benefit, particularly if they were enrolled in an academic orientation course. Upon review of all data, it appears that the most significant difference occurred between students reading at or below college level. Moreover, the retention rate of students within learning communities was 81 percent compared to the 79 percent retention rate of the new students experiencing NSO.

These results were replicated in the following semesters. Indeed, results continue to improve as we offer the Pre-Enrollment Orientation program on an on-going basis. The results have established that the NSO program definitely aids student retention and success.

### **Advice to Others**

If there is a need to initiate a similar program on your college campus, assess your political climate and lobby the campus administrators to appoint a task force or create a strategic planning committee with representative(s) from counseling, instructional faculty, admissions, financial aid, assessment/placement and the media department, and invite key administrators

Assess the needs of new students, develop informational responses to the identified needs, conceptualize an orientation and restrict your program responses to 90 minutes or less. Outline the program in the admission acceptance letter along with the dates and times of sessions.

Develop a brief video of the college services via the media services department. Hire student workers to assemble orientation kits for back-up purposes. Design evaluation instruments for student participants and commit to follow-up assessments of the new student population each semester.

Launch your program and evaluate the procedural process with the committee after each registration period.

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# *The Shared Team Organizational (STO) Model*

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## **Monroe Community College (New York)**

SUSAN BAKER

Assistant to the Vice President, Student Services

PAMELA WEIDEL

Assistant Director, Student Services

Damon City Campus

### **Purpose**

The Shared Team Organizational (STO) Model encompasses a shared team approach to Student Services that integrates technology, cross training, staff development, leadership training and student development theory. This organizational structure empowers staff to use a holistic framework to deliver seamless services to students, that consequently allows students to navigate the student services systems on campus more expediently.

### **Need**

The development of the STO model is an institutional response to the changing student demographics, technology, changing world marketplace, institutional financial constraints, and external and internal accountability in higher education. The STO model encompasses a shared leadership approach that integrates and uses a holistic framework to deliver seamless services to students. As a direct result of the institution growing and adding an additional Branch Campus, the model was developed to respond to the above conditions in a contemporary higher education landscape. The following chart outlines the services that are included in the model.

The model includes the following integrated Student Services:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. AccuPlacer & ESOL testing              | 11. Bursar services                    |
| 2. Fitness Center                         | 12. New student orientation            |
| 3. Academic advisement                    | 13. Campus Communications              |
| 4. International student advisement       | 14. Peer Leader program                |
| 5. ADA services                           | 15. Campus Events programming          |
| 6. Health services/student insurance      | 16. Pre-admission & admission services |
| 7. Bilingual counseling (Spanish)         | 17. Career Counseling (developmental)  |
| 8. Job placement services                 | 18. Program change                     |
| 9. Bookstore                              | 19. Child care services                |
| 10. New & continuing student registration |  |

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 20. Registration services       | 28. Student leadership training & development |
| 21. Counseling services         |   |
| 22. Senior citizen registration | 29. Facility building services                |
| 23. Crisis counseling           | 30. Suspended student registration            |
| 24. Student government          | 31. Financial aid advisement                  |
| 25. CLEP test center            | 32. Transfer assistance                       |
| 26. SUNY Card                   | 33. Financial aid services & processing       |
| 27. Co-curricular programming   | 34. Veteran's services                        |

## **Organization**

Within the STO Model, teams were created that are interdependent, synergistic and highly collaborative in nature. Each team member works collaboratively with one another in multiple capacities to provide comprehensive services (e.g., admissions, advisement, bursar services, counseling, financial aid, leadership training, college orientation, etc.).

Team leaders are accountable for team praxis; the development and implementation of individual team goals and objectives; personnel supervision; data collection, analysis and report writing; and day to day departmental operations. The following operational team structure was created to address the need for comprehensive Student Services on Campus:

### Leadership & Administrative Team (LAT)

The LAT is comprised of the team leaders from each operational team. The LAT is the nexus of the organization. The LAT sets priorities, focuses resources, and captures the synergies of the office.

### Admissions & Counseling Services Team (ACST)

The ACST is responsible for providing counseling services and programs, which include personal counseling; crisis counseling; career exploration and personal growth seminars.

### Registration & Financial Services Team (RFST)

The RFST coordinates the development and delivery of bursar, financial aid, records and registration services in a seamless fashion to students. The RFST works in tandem with the Brighton Campus Bursar, Financial Aid, and Records and Registration Office Directors to ensure consistent services.

### Orientation, Academic Advisement, Communication & Assessment Services Team (OACAS)

The OACAS team develops and implements programming for Damon Campus's Orientation, Academic Advisement and Registration programs for new and continuing students. The team manages the Peer Leader Program, the

Academic Advisement Center and oversees the Educational Assessment Center (placement testing).

#### Campus Center Team (CCT)

The CCT provides innovative and contemporary co-curricular programs and services. These programs include but are not limited to the development of student leaders, student government, cultural and academic clubs, service learning and community service programming.

#### **Impact on Students**

The model has offered seamless services to students. It has also created more effective time management for students who are interested in accomplishing multiple functions in less time. Outcome assessments have shown that the actual numbers of students served is reduced, but satisfaction is constant or improved, due to multiple services being accomplished at one time. More holistic services since staff are cross-trained for multiple functions. Finally, the STO model empowers teams to continuously search for innovative methods in addressing the ever-changing trends of students and society, thereby offering students innovative services.

