

TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

IN THE NEWS



February 14, 2009 - March 5, 2009

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TCC Gadsden programs recognized

DEMOCRAT STAFF REPORT

Tallahassee Community College received special recognition for its innovative programs in Gadsden County on Tuesday night in San Francisco.

TCC received the award at the national Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count student success initiative. The college also received a \$5,000 cash award from Lumina Foundation for Education to be used for any student success purpose TCC deems appropriate.

“To be recognized for our efforts in Gadsden County is a great honor that the entire community can be proud of,” said TCC President Bill Law said. “What we’ve been able to achieve (in Gadsden County) speaks to the value of what can happen when community partners come together with a single vision, one that truly benefits the people that live there.”

In 2004, state officials reported alarming rates of infant mortality and unemployment in Gadsden County. Numerous local schools were failing and many students were dropping out of school altogether.

To address these critical community issues, TCC conducted a series of town hall meetings, which led to a 10-point action plan. Additionally, the college helped secure \$16 million for Gadsden County community initiatives. In 2005, TCC established The Quincy House, the College’s Gadsden County Service Center, to provide after-school programs, a computer lab and Tech @ Night classes, as well as GED and adult literacy instruction

Fla. college honored for student success initiative

Valencia Community College (VCC) of Florida was presented the inaugural Leah Meyer Austin Institutional Student Success Leadership Award—which comes with \$25,000—at the annual Achieving the Dream Strategy Institute in San Francisco this week.

VCC, one of the largest community colleges in Florida with 50,000 students on four campuses, was recognized for its unique execution of data-informed initiatives to close performance gaps among students from different ethnic and economic backgrounds.

“Valencia Community College, its leadership, faculty, staff and students have made tremendous strides in improving success for all students by creating and implementing strategies that have led to systemic improvement,” said Carol Lincoln, national director of Achieving the Dream.

Achieving the Dream is a long-term national initiative that helps community college students complete courses and earn certificates or degrees. It is built on the belief that broad institutional change—informed by student achievement data—is critical to achieving these results. Achieving the Dream is particularly focused on student groups that have faced the most significant barriers to success, including low-income students and students of color.

“Our work with the initiative has required us to make important decisions impacting student success collectively with the entire college community,” said VCC President Sanford Shugart. “This type of collaboration, plus detailed planning, has fostered a disciplined process that is yielding better decisions and embedding student achievement goals and activities into the culture of the college.”

By mining its internal research data and studying the intersection between its highest enrollment courses and those in which students were least successful, VCC identified major achievement gaps across racial and ethnic groups, between college-ready and under-prepared students, and between student performance in mathematics courses compared to courses in other disciplines.

To begin addressing these performance gaps, VCC chose to focus intervention strategies around six “gateway” courses, including four mathematics courses, an English composition course and a U.S. government course. The strategies for addressing these courses use three arrangements of learning

communities, implemented in phases beginning in the 2005-06 academic year, to cultivate student success:

- Supplemental learning, including hiring successful students to serve as peer mentors.
- Learning in Community (LinC), which coordinates instruction for students who attend linked courses together.
- Establishing a student life skills requirement for students who test into all three developmental disciplines (reading, writing and mathematics).

More than 29,000 VCC students have taken at least one of the six targeted gateway courses since the inception of the new learning communities. The average success rate for all ethnicities in the six courses improved three full percentage points to 66 percent in 2008, compared to 2004, prior to starting the learning communities.

Success rate gaps compared to Caucasian students varied from year to year among the six courses. The success rate for Caucasians held steady from 2004 to 2008. However, Hispanic students, who lagged behind Caucasians in 2004, outperformed them in 2008.

African-American students also significantly closed the gap in the six gateway courses, from 13.4 percent in 2004 to just a 3.6 percent gap in 2008.

“The goal is to create conditions for student learning that improve success for all students and eliminate the predictability of success or failure based on demographic factors,” Shugart said.

