

Sept. 15, 2014

Fall Enrollment

I am disappointed we did not achieve our all-time enrollment goal of 17,677 FTE.

HOWEVER...

I am **ecstatic** we are up 1.8 percent in FTE (292 FTE) and 3 percent in headcount (849 students). We now enroll 16,857 FTE and 29,476 headcount. Over the past two years, credit headcount has increased 12.7 percent. Since fall 2008, the College's total FTE enrollment has increased by an astonishing 13 percent while the rest of the state's community colleges have seen a combined 2 percent decline in FTE enrollment.

My thanks to all of you who played a role in our success. There are many of you. Team Dowling led the way, and Earl would be the first to say his team had many assists from others throughout our College, with a special note of thanks to our Marketing and Communications team.

College of DuPage is pushing upward amid downward statewide and national community college enrollment trends. In a [Crain's article](#) this spring, Karen Anderson, executive director of the Illinois Community College Board in Springfield, said enrollment at Illinois' 48 community colleges is down more than 12 percent since 2010. In addition, the [National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's](#) most recent data from 2014 lists community college enrollment as down nationally by 2.7 percent.

Among our group of fall students are 129 Scholars Award recipients with at least one student representative from nearly every District 502 high school and 130 students representing 45 countries. Our students are also diverse in terms of age, with more than 36 percent of our student body over the age of 24. This is especially telling as many in this demographic initially found employment and decided to put off their educational journey.

Our enrollment numbers will become more significant when 10th day numbers, the official counting day, are reported by all Illinois community colleges (and national numbers are published). Using opening day enrollment numbers in Illinois, we observed student enrollment at most community colleges declining year after year. COD continues to run counter to both national and statewide trends. There is a reason for this: Place, Price, Product, Promotion and People! Add in Persistence and Pride and we are operating on all cylinders. Bravo.

To our critics: Take note...College of DuPage is not what you say it is. We are living our vision: "College of DuPage will be the primary college district residents choose for high quality education," and there is good reason for it. We are good at what we do and our community affirms it through steadily increasing student growth. What better proof?

Thank you ALL.

P.S. Dual credit increased from 360.7 FTEs to 492.5 FTEs. There is a message here...

P.P.S. Here is another interesting point: The 10th day Fall 2014 enrollment, 16,857, is 95.4 percent of the [Chaparral Pride goal](#) of 17,677 FTES. Also, the fall 2014 enrollment is 100.8 percent of the strategic plan target of last year plus 1 percent. In other words, we exceeded our target!

Responding to Our Critics

Over the past several months, citizens attending Board of Trustees meetings have made pronouncements and accusations that are either inaccurate or predicated on an incomplete understanding of the facts. Three topics are addressed here:

- [Enrollment/Building Space](#)
- [Space Analysis](#)
- [Compensation of Senior Management Team](#)

If interested, please use the links to read more information.

As you might have expected, these critics do not take time to understand in its entirety the issues they address. If your agenda is to create a negative disposition, accuracy and a comprehensive undertaking of the issues aren't your priority and any response from the entity being criticized will be summarily dismissed as propaganda or mere deception.

It is what it is.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

To help ensure public bodies operate under the highest ethical, moral and legal standards, the Illinois legislature created a vehicle for interested citizens to access public records. It's called the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA as it has become known).

The [Daily Herald](#) recently ran an article on the rising costs of processing FOIA requests at area municipalities. Over the past several years, Illinois has opened up the types of information that can be made by private citizens for information at public institutions, but has tightened the deadline to five working days to process these requests. The Daily Herald article found through a survey of 55 municipalities that the number of FOIA requests received is climbing. Between 2011 and 2013, 17 suburbs saw an increase in FOIAs of more than 25 percent.

Here at College of DuPage, we receive our share of FOIA requests. Since mid-December 2013 (nine months), we have received 66 FOIA requests. Of that number, 26 have come from persons we believe are connected to the organization "Open the Books." These requests focus on aspects of the College and/or me. It is clear from the repeated requests and the focus of those requests the petitioners are looking for something, anything that can embarrass either party and drive their agenda. For each of these requests, information must be gathered from offices throughout the College, then redacted, photocopied for mailing or scanning and sent to the requesting party. This required hundreds of hours of staff time.