#### **Advice to Others**

Research models that resemble individual campus structure and philosophies. Select staffs that are committed to change and new paradigms of thinking. Create a team of individuals with diverse strengths in Student Services. Management must remove their own paradigms concerning service delivery. Management must expect conflict, and embrace change.

#### **Contact for More Information**

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## *Service Learning Program: Empowering Students*

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El Paso Community College (Texas)

ISABEL BACA

Instructor

ELIA M. CHACON

Instructor

### **Purpose**

El Paso Community College (EPCC) was a participant in the higher educational institutions support network (Campus Compact). The Campus Compact was challenged to investigate a methodology that supported a sense of civic responsibility while maintaining the rigors of academia. Service Learning became the answer to this challenge; it integrates volunteer community service with course-related activities. Additionally, service learning has gained national acceptance as a pedagogical strategy that focuses on student-directed learning.

The purpose of this program is to enhance students' learning by helping them meet course objectives through actual practice. Students practice what they learn in the classroom by serving with community agencies such as the American Heart Association, El Paso County Attorney's Office, Child Protective Services, and the El Paso Water Treatment Plant. This is what distinguishes service learning from volunteerism. Students connect course material to their community service by reflecting on their experiences.

### **Organization**

Service learning is an innovative teaching methodology that incorporates classroom learning with workplace application in the community. EPCC has offered this unique learning tool to its students since 1997. Since then, we continue to see the many benefits the students, faculty, community and college receive.

Reflection thus becomes a critical component of any service-learning program. The reflection sessions serve as an instrument of evaluation. The students speak about the benefits they personally received from their service. However, most important for the faculty, students reflect on how the service facilitated the learning of course objectives. In addition, reflection shows faculty, no matter what their discipline, that service learning indeed helps students accomplish the goals of the course in an innovative manner.

El Paso Community College continues to support the Service Learning Program. The students, faculty, and community have established a true partnership in education, a partnership that promotes teamwork, civic responsibility, community awareness, critical thinking, and reflection.

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# *Integrated Student Services*

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## **Central Florida Community College**

**LUANNE ASHLOCK**

Enrollment Services Specialist

**VANESSA BAXLEY**

Coordinator, Student Leadership Development

**GLENNA MORELOCK**

Counselor and Assistant Professor

**DEBORAH STARR-BOWE**

Director, Enrollment Services

### **Purpose**

Active in the teaching mission of the college, the Division of Student Services at Central Florida Community College promotes and supports access to and participation in learning through the delivery of student-friendly services and programs. The Division seeks to facilitate admission to the college and collaborate with students to provide sound educational planning and use of college offerings. One of the major college goals of 1998–99 was to provide an integrated system of student support services which promotes learning and student development. The Division developed an action plan that included consultant visits, site visits, analysis of Division and Department functions and services, identification of areas targeted for integrated delivery, location identification, timeline to implementation, and a budget.

### **Need**

Our student population consists largely of adult students with “real” lives—learners who struggle to balance school with children, work, limited resources and inadequate time. Many are first in their families to attend college and they have no prior experience with college terminology or procedures and no family support system available. For this population of learners, the integration of student services provides a holistic approach to delivering the support systems necessary for their success.

Prior to the opening of the Enrollment Services Center, potential students and currently enrolled students would have visited three or more separate office areas to obtain all of their information. All Student Services were housed on the second floor of the building. Although there is an elevator, it is located in the rear of the building and not the entry pathway. Not only did this make access physically difficult, it presented an impression of a cloistered maze, complex for students to navigate. During times of high traffic, students often waited in long lines only to discover they were in the wrong areas to obtain the services they desired and to gain appropriate assistance needed to go to other offices with more long lines. Students were understandably frustrated by the process and inconvenienced by the time involved. But more damaging was the pervasive sense that students could not effectively negotiate the system on their own.

## **Organization**

The Division developed three new initiatives designed to implement the college concept of integrated student services. These were the Enrollment Services Center, SALT Team and Peer Educators.

The Enrollment Services Center (ESC) links the departments of counseling, admissions, records and financial aid at an ESC counter (four stations) located in the Student Services building at the Ocala campus. Training sessions are held each Friday for all employees in counseling, admissions, records, and financial aid. All employees are cross-trained to perform the following services:

Financial Aid—applications, scholarship information, current award status, SARA access, and document drop-off/input stations.

Admissions and Records—CFCC applications, transcripts via mainframe access, and document drop-off/input stations.

Counseling—Registration schedules, information on special programs/activities, test dates and information for CPT, TABE, etc.; general information related to academic programs and designated programs, activities and services of the College.

The Peer Educators, a team of at least 15 students, are paid as part-time employees. They are selected by application and interview, and are trained to work in the ESC and other departments designated for integrated student services. These paraprofessionals complete a series of comprehensive training workshops in admissions and academic advising procedures, as well as financial aid, assessment, equal access, tutorial and remediation, and career counseling services. The peer educators assist prospective students in “getting started” at CFCC.

