October 1, 2013

College Update

The 50th anniversary of the North Carolina Community College System is being celebrated this year, and many trustees and friends attended a Founders Dinner on September 18 in Goldsboro to hear people like Dr. Ben Fountain, past president of the System, former Governor Jim Hunt, and current President Scott Ralls talk about the great accomplishments in the advancement of all sectors of NC’s population during the past half-century. I hope that all of you saw the NC Now program on UNC-TV this past month (see the PCC website) which spotlighted Pitt Community College. My only regret is that many comments which I made praising our own pioneering leader, Robert Lee Humber, Jr., were not included in the final edit of the program. We are proud of what PCC has achieved, but it might not have occurred without the leadership of Mr. Humber, our first Board of Trustees chair, and many others. We are building upon the foundation they helped to create.

The final enrollment numbers for Fall 2013 were issued by Registrar Joanne Ceres in September, and once again you should be proud that PCC enrolled 9,117 credit students, a gain of just over 1% compared to last fall. After the spectacular growth in Fall 2012, I was going to be pleased if we were able to match that total this fall, especially as the local economy has picked up, but we once again exceeded that level. Thanks to all the faculty and staff who accommodated the demand, even though I realize that there were many students who could not find all the courses they needed. Pitt is once again among a small number of NC community colleges with growth in 2013.

This growth underscores our documented need for the Science Building and Law Enforcement Training Center on the November 5 ballot for voter approval. Pitt Community College remains by a long shot the most crowded of all NC colleges, public or private. This means that many students are denied the courses they need to advance in our community, to help take over the 30,900 new and replacement jobs which are projected in Pitt County by 2020. Our graduates are a substantial boost to the middle class, which is threatened by the lingering impact of the recession. The average annual income of associate’s degree graduates at their career midpoint is currently $38,100 according to a 2011 local economic impact study. PCC is definitely a strong investment for the future.

There are many things which you can do to assist in bringing the referendum to the attention of local voters:

- Talk with neighbors and friends and distribute fliers and cards to people across campus and in the community. Materials available in the Institutional Advancement office in Vernon White.
- Volunteer at Early Voting sites to provide information to interested people (contact Andrew Walker for available times and dates).
- Inform your students of what is at stake in this election and urge them to register to vote by October 11 or at an Early Voting site up to November 2. Please remember that on the job employees are prohibited from advocacy, but you can inform students of the election and the PCC referendum.
Pick up yard signs in Facilities Services Room 105, listing the number taken and where you hope to place them.

Send postcards to friends, family and others urging them to vote (postcards will be available in the Institutional Advancement Office – see Lisa Elmore).

We are also hosting a campus public forum about the Bond Referendum on Thursday, October 9, at 6:30 PM in the Goess Student Center following Bond Information Day sponsored by the SGA. Please inform people that at this event we will address all issues and answer questions.

The PCC United Way Committee, chaired this year by Tabitha Miller, encourages all PCC employees to 'live united' by contributing to the United Way as a means of giving back to our community. Through generous contributions from employees, PCC has been able to support the United Way of Pitt County and directly impact our community. The goal of the United Way of Pitt County is to create lasting change by addressing the underlying causes of community challenges, especially school success and workforce development.

Please consider donating to this year's campaign (October 14th – November 15th). Your contribution will do much for Pitt County!

Accomplishments and Recognitions

Respiratory therapy students Danielle Dillane, Stephanie Spencer, Michelle Nobles, and Michelle Turnage won the quiz bowl at the 35th annual meeting of the North Carolina Society for Respiratory Care which was held in Wilmington, September 24-27. As the winning student team for NC, they are provided the opportunity to compete at the national level in Anaheim, CA in November.

Mary Paramore, Derek Hunter, and many PCC staff and volunteers hosted a Forklift Rodeo on September 20 with 8 competing teams and great publicity. Ann’s House of Nuts was the winner. Everyone felt it was a great success.

The Fine Art & Design Faculty Exhibit has opened in the Goess Student Center. View and enjoy the talents of our full and part-time faculty!

Thanks to over 100 faculty and staff who made PCC in the Community Day on September 24 a tremendous success. Thanks to Susan Nobles and her staff for their leadership in creating and improving friendships with those we serve.

Finally, many thanks to those who contributed to the PCC Foundation’s Annual Excellence Fund. We exceeded the goal of 60% of full-time employees and $60,000 by receiving $68,424.97 and 64% participation. Special thanks to the PCC Employee’s Annual Excellence Fund Campaign Committee members for assisting with this outstanding campaign.

Early voting starts on October 17 and the election is November 5. Thanks for your support. It will help thousands of students and businesses over many years!

G. Dennis Massey, President