They have levied plenty of criticism, all of it predicated on an incomplete understanding or a deliberate misrepresentation of the facts. They continue with their assault by way of inundating us with FOIAs or presentations at monthly Board meetings. They even go so far as to enjoin the Office of the State's Attorney General. To date, one alleged non-compliance by the College with a FOIA request they submitted was dismissed.

"Open the Books" claims it is the public's watchdog. They advocate for public transparency and accountability. In and of itself, those are worthy causes. However, in our case, how can they justify filing more than two dozen frivolous FOIA requests which have cost COD taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars in administrative and legal costs complying with those requests? This is inconsistent with their expressed purpose of saving taxpayers funds.

Why then do they exercise this approach? The answer is clear and simple. They are on a mission to tarnish good people and a good organization. They do this through frivolous requests intended to harass good people who perform their duties admirably. Their dislike, their contempt for COD and some of its employees overrides good judgment. It seems they can no longer help themselves. They will continue their assault until they either find a tidbit they can distort or until they can fabricate a scenario that justifies their behavior. Character assassination and attempts to intimidate are part of their repertoire. In their own sad way, they seek validation for their actions.

We have spent countless hours complying with the FOIA law. We will continue to respond under the guidance of our College attorneys. At some point, we may need to seek protection under the law from organizations/people like "Open the Books" whose requests are serial in nature and their purpose is not congruent with the spirit of the law. Truth be known, the information they seek is secondary. Their primary pursuit is in some way to discredit COD. They are driven to do this because of their own personal needs and desires. The public's interest is not their priority.

In some respects, "Open the Books" is like a virus gone rogue. Honorable ideals have given way to contempt and the need for attention, to prove their organization's worth. Unable to behave responsibly, they resort to harassment tactics intended to create discomfort and disruption.

So that all interested employees may see the FOIA requests we receive, we will publish the list on the [COD portal](#) under the President's Corner tab, including date of filing, who filed, the subject(s) of interest and the status of the request. I doubt this public listing will influence "Open the Books." My action is not to seek a change in their decision-making (although that would be a nice fringe benefit), rather to let all who have interest fully appreciate the time, money and effort expended by College personnel to deal with the relentless harassment from "Open the Books."

(As an aside, in FY12 the Faculty Senate submitted 23 FOIA requests or one-third of all that were submitted that year. In FY14, the baton has been passed, so to speak, to "Open the Books.")

Teaching and Learning Center Meetings

The Board of Trustees has committed \$30 million to construct a Teaching & Learning Center. Our continuing enrollment growth, when coupled with the fact we are near capacity during prime time teaching hours and we need to add more general purpose classroom space on the west end of the campus to help address travel time between classes, argues for building such a facility.

The proposed Teaching & Learning Center would be located on the former Building M site. The demolition of former temporary facilities has been part of our capital development plan going back to 2002. The new Homeland Security Training Institute is being constructed where OCC and Building K once stood.

As we get ready to write the educational specifications for the new facility, I am interested in anyone's thoughts as to what we might include in the building. Keep in mind multi-purpose classrooms are the priority, along with some faculty and administrative offices. We also need student gathering space, and we are restricted by how much we can build for \$30 million.

In order that I might hear your ideas *and accompanying rationale*, I will hold two meetings:

- Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 10 a.m. in SRC 2131
- Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 3 p.m. in SSC 3245

I look forward to hearing your ideas.

College-Wide Meeting

I also want to remind everyone that I will hold a college-wide meeting at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 24, in the Belushi Performance Hall at the McAninch Arts Center to discuss various current issues surrounding the College.

Equipment Needs

About one month ago, I asked **Jean Kartje** to ask the Deans to identify any instructional equipment needs that were not being addressed because of available budget dollars. Some weeks later, the list arrived totaling \$1,184,852.