The SALT team is an acronym for skills, assessment, learning, and testing. All personnel are prepared to function in three departments: testing, assessment, and the college skills lab. The college skills lab has been renamed the Learning Support Center, and the testing and assessment departments have been combined and renamed Academic and Career Assessment. Other innovations include: development of three new job descriptions and consequently reassigning personnel; integration of vocational academic advisement with assessment, remediation, and job placement; restructure of the SAIL Lab, renamed Vocational Preparatory Instruction, a priority emphasis on career counseling; a new testing center; remediation “on wheels;” cross training of personnel; and active involvement of the Division in the instructional mission of the College.

## **Impact on Students**

The centralization of services reduced the waiting time for information and support, and increased the students’ ability to be self-directed. Everything can be handled in one office area: the Enrollment Services Center. With integrated services, a student is not forced to understand the nuances of the system in order to be in the correct office. Students with a sense of self-competency and a strong internal locus of control are more successful. Integration of services fosters that effect.

### **Advice to Others**

Colleges considering the integration of their student services need to clearly define the purpose and goals of the change. Administrative support is vital, but it is equally critical to include the contributions of the actual practitioners. The goal of integration is increased access and inclusiveness. This attitude needs to be mirrored in the planning process as well. Respect and caring cannot be switched on and off at will. They are attitudes that must be pervasive throughout the climate of the division, from staff to staff, administration to staff, and ultimately from staff to administration to students.

### **Contact for More Information**

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# ***Student Leadership Developed Through Community and College Collaboration***

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## **Hutchinson Community College (Kansas)**

EDWARD E. BERGER

President

RANDY MYERS

Dean, Student Services

### **Purpose**

The College desired to create a systemic change to improve the quality of student leaders at Hutchinson Community College. The initial goals of the program included formal instruction and practical application of leadership skills. Additionally, it was decided that a leadership community should be developed which included students, donors, instructors, and business mentors. Another component was an active recruitment strategy for bringing proven high school leaders to Hutchinson Community College.

### **Need**

A need existed to enhance the quality of student leaders at Hutchinson Community College/AVS. The characteristics of students at Hutchinson Community College are comparable to other community colleges. Community college students frequently are transient, with limited involvement on campus, causing student organizations to languish, making informal learning difficult thus negatively influencing the sense of community on campus. Neither the campus nor community is able to benefit from the leadership skills of students with this profile. Occasionally clubs and organizations flourish because a “leader of the moment” emerges.

### **Organization**

The first phase of the program was a one-day training program for all student leaders conducted as early in the semester as possible. It then became the responsibility of students participating in this training exercise to develop a comparable training experience for incoming high school students.

The second phase of the program was to develop a scholarship program to attract outstanding high school leaders to Hutchinson Community College. To be eligible for the Leadership Scholarship, the student was to show evidence of leadership skills in high school, a 3.2 grade point average, and the recommendation of a high school principal or counselor. To assure growth in leadership skills at Hutchinson Community College, the student recipient was expected to assume a leadership role in a campus organization, successfully complete the three credit hour leadership class, complete an internship with a community leader and maintain a 3.2 grade point average.

## **Impact on Students**

The general results have reflected a dramatic improvement in campus involvement, improved leadership in clubs and organizations, and student ownership of the process, resulting in a more collegiate environment on campus. More specifically, 300 area high school students now receive leadership training provided by our students, which not only makes these high school students better leaders but also causes them to associate leadership experiences with Hutchinson Community College.

Hutchinson Community College student leaders have assumed the responsibility for leadership training, have incorporated leadership skills into their clubs and organizations, have become actively involved in community and service-based organizations, and have established relationships with mentors in business and industry. There were nearly 30 students in the program in the first year with that number doubling in the second year. The demand and competition for leadership scholarships is strong.

A leadership advisory committee of community leaders has been appointed and will provide assistance and insight as the program continues to grow and expand. The involvement of the community in the program and the students in the community may be one of the most significant by products of the leadership program.

## **Advice to Others**

For an institution to successfully implement a leadership program of this magnitude, commitment from staff and community is essential. Without this level of ownership, success is difficult to attain.

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# *The Learning Centre*

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## **Douglas College (British Columbia)**

**JULIA ROBINSON**  
Coordinator, Learning Centre

**TED JAMES**  
Dean, Student Development

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Learning Centre is to foster student success through the provision of academic skills support. Students from all areas of the college access the Centre's services. The Centre mainly assists students in developing writing, reading, math, computer and study skills. The activities of the Centre include peer tutoring, peer tutor training, study skills and computer literacy workshops, tutor-led study groups, and provision of self-help resources (texts, videos, software, handouts).

### **Need**

Douglas College is a 2-year community college in southwestern British Columbia, Canada. Its approximately 12,000 students are enrolled in university transfer, career and developmental programs. The mission of Douglas College is to enhance "the skills, knowledge and values of life-long learners in meeting their goals" and to "respond to diverse community needs in a rapidly changing society". However, many of the students have significant barriers to success in post-secondary education—academic, economic, linguistic, cultural and age barriers. To reduce access barriers, the college maintains an open door admissions policy for most academic courses. One downside of this policy is that many students enrol in courses without having demonstrated the ability to be successful in their studies. Some do succeed, but others struggle. Through referral to the Learning Centre, the ones at risk of failing can receive free tutorial assistance to help them cope with their studies and develop the skills needed for long-term success.

### **Organization**

An important theme of the Centre is to foster students' ongoing academic success by helping them develop skills that will enable future independent success. Following principles of adult and cooperative learning, the Centre strives to assist students in becoming effective life-long self-regulated learners.