The Leah Meyer Austin Award, sponsored by Lumina Foundation for Education and administered by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), recognizes outstanding institutional achievement in creating excellence and equity through committed leadership, documented student success strategies, broad engagement, use of evidence to improve programs, policies and practices, and systemic institutional improvement.

Meyer Austin is a former senior vice president at Lumina Foundation for Education and shaped the development of Achieving the Dream. The winning college may use the \$25,000 cash award for any student success purpose.

Achieving the Dream also gave Special Recognition to Tallahassee Community College (Florida) for its community engagement work and Patrick Henry Community College (Virginia) for exceptional work in cooperative learning.

EDC's Manufacturers Roundtable meets Tuesday at Syn-Tech

Democrat Staff Report

The Capital Region Manufacturers Roundtable will meet Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. at Syn-Tech Systems in Tallahassee.

Speakers will discuss the latest developments for the upcoming session of the Florida Legislature, including tax exemptions and workers compensation.

In addition, the Florida Sterling Council will unveil its Small Business Blueprint program and workforce training updates will be provided by Lively Technical Center and Tallahassee Community College.

Attendees will be asked to provide feedback helpful for manufacturers during the current economic climate.

Syn-Tech Systems is located at 100 Four Points Way, off South Adams Street. Lunch will be served during the meeting. To RSVP, contact Kara Palmer at 521-3117 or e-mail kpalmer@taledc.com.

Tuskegee Airmen Visit TCC

Reporter: John Rogers

Email Address: john.rogers@wctv.tv

Members of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen were at Tallahassee Community College on Tuesday.

TCC students gathered at lunchtime for a presentation on the military's first African-American flying unit.

These brave men fought in World War Two at a time when the armed forces were still segregated.

Two members of the Tuskegee Airmen were present at the ceremony.

Tuskegee Airman Retired Col. Willie E. Jenkins says, "I was a parachute rigger and repairman, in charge of field operations for parachute activities."

A nationally reknown educator and expert on the Tuskegee Airmen spoke about the history of the group.

25 Women You Need to Know in 2009

By Dave Hodges
DEMOCRAT BUSINESS EDITOR

Whether they are teachers, counselors, activists or employers, the 25 Women You Need to Know share a passion for people and a commitment to improving the community.

Beginning today and continuing through March, Women's History Month, the spotlight will be on these women and their accomplishments, both professional and civic.

"I am delighted. What a wonderful honor," said Kenan Fishburne when notified by phone that she had been selected. An interior designer in Quincy, Fishburne said she had seen the caliber of honorees in the past and felt privileged to be included among such an elite group.

The 25 Women You Need to Know celebration is a program of the Tallahassee Democrat, and the reception for the winners in early April will be sponsored by law firm Holland & Knight. The program is in its third year and attracted more than 150 nominations from area residents during February.

The nominees reflected a wide range of backgrounds, ages and experiences. Some of the women had worked many years in their professions or areas of business. There were successful company owners and others with great achievements in managing nonprofits and civic organizations. All demonstrated a commitment to their neighbors and to supporting community causes.

The panel of judges included Yolanda Miranda-Hill, representing the local chapter of the Business & Professional Women's Association, and 2008 honorees Pam Ridley, Ivette Marques, Martha Stubbs and Kelly Johnson. Also serving as panelists were the Democrat's Jeanie Booth and Marsheila Hayes.

"It was indeed a pleasure serving on the committee," said Ridley. "What a great, diverse group of very talented women who were selected. The main theme running through their applications was their commitment and resolve for service and their determination to make Tallahassee a better place to live."

Beginning Tuesday on the Democrat's Business & Growth page, one of the 25 will be featured in a profile, with the series concluding at the end of the month. Visit Tallahassee.com for more photos, video and details about the women's achievements.

Contact Democrat Business Editor Dave Hodges at (850) 599-2321 or dhodges@Tallahassee.com.

