



RICHARD J. DALEY COLLEGE

ONE OF THE CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO

27456

RECEIVED AND PLACED ON FILE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT NO. 508 - JUNE 8, 2006

FCCCC President's Address
CCC Board of Trustee's Meeting
Thursday, June 8, 2006

Chairman Tyree, Chancellor Watson, members of the Board, Officers of the District, faculty, staff and all others present: Good morning!

I want to thank you for allowing me to move up on the agenda this morning. For the first time in five years, I'm teaching a classroom course during the summer. Unfortunately the Spanish 102 course is scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday mornings so I most likely will not be able to attend July's meeting. I will try to find someone to be here in my stead. I also would like to wish the Chancellor *un buen viaje* to Spain and remind him that my offer still stands: if you need anyone to fly over with you to get you settled in your new environment, I'm your man.

Yesterday I attended the wonderful new "Da Vinci" exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry. His machines were simple in their essence, utilizing the laws of gravity and physics (although he did this prior to Newton's Law of Gravity) to improve human endeavor and, unfortunately, warfare. One item of many in the exhibit that stuck in my mind is Da Vinci's use of the cog. That's right, the "cog," the wheel with teeth that interlock with another to transmit motive force. Prior to Da Vinci, each machine was built to its own unique specifications with each part only created for that machine. He was able to change not only how manufacturers made machines with interchangeable parts but also the *concept* of interchangeable parts.

"Cog's" secondary meaning leads me to my discourse today. While "cog" can have a negative connotation at times, i.e., "We're just cogs in the machine," I think it's an apt metaphor (and not a negative one) for seeing City Colleges' role in the larger educational system vis-à-vis primary and secondary education and four-year colleges and universities.

At the Committee meeting on Tuesday, in response to Executive Vice Chancellor Lewis' report on the lower-than-expected Spring 2006 enrollment figures, Chairman Tyree asked, "Are we teaching relevant courses?" It's a pertinent question that is being addressed in many ways, including APSA, a sometimes painful but necessary process to determine the viability of programs using measurable data. Another is the Vision 2011 project whose goal is to anticipate where the CCC should be in terms of its role in five years. Related to Vision 2011 is the concept of globalization.

As you are aware "globalization" has been a hot topic in the CCC this past year and we are moving forward with numerous activities this fall, from a symposium on globalization to a Town Hall meeting produced by WYCC. And in one month a group of faculty and administration, including me, will be participating in an International Study Program, "Community Colleges as Sites of Global Citizenship," at the Salzburg Seminar in Salzburg, Austria. The goal of the program is to "explore the factors that may either support or restrain a comprehensive approach to global education within community colleges and to develop...strategies...on how [to] incorporate a more comprehensive approach to global

education.” It’s an ambitious goal for the City Colleges to tackle such a relevant topic but I wonder how it will fit within our core mission.

One of the key questions that we will be exploring at the Seminar regarding curriculum enhancement is, “How do we effectively engage our students to be active citizens in the global, national, regional and local arenas?” I wondered the same at our first globalization Town Hall preparation meeting in April. Many exciting ideas were put forth; I think that we can all recognize the significance that globalization plays in our lives. Nonetheless, I began to grow a little frustrated because it seemed that, once again, we are beginning to build our house at the roof. The discussion began up here where it really needed to begin down here: the basics. I asked, “Why don’t we start with a map?” In my experience giving map quizzes of Central America, the Caribbean and South America, most of my students, even after I’ve given them the weekend to study, are on the whole unable to identify the countries’ locations or name their capitals. Quite frankly, I wonder how well they would do naming our own states. I ask my students which newspapers they read, if they listen to public radio or watch public television and to name their state reps and senators. Sadly very few do.

I want to reiterate that I believe the topic to be extremely important but, being in the trenches, I have to wonder how relevant it is to our average student. Are we moving too far away from our core mission? Or, conversely, are we going to be able to allocate the necessary resources to make globalization a reality in our curriculum? For instance, this summer there are only two sections of geography being taught (both at Wright) and one on-line course and, to the best of my knowledge, there are only two or three full-time geographers in the district.

The issue of making students aware locally, regionally, nationally and globally is an awful lot to handle for the community college. I am not suggesting that we don’t try; I attend yoga twice a week but it doesn’t mean that I’ll ever do the splits. No, the solution here is both long- and short-term. Much like Project Align with the Chicago Public Schools, we may need a Project Globalization that begins in primary school so that civic responsibilities and globalization concepts are instilled as important values.

But, at the same time, I think we do need to recognize our roles as important cogs in the educational system while also continuing to redefine that role in order to remain vital and, most importantly, relevant.

Have a wonderful, restful and restorative summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Lakin, President, FCCCC