A second theme is the collaborative approach employed by the Centre. Students, peer tutors, staff and faculty work together, each employing their own strengths to assist students in their development. For example, students seeking tutoring initially work with a faculty member to assess their needs and develop a plan of action. Peer tutors then assist students in carrying out these learning plans. The Centre also collaborates with faculty across the college to assess needs and develop appropriate services.

Another theme is the holistic approach taken by the Centre. Working with the whole student and a wide range of skills is important. For example, a student may be referred to the Centre for help with Math skills, but investigation may reveal problems with study strategies, confidence, test anxiety, time management or reading skills.

A final theme is responsiveness. Rather than attempting to predict student needs and provide programs accordingly, the Centre has the resources to respond to student needs as they arise. For example, if a number of students are referred for help with the same course, the Centre may establish a tutor-led study group for that course to facilitate cooperative learning among the students.

### **Impact on Students**

The Learning Centre has accomplished much since it began in 1993. Surveys of students reveal a high degree of satisfaction with Learning Centre programs. Students report increases in motivation, confidence, academic skills and grades. The 20 peer tutors hired each semester gain not only on-campus employment but also improved grades, skills, confidence and future employment opportunities. Faculty in the Learning Centre are consulted broadly by other educational institutions and a number of other centers in the province have been established based on the Douglas College model.

The Centre finds it impossible to meet all the demand for its services. Last year, the Centre provided service to 4,232 students for a total of 12,438 hours of service, up 11 percent from the previous year. The growth of the Learning Centre and its continuing survival are major accomplishments in tough economic times.

### **Advice to Others**

One key to the success of the Learning Centre at Douglas College is the close liaison maintained with classroom faculty. From the beginning, the Centre aimed to support the instruction taking place in classrooms, not to replace it. The Centre assists students with handling homework and others assignments but steadfastly trains its tutors not to be drawn into doing the work for the student. Close contact with instructors is maintained by using referral forms and ensuring that classroom faculty know who is receiving assistance from the Centre and on what topics. Anyone seeking to establish a similar Centre on their campus should ensure such close liaison with faculty is created from the start.

### **Contact for More Information**

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## ***Access and Equity Program***

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### **Piedmont Technical College (South Carolina)**

**MATTEEL D. KING**

Admissions Counselor

#### **Purpose**

The Access and Equity program at Piedmont Technical College is funded by a grant from the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. The funds are provided to specifically promote the recruitment and retention of African-American students at Piedmont.

#### **Need**

The additional funding has enabled Piedmont Technical College to enhance its minority recruitment and retention efforts far beyond the traditional methods so that the special needs of prospective and current African-American students are addressed through specialized programming in the seven-county area that is served by Piedmont.

#### **Organization**

During the 1999–2000 academic year, the Access and Equity program was spearheaded by one coordinator who organized a planning committee that consisted of faculty, staff and students representative of the entire campus community. The committee developed the theme “Celebrating Unity in 2000!” and worked tirelessly to organize programs that would appeal to the African-American student population, while also capturing the attention of the entire campus community. The committee members shared the common vision of uniting the campus in the spirit of cultural awareness and education.

#### **Impact on Students**

In addition to the increased African-American enrollment during the year, there was a noticeable increase in the social interaction between African-American students and other students on campus. Students of all ethnicities came together to participate in events. Through the exciting programs provided by this project, all students learned about African-American history and raised their cultural awareness.

Another advantage was the improved comfort level between faculty and students, as students had opportunities to experience quality time with their instructors in relaxed environments outside of the classroom setting. This proved to be extremely valuable in reducing the degree of isolation often experienced, and expressed, by African-American students on predominantly white campuses.

## **Advice to Others**

At our growing campus in the deep south of rural South Carolina, we were able to unite as a campus community to celebrate, and learn about, the African-American culture and its rich heritage.

The most valuable piece of advice for others wishing to implement a similar project would be to pull together a dynamic group of individuals from your campus community to form a planning committee. The committee members should not all be African-American. Seek out those students, faculty and staff members who represent different cultures and talents—people who have open minds, creative abilities, technical abilities, a thirst for knowledge, and a positive attitude. A group like this will drive itself and also serve as a model of racial unity for the entire campus to see.

Another suggestion is to design activities so they have elements that will appeal to the interests of ALL students. Plan high-value activities that are heavy in the fun category but will also add to the learning process by providing opportunities for instructors to incorporate the activities into their lesson plans.

Ensure that all events are centralized near heavy student traffic and offered when the students are on campus. Piedmont Technical College has a fifty-minute activity period every day during lunchtime, and most events were located in the Clock Courtyard area.

A final piece of advice is to be sure to include students on your planning committee and let them know that you value their input. After all, students are our business.

## **Contact for more information**

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## ***Dual Roles: Counselor/Teacher Facilitating Retention in the Classroom***

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**Seminole Community College (Florida)**

**PATRY ENGLISH**

Director, Counseling and Educational Planning

**VICTORIA NANOS**

Counselor

### **Purpose**

At Seminole Community College counselors are teaching faculty. Years ago, the professional counselors in the Counseling Office were the driving force behind the development and adoption into the curriculum of two courses: College Success and Life Career Planning. Every semester, since the inception of the classes, counselors have taught sections of both courses. We have seen the rise from one or two sections of each course in the early days, to 20 sections of College Success and 10 sections of Life Career Planning today. The most recent data covering a three year period shows the retention rate for both College Success and Life Career Planning to be 83 percent.