25 women you need to know — 2009

- Beth Shankle-Anderson, attorney and reigning Mrs. Tallahassee
- Kathy Anderson, executive director and president, Ronald McDonald House Charities
- Janegale Boyd, president, Florida Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
- Joanne W. Brown, senior vice president, Morgan Stanley
- Maggie Lewis-Butler, chair, Leon County School Board
- Susan Clark, attorney, Radey, Thomas, Yon & Clark
- Carol B. Dover, president, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association
- Ilona Faust, principal, Betton Hills Preparatory School
- Kenan Fishburne, interior designer
- Linn Ann Jones Griffin, managing co-owner, Strong and Jones Funeral Home
- Wendy Halleck, owner, Quarter Moon Imports
- Patti A. Hilaman, deputy executive director, Florida League of Cities
- Terry Kemp, community volunteer
- Christine M. Koontz, faculty member, FSU College of Information
- Rev. Candace McKibben, pastor
- Marsha Morrison, Realtor
- Sally Musgrove, insurance and financial services agent
- Jeanne O'Kon, professor, Tallahassee Community College
- Nina Ashenafi Richardson, Leon County judge
- Becky Sauers, LPGA golf professional
- Judi Taylor, owner, Jenny Craig Weight Loss Centre
- Rosalind Tompkins, poet, founder of Mothers in Crisis
- LaTanya White, owner, 71 Proof LLC
- Jennifer Womble, teacher, Lawton Chiles High School
- Carrie E. Zimmerman, president, The Zimmerman Agency

Tallahassee Is Growing Innovation

By Charlotte Crane

Two years ago, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation launched a pilot project called the Knight Creative Communities Initiative in Tallahassee and two other cities where the now-defunct Knight Ridder owned newspapers. Tallahassee's aim: Grow and diversify the local economy, emphasizing innovation and quality of life.

Despite the economic downturn, organizers say they will be continuing and expanding Tallahassee's program this year. Mike Pate, the Knight Foundation Tallahassee program director who helped spearhead KCCI, talks about its successes and its latest initiative.

- **Successful Initiatives:** "The Knight Creative Communities Initiative spun off three successful projects that are now exploring ways to sustain themselves into the future. The Tallahassee Film Festival second-year event will be held April 15-19. Knight gave the effort a \$60,000, two-year grant to help it get started. We have also given a \$160,000, two-year grant to launch Sustainable Tallahassee; its goal is to make Tallahassee a greener community and find ways to build green business, industry and jobs. The third project, Get Gaines Going, is focused on turning Tallahassee's Gaines Street corridor into an arts and entertainment district. In addition, Knight gave \$1 million last year toward renovation of FSU's Ruby Diamond auditorium and lobby."
- **Key Players:** " 'Community Catalysts,' citizens who through a self-nomination process were selected to participate in the KCCI pilot, have come up with the ideas and executed them. Many of these folks were new to economic development efforts and brought freshness and energy to the projects."
- **What's New:** "We are providing a \$570,000, five-year grant to establish the Knight Creative Communities Institute at Tallahassee Community College. The institute will be a cornerstone of our work to create a sense of place in the community to attract and retain college graduates and young professionals."

Favorite projects in spending bill

Every member of South Florida's Congressional delegation managed to secure at least a few favorite projects in the spending bill the Senate is debating this week. Among them:

Sen. Mel Martinez:

- \$100,000 to Orange County to "remediate environmental dangers of methamphetamine labs."
- \$475,000 to Miami-Dade Transit, procurement of buses.

Sen. Bill Nelson:

- \$1 million to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, "to collect accurate, reliable data on red snapper catch, bycatch and mortality."
- \$200,000 for Tallahassee Community College to expand intelligence training programs.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart:

- \$600,000 city of Hialeah, police-equipment upgrades.
- \$475,000, Pembroke Pines Senior Center, bus procurement.

Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart:

- \$1.2 million in the military budget, "Dual Use Technologies for Bio-Defense: Drug Design and Delivery of Novel Therapeutics"
- \$570,000 for Miami Lakes for hybrid electric vehicles and a trolleybus.

