

Queensborough Community College President's Report May 9, 2006

At this writing we are returning from the AACC Convention. One of the benefits of attending this National Conference is an opportunity to benchmark our College's progress to other community colleges nationwide. I am happy to report that Queensborough Community College is doing well.

It is clear that the Plan for Integrated Education is right on target; it is clear that our emphasis on research in pedagogy is at the cutting edge of community college education. The grant that we are very hopeful to receive to assist us in enhancing our offerings of learning communities and studying their impact on student outcomes will provide impetus to our Plan. The idea of having a cohort of students identified through academies and the intention to improve their chances for success through specialized attention and services will be tested next year. It is our intention to learn from these ventures and continue with the quest to institutionalize this approach to community college education. What is very interesting is that many colleges are moving in this direction; some are emphasizing learning communities; others student services; others scholarships. We are intending to approach the concept from all three directions.

Another area that we must continue to monitor is the Spelling's Commission on Higher Education. This Commission of businesspeople and educators is supposed to come out with a report by the end of August. There is only one community college member of this Commission, Charlene Nunley, president of Montgomery College in MD. Preliminary reports indicate that the Commission is leaning to call for major changes in accreditation, accountability and tracking of student data. It appears that the Secretary of Education's report may have as significant an impact on higher education as the Nation at Risk report of 1982 had on education.

The General Education Conference scheduled for May 5th is a time for Queensborough Community College to shine among our sister CUNY colleges. The presence of a major academic figure such as Lee Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation, together with the many interesting presentations from faculty members from Queensborough Community College and the rest of the University promises to make this a memorable event.

Clearly, the Governor's veto of many of the items that were contained in the Compact is a serious matter. It is important that we keep the pressure on our legislators and I urge you to keep sending emails indicating the need to restore these cuts. Unfortunately, our small request of 3 million to dome the courtyard of the Science building and convert it into the cafeteria was vetoed. Let us hope that it can be restored.

We are using whatever survives the vetoes in the Compact to fund the Plan for Integrated Education. In order to fund our initiatives we need additional dollars and we believe that the \$1.5 million slated to come to Queensborough Community College if the Compact survives in its entirety will enable us to begin the process of providing greater services for our students.

In the area of philanthropy, I am happy to report that at this writing we already exceeded our goal of \$500,000 for the Partners for Progress. A great boost came from the \$250,000 gift from Barnes and Noble.

We need much more assistance from our friends and alumni. It would be wonderful if we ever got to the point that we could provide an excellent education to all serious students, not just the academically superior students, at no cost to them. We can do this if we ask the right people to support it. While it is impossible to turn back the clock to the days of free tuition, we can institute scholarship programs that will provide significant aid to all students who seriously commit to completing their goals at our College. We are starting with those who can commit to graduating in two years, but let us not end there. Let us work to raise enough funds so that we can help all the students who need support.