### **Need**

Looking at the retention rate for these courses taught, we began to wonder about what qualities or approaches did counselors bring to the classroom that might be positively affecting the retention rate. Further, we wanted to expand the view that many academic faculty and other members of the college community have about counselors. The views range from counselors as “touch-freely” types—who advocate for students even when students are inappropriate, make excuses for student’s behavior, and generally speak in “psychobabble”—to the view of counselors as saviors when faculty discover, through a student’s writing, that s/he is suicidal or depressed. And finally, we wanted to see if through teaching/classroom presentations, we could build a bridge to the academic side of the college.

### **Organization**

In organizing the program, we decided to look at the ways in which counselors: (1) fit into the concept of the learning college as put forth by Terry O’Banion, former president of the League for Innovation in the Community College, (2) use lifespan development theory, specifically Erik Erikson’s, as a framework for working with students, (3) understand barriers to student learning, (4) can support faculty in the classroom, (5) are trained and how their training influences their teaching style, (6) use the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory to identify learning styles of students and faculty, and (7) have developed specific activities for use in the classroom that facilitate and integrate student learning.

## **Impact on Students**

The results of the program indicated that students who have had counselors as their instructors found they: (1) are not able to be anonymous in the class, (2) are listened to, (3) are given many opportunities to express themselves, (4) are involved in collaborative and interactive learning with fellow students and the instructor, (5) are learning to think critically, (6) are excited about coming to class, and (7) are expected to be on time, hand in their assignments, and conduct themselves in appropriate ways in the class.

The counselor/teacher role is a hybrid that brings to the classroom a “high touch” approach that maintains the integrity of the academic environment and yet retains and enhances the development of students.

## **Advice to Others**

Our advice to counselors in other institutions is to find the opportunities to teach classes.

College Success classes or Freshman Seminars are natural environments for counselors to teach. If your institution does not have a Life Career Planning course, see about designing and developing one. The more counselors are able to go into the classroom, the better it is for the student and other faculty. Counselors have a great many skills that can be transferred from the office to the classroom.

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## ***HIV/AIDS Peer Education Program***

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### **MiraCosta College (California)**

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Interim Coordinator, Student Health Services

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Student Intern, Student Health Services

**LINDA SHAFFER**

PeopleSoft Project Manager

**ARLENE PAA**

R.N., Health Education Promotion

**KAREN KOHL**

Secretary, Health Services

### **Purpose**

This program trains students to give full class length presentations on HIV/AIDS. The 26 hour comprehensive curriculum gives students the broad background information and practical skills necessary to prepare them to give presentations to classes on our two campuses.

The goal of the classroom presentations is to provide college students with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent transmission of HIV. The curriculum shifts the educational focus from general information about HIV/AIDS to providing specific information needed to assess the risk of transmission. Students see positive communication skills modeled, followed by skill rehearsal through role play. The interactive presentations provide information, provoke thought and empower students with communication tools.

### **Need**

For many students, the college years for many are a time of sexual experimentation. This can involve behaviors that put one at risk for infection. Recently, a public poll found that 40 percent of respondents believed that HIV could be spread through casual contact. There is still much education to do! However, information alone has not been effective. Prior to the development of this program, we used outside experts as guest speakers to inform students about the AIDS issue. After watching the epidemic grow and seeing students who were still engaging in risky behaviors, we felt we had to make a change.

Our program evolved to include two new strategies: peer education and risk reduction skills. Students often rely on their peers as important sources of information. Studies have shown that peer education is an effective means of educating students. Through role play, the students practice communication skills to negotiate for safe/safer behavior.

## **Organization**

This program, which began five years ago, is organized and administered under the Student Health Services Department. The program was developed in collaboration with the San Diego County Department of Public Health. Students were recruited through campus advertising and brief class visits to inform students about the program. Students volunteered for the training. The initial training was provided by an educator from the San Diego County Department of Public Health, a student intern and nurses from Student Health Services. Thereafter, Student Health Services assumed full responsibility for the program.

Three years ago, the training program was approved as a two unit credit class. The initial 26 hour comprehensive training is held over two weekends. In addition, students attend five class sessions throughout the remainder of the semester.

Presentations are available for any class. Instructors make their requests to Student Health Services where the scheduling is done. We receive from 20 to 25 requests for presentations each semester.

## **Impact on Students**

The impact on students is twofold: there is impact on the students who conduct the education, and impact on the students who receive the education. We have found that the peer educators often internalize what they teach. Helping others learn and assume healthy behaviors leads to an increased sense of personal fulfillment and self-confidence.

Using peer educators is an effective way to reach many students. Evaluations from students who heard a presentation have shown that 54 percent reported they would feel more comfortable discussing HIV/AIDS with their partners, family and friends; 52 percent reported they plan to improve their protection against HIV and sexually-transmitted diseases, and 86 percent rated the program good to excellent.

## **Advice to Others**

Staff commitment and dedication are crucial as this program is very time and labor intensive. Since there are various ways to set up a program such as this, looking at the organization's structure, goals and needs is also very important to having a successful program. Areas to consider include: administration, program structure, marketing, recruitment, selection criteria, training, supervision/quality control, and ongoing training.

