

December 18, 2008

Pathways to education economic recovery

Dear Members of our Community College Family,

As you all know, the major strength of a comprehensive community college is the wide array of education pathways we provide for students. For many of our students, general education and transfer programs help them reach their goal of obtaining a bachelors degree, while just as importantly, many of our students desire workforce skills training and a career in the trades. As a comprehensive community college, we also have a mission to assist employers with retraining and retooling their employees, which we do through our short-term intensive training and custom fit programs, as well as provide continuing education for members of the community interested in a variety of educational programming, including new programs and technologies.

In meeting our role as a comprehensive community college, I am convinced SLCC can be one of the state's most effective gateways to economic recovery because of the strength of our programs. Our enrollments for Spring are up 10% in headcount today as compared to this time last year, and we still have weeks to go before our Spring semester begins. Our Workforce and Professional Development division of the college continues to provide workforce training and retraining for our employers of the state especially in the high wage/high growth areas of IT, healthcare, and manufacturing technologies. In fact, last year our Continuing Ed, Custom Fit, Skills Center and credit courses through CE provided education to **35,000 learners**. This is well over half of the total of 55,107 learners served by SLCC last year!

Yet, we face a number of challenges in order to assure that our workforce education and skills training programs are cutting edge and providing students with the skills needed in the 21st Century. As you all know, we have been in discussions throughout the summer and fall regarding the combining of the Salt Lake Applied Technology College with SLCC. This bill will be debated during the 2009 Legislature, and with a good chance of passage, much work is ahead including the evaluation and implementation of different reporting and accountability systems, curriculum and service locations. We also have to make sure we are continually evolving our programs with the needs of business and industry to assure that our students receive credentials that help them obtain meaningful jobs and careers. This includes making certain that our equipment needs and curriculum are up-to-date and that we are being responsive when we hear of industry changes and improvements. Most importantly, we must be connected to business and industry as well as our union partners in order to provide the services expected of a premier community college.

With these successes and challenges in mind and to continue the critical growth of this arm of the college, I am pleased to announce that Dr. Troy Justesen will be joining us as our Vice President of Professional, Workforce and Literacy Development on February 1 to bring additional support as we anticipate unprecedented growth in these pillars of our college. Dr. Justesen is currently serving as Assistant Secretary for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) for the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, DC. Prior to this role, he was the Deputy Assistant Secretary and Deputy Commissioner for Rehabilitation Services at the U.S. Department of Education and has served as the Associate Director for Domestic Policy for the White House's Domestic Policy Council. Troy continues to teach as an adjunct professor at Morgan State University in his spare time! We are most fortunate to have him join our college and promote the importance of our non-credit and workforce development education and training to our internal and external constituents.

Finally, as we leave for a well-deserved and needed respite over the holidays, I ask that you join with me in acknowledging and appreciating all that we do have- our collective health, our families and friends, our deep purpose in keeping SLCC an open door to learning, and our students. Thank you for all that you do towards these abundant blessings.

Most Sincerely,

President Bioteau