Rep. Kendrick Meek:

- \$3.2 million, minority aviation training.
- \$500,000 for the Overtown Youth Center

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen:

- \$95,000 to Barry University for curriculum development, including the purchase of equipment.
- \$1.6 million to Florida International University for a "Mass Scale Biosensor Threat Diagnostic for In-Theater Defense Utilization."

Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz:

- \$400,000 for Wilton Manors, law-enforcement equipment for the city's emergency operations center.
- \$200,000 for Miami-Dade County after-school gang- and drug-prevention programs.

Source: Herald research; Taxpayers for Common Sense

TCC's "proactive" work on budget keeps layoffs at bay

By Angeline J. Taylor
DEMOCRAT STAFF WRITER

Class sizes may be larger, student enrollment continues to break records and retiring professors may be replaced with less experienced instructors.

But through all of the symptoms of the economic downturn at Tallahassee Community College, there is one source of pride for President Bill Law — no layoffs.

"We still have not contemplated the need for any layoffs," Law said. "As positions come vacant, we are being even tougher on ourselves on whether to replace them or how to replace them."

Holding to the ideal to keep about 200 employed hasn't been easy for administrators or trustees, Law said. He said more temporary employees have been hired to replace outgoing faculty and staff.

"It's just too uncertain for us to have people join us full time with the sense of permanence when we can't make that assurance," he said.

Tuition for next year will increase by \$3 per credit hour. And, although administrators don't make it a practice, they have dipped into TCC's rainy day fund and taken out \$300,000 to supplement the budget.

"It's raining," Law said. "Now is the time to spend it."

Law said the key to the college's budgeting success during the ongoing recession is how his team deals with the cuts.

"Our success has been to be realistic about the problems we face and to face them earlier rather than later," he said. That's

why they aren't relying on federal stimulus money. Law said he wants to be sure how much TCC will receive and how to use it.

TCC trustee chairman Frank Messersmith, who was in the Legislature for 10 years, said he's never seen this kind of "economic meltdown."

He agreed with Law that TCC has worked to stay ahead of the cuts. Last year, TCC planned to cut about \$2.32 million — 7 percent of its budget — when the state mandated 4 percent cuts.

"We proactively worked on the budget," Messersmith said. "We were actually a step ahead of every cut."

Law said he will be presenting his recommendations for the 2009-2010 budget cuts to trustees in April. And, even though Gov. Charlie Crist has recommended no budget cuts for higher education, Law is playing it safe.

TCC faculty senate chairman Tom Waller said administrators have established good financial management. He said it helps that enrollment at the college continues to increase, now exceeding 14,000 students.

"Everybody's worried about the state of the financial system in Florida," Waller said. "But it's not affecting the work that we do in the classroom."

Law admits he has one overriding concern: "As bad as the news could be, if somebody said here's the bottom line ... I would be able to structure a program.

"The uncertainty is what creates the anxiety."

Tallahassee's Trailblazing Women: Local leader Marjorie Turnbull

DEMOCRAT STAFF Report

Marjorie Turnbull shattered a glass ceiling in 1994 when she became the first woman from Leon County elected to the Florida House of Representatives.

A graduate of the University of Florida, Turnbull served six years as a Leon County commissioner, six years as a state representative and 12 years as executive director of the Tallahassee Community College Foundation.

She has served Tallahassee in many ways, including service with the Council of Neighborhood Associations, Children's Home Society, Apalachee Regional Planning Council, Zonta, Federal Correctional Institution Community Relations, the Tallahassee/Leon County Civic Center Authority and the Tallahassee Symphony.

Turnbull currently volunteers with the Challenger Learning Center, Gadsden Arts Center, Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation, Foundation for Florida's Community Colleges, Florida State University's Seven Days of Opening Nights and the Knight Foundation Community Advisory Committee.

"I believe that every challenge presents itself as an opportunity to learn, to excel and to give back to others," she said.

Researched by The Oasis Center for Women & Girls, a non-profit organization whose mission is to "improve the lives of women and girls through celebration and support." Join us for our community women's history month celebration March 24. www.theoasiscenter.us.