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## ***Step-by-Step (Paso-a-Paso)***

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### **NorthWest Arkansas Community College (Arkansas)**

**STEVE BROWN**

Associate Vice President, Student Development

**DALE KIRKPATRICK**

Director, Student Development Outreach

**JORGE AMARAL**

Outreach Coordinator

### **Purpose**

The Paso-a-Paso program was created to meet the educational needs of a growing language minority student population. The goal of this outreach program is to increase the number of language minority students who successfully complete high school and pursue post-secondary education. Paso-a-Paso strives to increase the awareness by students and their families of the importance, benefits, and options of higher education. Paso-a-Paso provides academic programs and support for these students.

### **Need**

Statistics from the Arkansas Department of Education show that Springdale and Rogers high schools enroll more than thirty percent of the state's LEP (limited English proficiency) students. NorthWest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) serves these school districts—which are the largest in the state. During the school year of 1993–1994, the total enrollment of Hispanic students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 was 219. By 1999–2000, the total reached 1694, an increase of 773 percent in five years! Despite this growth, before outreach efforts began, less than one percent of NWACC's student body was Hispanic.

Before Paso-a-Paso, students at the local high schools had expressed their belief that college was not an option for them. They felt excluded and disenfranchised. Added to this belief was the fact that culture and language differences created barriers to higher education. In some Latin American countries, higher education is only available to a select few. Low enrollment of Hispanic students at NWACC seemed to reflect these factors.

### **Organization**

Recognizing the necessity for global education, NWACC's board of trustees passed an International Vision Statement. A component of this vision statement supports educational programs for an increasingly large population of language minority students. In order to fund these initiatives, it was necessary to seek financial support. Grants were obtained through a local business and a non-profit organization. A bilingual coordinator who was able to relate to language minority communities was hired for the Paso-a-Paso program. The coordinator organized an advisory committee

which consisted of high school teachers, students, parents, and community leaders. This committee provides input and direction for the program.

Activities designed to encourage student and parental participation in the program included: informational workshops at schools and at community centers along with home visitations to earn parental trust and support. Other activities included advisement and tutorial assistance, field trips to NWACC and other institutions. Also, career exploration workshops were held for students and their families, and an intensive two-week summer program prepared students for the rigors of college.

### **Impact on Students**

More than 350 students participated in workshops and discussions about general college information, financial aid, and registration. Positive feedback was received from students who participated in Paso-a-Paso. Comments like these were typical: "I am glad that you are taking the time to show us how college is. Now my idea about college is clear and different," and "This Paso-a-Paso program has helped me a lot. I was really scared about college, but now I feel more confident. Thank you!" In addition, one of our first high school students to receive tutoring won the President's Scholarship in the Fall of 2000. Enrollment has steadily increased since the implementation of the program and Hispanic enrollment has grown from 24 students in 1996 to 146 in 2000.

As a result of this outreach effort, college is now an attainable goal for many language minority students. There is new interest and better understanding of post-secondary education. We have been able to break down some of the barriers that keep students from reaching their potential.

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# *Mentoring for Success: The New Definition of Community College Success*

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**Penn Valley Community College (Missouri)**  
**Maple Woods Community College (Missouri)**

LISA MINIS  
Dean of Students

ANDREA SHELTON  
Associate Dean, Student Services

## **Purpose**

The mentoring programs at Maple Woods Community College and Penn Valley Community College were designed to improve the retention rate and overall academic success of participating students. The Maple Woods mentoring program focused on all first time, full-time, credit-seeking students while the Penn Valley program more specifically targeted students enrolled in a college success skills course. The purpose of both programs was to provide a campus contact person for participating students so they could discuss academic or other problems in order for students to have greater awareness of—and more fully utilize—community college support resources.

## **Need**

Administrators and faculty at Maple Woods and Penn Valley have long expressed concern over the retention rate and lack of academic success at both institutions. Nearly half of all entering students were leaving before completing their first year of college and many of the students who were retained were not academically prepared for the next level of course work. The high attrition rate at the colleges was due somewhat to the fact that most of the students had full or part-time jobs and all lived off-campus and therefore lacked a connection with social and academic experiences on the college campuses. The issue became how to connect students in a significant and meaningful way with the college experience—so they could become socially and academically integrated with campus life—thereby increasing persistence and academic success.

## **Organization**

The Maple Woods Community College mentoring program was a college-wide initiative of the President. The President appointed a mentoring committee in response to the recommendation made by the college-wide retention committee for the purpose of improving retention and academic achievement. The committee was comprised of faculty, staff and administrators.

At the time of registration, students were identified and required to complete an intake form as a condition of acceptance into the college. Students were assigned to volunteer mentors by a mentoring subcommittee. The mentor-student match was

based on preferences designated earlier on mentor information forms. Mentors attended training sessions and were advised to make the most frequent contacts early in the semester. Mentors were also encouraged to monitor student progress on a contact log.

The Penn Valley Community College mentoring program was an initiative of a Title III grant designed to integrate mentoring activities into the READ 108/College Success Skills course to increase persistence to the next level and improve overall academic skills. Faculty from the College Success Skills course worked with student development professionals and members of the retention team to develop an early alert and referral mechanism. The team recommended the integration of a mentoring component into the College Success Skills course.

