College Update

“One’s destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.” – Henry Miller

I sincerely hope that your holiday break went well and you are looking forward to a great 2012 and, more immediately, the successful start of Spring semester. Welcoming new students to campus and welcoming back continuing students will be important in the next few days and then getting off to a positive start to the semester will keep the journey vital and ongoing. We will also have several new faculty and staff joining us at this point in the year due to position openings and new programs, and I will include in this Update a few of the new full-time personnel who have joined or changed positions at Pitt Community College recently in our quest to “educate and empower people for success.”

One of my favorite works of literature, once I got over the unusual language of Middle English, has been Geoffrey Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales, not just for the great humor and compassion in the various stories, but for the personalities revealed of those pilgrims telling the tales. I am sure that all of us could tell entertaining stories about the students and community members we are serving and, in fact, some of these stories, past and present, emerge in the 50th anniversary book, A Resolve to Serve, as well as in the presentations to our Board of Trustees of student statements of success, often done against major odds. Observing the induction of honors students into the Gamma Beta Phi chapter this fall inspired me in particular when one student at the reception asked where he could obtain information on his mother applying for the GED program. We are witnessing many examples daily of students and entire families striving to improve themselves in a less than favorable economic context. Our emphasis should remain on supporting them to reach their educational goals, especially a degree or certificate (or transfer diploma), which is a tangible asset for the future. But our journey is also about changing the ways people see things, which is done both in the classroom, in clubs and activities, and in everyday interactions. I thank you for what you do to facilitate this growth in those we serve.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Accreditation (SACS)

During the course of the past three years, faculty and staff across the campus have been involved in a different kind of journey, a journey to accreditation. We have many committees and teams working hard to complete our Compliance Certification in the next few weeks. We are also developing a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) focusing on Career Planning and Academic Advising, which will be completed this coming summer in advance of the visiting team coming to PCC this September. To prepare for this important review, we have invited Dr. Barry Goldstein, SACS Vice President, who will be part of the site visit team, to make a preliminary visit here on January 30-31 to answer questions and provide his perspective on our progress to date. Go to http://www.pittcc.edu/sacs/ for information on various parts of our preparations as well as frequently asked questions about the process of reaccreditation.
SACS recognition is vital not just for the “destination” of reaccreditation but for the ongoing self-reflection and improvement which is at the heart of the process. Pitt Community College is a strong institution of higher education because of our continuous analysis of our programs and services. It is essential that all employees and as many students as possible be familiar with the SACS review and contribute to this process of evaluation and improvement. You will hear much more about the “Journey” of our SACS reaccreditation in the months ahead, and I invite your participation and welcome suggestions to me or our SACS Liaison, Dr. Larry Dendy.

**Accomplishments and Recognitions**

* **Dean David Lusk** (Continuing Education) for receiving a grant of $50,000 from The NC Rural Center for a training program for logging equipment operators.

* **Catherine Tingelstad** (Library) for her book review for the NC Library Association.

**Sabrina Westerman** (alumna), who was named outstanding senior in English at ECU.

**Terra Jones** (Bookstore) for receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mt. Olive College.

**Amber Ream** (Nursing) for completing the Master’s degree in Nursing at East Carolina Univ.

**Rick Owens** (Information Technology) is one of eighteen professionals who completed the UNC Certified Government Chief Information Officer program.

**PCC Women’s Softball Team** for compiling a 3.33 GPA for Fall 2011.

**Andre Gregory/Dan Mayo** for their presentation at the SACS Conference in Orlando on PCC’s partnership with Wuxi Institute of Technology.

**New Hires and Promotions since December 1, 2011**

Natasha Thompson, HIT Admin Assistant    Tia Holloman, Staff Accountant

Shelly Allen, Instructor, Networking, CISCO Acad.    Matthew Amante, AFA/Art Instructor

Bershuan Thompson, TRIO/EOC Outreach Specialist

Christy Moore, TRIO: EOC Coordinator    Sidette Boyce, Dir., Healthcare Programs

Please join me in welcoming and congratulating these individuals. Best wishes to you all for a great 2012!

G. Dennis Massey, President