Instructors had students complete information forms on the first day of class. Mentors were recruited by the retention team and all volunteer mentors completed information forms. Matching of the mentors and students was made by members of the team, based on similarities in gender and race, as well as shared backgrounds, experiences, interests and needs. The mentors and students were introduced during a class session in the second week of classes. The students were required to work with their mentors on three class assignments. Both the students and mentors completed feedback forms at the end of the semester.

### **Impact on Students**

Although the programs were organized differently, there were similarities in the findings. The primary finding of both mentoring programs was that students who received mentoring completed a significantly larger number of courses than students who did not receive mentoring. Also, the students who participated in the mentoring programs were less likely to withdraw from the courses in which they enrolled. With regard to overall retention rates, the Maple Woods students were not retained at a higher level than students who attended previous semesters prior to the implementation of the mentoring program. However, eighty-two percent of the students in the Penn Valley mentoring program were enrolled in classes the following semester.

There was no difference in the overall grade point averages of the students who participated in the mentoring programs when compared to students from previous semesters who did not receive mentoring. Eighty percent of the students in the Penn Valley College Success Skills class received a grade of C or above in the course.

Follow-up interviews with the students found that ninety percent expressed satisfaction with the class and the mentoring program. Students in both programs reported an increased awareness of campus life and many had a new sense of direction concerning careers. Thirty-one percent of those participating maintained contact with their mentors once the mentoring program ended.

### **Advice to Others**

Committing to a centrally planned and managed program with sufficient support staff is key to the success of a mentoring program. Clearly defined goals and objectives with timelines and a designated budget for the program are also important factors. However, the most critical component of a successful mentoring program is the design of the program.

In designing a mentoring program the most successful matches seem to occur between people of similar social origins. The training of mentors on the goals and objectives of the program is essential. The more meetings between student and mentor, the more likely the student will persist. Finally, the most successful mentoring programs are linked with other college intervention initiatives.

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# *The Transitions Program: Making Differences in Women's Lives*

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**Mt. Hood Community College (Oregon)**

**DEBBIE DERR**

Vice President, Student Development and Services

## **Purpose**

The Transitions Program is an innovative and highly successful career development program for single parents and displaced homemakers. The program serves primarily low-income women who have experienced significant trauma, including domestic violence, addiction, poverty, racism, divorce and/or death of a spouse. This college-credited program has achieved dramatic increases in student retention and success using group work and role modeling, as well as intensive survival and healing support.

## **Need**

The Transitions Program addresses a critical community need to help move women and children out of poverty. In Multnomah County, Oregon, seventy-two percent of the poor are women and children. Fifty percent of the county's poor families are headed by single mothers. Women are more likely to earn less than men, work at jobs without health and retirement benefits, and lack the funds for child care to allow them to be employed. The Transitions Program assists women to acquire the skills needed for secure family wage-paying jobs and achieve long term economic independence.

## **Organization**

The Transitions Program is one of Oregon's seventeen single parent/displaced homemaker programs historically funded by a set-aside in the Carl Perkins Vocational Assistance Act. The program was created in 1985 in a community-based setting and moved to the campus in 1994. The program offered a six-credit program with a staff of two or three. In 1997 the program was re-designed to move participants directly into college classes and to support long-term student retention using a large group of mentors and intern volunteers. In 2000, the federal set-aside was eliminated, and the college made a decision to direct other grant resources to fund the program.

## **Impact on Students**

After program re-design, the Transitions Program achieved dramatic increases in student retention. Enrollment doubled in college classes following the Transitions Program, and one-year retention increased by fifty-six percent in two years. Most strikingly, 1997-99 Transitions graduates had higher retention rates and grades than traditional Mt. Hood Community College students, who are typically young, without dependents, and have family support and recent school experience. Graduates of the Transitions Program had a twenty-five percent higher one-year retention rate than

the younger students, and had an average grade point average of 3.03, compared to 2.72 among their younger counterparts.

The Transitions Program has helped to save thousands of taxpayer dollars in public benefits programs. Transitions students report higher wages, more benefits, and a significant reduction in receipt of welfare, food stamps and Medicaid benefits five years following participation in the Transitions Program.

### **Advice to Others**

Mounting a program similar to the one at Mt Hood Community College requires building upon some key features that help achieve success. Ensure there is repetitive use of low-income role models, including a peer mentor program. Rely heavily on the development of social support systems, such as by using a 3-term cohort model. Focus on the development of critical thinking skills on issues of gender, class and race. Provide opportunities for leadership development and involvement in student life. Also provide personal counseling and linkage to community-based counseling services. Program participants will need financial assistance, community referral and advocacy for basic survival needs. And expect a need for significant expansion of staff, where possible making use of volunteers, including mentors and interns.

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# ***Collaborative Approaches to Enrollment Management for Student Affairs Professionals***

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## **Linn-Benton Community College (Oregon)**

DIANE WATSON

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### **Purpose**

To offset the negative impact of declining enrollment and to build upon a tradition of collaborative effort, Linn-Benton Community College (LCC) in Albany, Oregon developed college-wide goals for promoting a shared vision for enrollment management initiatives. Academic Affairs and Student Services sought to collaborate to provide access and student success through on-campus efforts and external partnerships, particularly via a dual admission and enrollment program between LCC and Oregon State University.

### **Need**

Community colleges have often relied on partnerships and collaborative efforts in order to meet the needs of their communities. For LCC, this has meant “providing accessible, quality, lifelong learning opportunities to serve the present and future needs of the community.”

The college has consistently worked with the public school system, agencies, and institutions of higher education. However, recent legislative bills in Oregon, which created greater reliance on state funding and limited resources have challenged institutions of higher education to pool resources and establish new partnerships, both internally and externally.

LCC has faced a flat or slightly declining enrollment through much of the 1990s. Student retention data indicated that for the 1996–1997 academic year, 80 percent of the first time freshmen attending LCC were leaving the college within the first year. Students who transferred to nearby Oregon State University found difficulty in transferring all of their classes and at times found that they needed additional course work for their majors. These concerns, along with a lack of enrollment growth funding from the Oregon State Legislature, created the potential for a crisis if the situation was not remedied.

### **Organization**

The College initiated a Campus-Wide Enrollment Management Campaign through the establishment of college-wide goals and priority initiatives. An Enrollment Management Steering Committee, including membership from both Student and College Services and Academic Affairs, was implemented. Internal partnerships such as the Summer School Task Force were established. A Student Ambassador program was created where continuing students called newly admitted students four times during their first quarter.

External partnerships were also established with the University of Phoenix, Study Oregon, Oregon Consortium for Distance Learning, and enhanced with the local school districts. However, the greatest impact on transfer enrollment, retention, and success has come from the Linn-Benton Community College/Oregon State University (OSU) Dual Admission and Enrollment Program which was first piloted in the Fall of 1998. Starting with just 60 students, this program has grown to over 600.

### **Impact on Students**

Dual Admission and Enrollment means that students fill out one application and are admitted to both institutions. Students may attend LCC and OSU and count enrollment at both schools toward Financial Aid. Students can access services and participate in student life at both campuses. There is more flexibility in scheduling with access to more classes. There is cost savings as students take classes at a community college and a university. It means better advising and articulation of requirements for degrees as faculty and staff at both LCC and OSU are creating a seamless curriculum and transition for students. It is also a model which supports student success as students who need skill-building and preparatory courses are able to take those at LCC and lower division courses at either LCC or OSU. Students have an easier transition from community college to the university.

The Summer School Task Force resulted in an increase of over 70 percent in full-time students and 24 percent in FT for Summer Term. The result of the Student Ambassador program along with other retention initiatives increased the retention figures from 20 percent in 1996 to 50.1 percent in 1999. The number of full-time students has increased more than 50 percent over the last five years due to student retention efforts and partnerships such as the LCC/OSU Dual Admission and Enrollment program. Through college-wide efforts, Linn Benton Community College's reimbursable FT grew nearly 10 percent during the 1999–2000 academic year.

### **Advice to Others**

When trying to establish a dual enrollment partnership, here are three suggestions to keep in mind. First, go in with an open mind—believe that a partnership is possible, but will probably not happen overnight. Our two institutions took a year to analyze issues and develop their plans. Second, make sure you have the right people involved on the partnership team and that it is a team with a contact at both institutions. Finally, do a pilot program with a small student population at one school to see where the problems are.

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## ***Bye Mom and Dad, I'm Off to College! — But Is It a Responsive Campus?***

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**Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell (New Mexico)**

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### **Purpose**

The Special Services Program at the Roswell campus of Eastern New Mexico University (EMU) provides an important component in the mission of this comprehensive community college. It provides specialized certificate programs for students with disabilities and others in Auto Body, Auto Mechanics, Child Care, Computer Repair, Food Service, Nursing Assistant, Office Skills, Sanitation/Maintenance/Grounds keeping, Special Topics, Veterinary Assistant, and Welding. Class sizes are small and the emphasis is on the completion of skills necessary for employment.

### **Need**

Historically, students with significant disabilities have not seen college as an option for further training. Those who did pursue a college education, selected a two year community college because of the open door policy, geographic proximity and reduced tuition costs. Fifteen years ago our campus discovered numerous students, with disabilities, who were unable to attend college because they had not received a high school diploma, or had a significant disability and were unable to succeed with academic courses. A Special Education instructor asked, “What happens for these students after high school?” Eastern New Mexico University–Roswell was contacted and a Vocational Training Program was developed for these students with a small teacher pupil ratio of one to eight. The classes are not limited to students with disabilities, but are designed with hands-on instruction to better facilitate various learning styles.

### **Organization**

A pilot course was presented to the University and data was collected as to the placement rate of students completing the program. Over the past fifteen years, courses and programs have been added and some deleted based on availability of employment and the employment rates.

A grant was funded by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and a program fee was established to provide funding to broaden the courses and programs offered.

## **Impact on Students**

Students graduate from the program with a sense of accomplishment and employability skills. The placement rate for students completing the program over the past ten years has remained at seventy percent or higher.

## **Advice to Others**

Keep in mind there are challenges in setting up a Vocational Training Program and becoming a responsive campus for all students. The cost of faculty is expensive to maintain a teacher/pupil ratio of one to eight. Classroom space is at a premium in most college settings. Qualified and experienced faculty need to be found to work appropriately with students with developmental disabilities. There is usually a lack of scholarships and grants available for students with disabilities and developing a working relationship with other agencies such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation requires persistence. Special attention should be paid to creating an effective referral and transition process for students entering the college setting. Finally, ensure you establish a means of vocational assessment to determine the students' aptitudes and abilities related to their chosen vocational goal(s).

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