There was some hesitancy on my part of moving forward on this opportunity following the Board's decision to lower tuition by \$4 per credit hour for the spring term as opposed to the recommended \$2. After considerable thought, I decided to move forward on more than 95 percent of the requests.

Our strong financial position makes this opportunity possible. My dad always said to me: "Robert, if you have money, you can spend money." It was good advice.

Homecoming Week

College of DuPage is preparing to celebrate its first Homecoming in 40 years. Homecoming week activities will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 23, and the week will culminate with our Chaparral football team playing national junior college champs Georgia Military at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 27. [Click here](#) for a video promo of the game.

The week will kick off on Tuesday, Sept. 23, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the SSC Atrium. A pep rally will start the events, which will include an introduction of the football team as well as several other sports teams, the Spirit Team and Chappy. The day will also feature the Build Your Pride contest, where 10 teams of students will each receive a bag of items, and each team will then have 40 minutes to construct something that represents their COD pride. If you know of any students interested in signing up as a team for this contest, they can do so online by [clicking here](#).

On Wednesday, Sept. 24, also from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the SSC Atrium, Homecoming Week activities continue

with a display of Spirit of Chappy contest winners. For this activity, all students are encouraged to enter with a creative piece that exhibits COD/Chappy pride, which can be a written word piece, a drawing, 3D creation, photo, video, Chappy-inspired hair or makeup, or anything else that their imaginations can dream up. Please let your students know about this activity, and they can [click here](#) to register online.

Also during the Sept. 23 and 24 activities, students and staff can sign the banner that the football team will run through before the beginning of the Homecoming game. COD Cares will begin its Homecoming Week collection of used athletic shoes and both new and gently used athletic equipment for DuCAP. Bins will be located throughout campus, and you can [click here](#) to find the location nearest you.

On Thursday, Sept. 25, students are invited to participate in the Chappy Olympics, held on the lawn north of the SSC. Students can show up the day of the event, but if possible, please encourage them to register online by [clicking here](#).

As I mentioned last week, all staff and faculty are invited to enter the office decorating contest. Each team/entry must register by Wednesday, Sept. 17, by [clicking here](#). Offices should demonstrate their Chaparral Spirit, and decorating must be completed by 3 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 22. Photos of each entry will be taken that afternoon, and winners will be determined through a public vote on social media. The prize is a Sodexo catered breakfast for up to 30 people.

Spirit wear will be encouraged on Thursday and Friday, Sept. 25 and 26. All staff and students are encouraged to show their spirit on both days by wearing their COD clothes, and jeans will be allowed on both days.

On Saturday, Sept. 27, pre-game activities will include a youth football game at 10 a.m. featuring the Glen Ellyn Golden Eagles. In addition, games, activities, B96 radio and free food will be held in the north section of College Parking Lot 1 by the PE Center. Guests are welcome to bring their own picnics and tailgate in the south section of College Parking Lot 1. Space will be limited and alcohol is prohibited.

An Alumni Brunch also will be held on Sept. 27, and we encourage alumni to pre-register for the brunch by [clicking here](#).

Finally, volunteers are needed to help make all of this happen. Please [click here](#) to sign up.

For more information on Homecoming Week, check out www.cod.edu/homecoming. We look forward to our students and staff celebrating this week together and demonstrating their COD Chaparral Pride.

COD Cares Day of Action

This is a reminder that the COD Cares Day of Action and Cupcake Social will be held this Tuesday, Sept. 16, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the SSC Atrium. Visit the [COD Cares web site](#) for more specifics.

Signing up to be a COD Action Hero may be the perfect way to take the ice bucket challenge issued by Hospitality Professor **Mary Beth Leone** and her Hospitality 1100 class. [Click here](#) to watch a video about the challenge, and [click here](#) to see photos of the COD Action Heroes who were recently helping out at the DuPage Children's Museum in Naperville.

Constitution Day Film

The COD Constitution Day Committee and the Africa and Africa Diaspora Committee will investigate the Supreme Court case "Cassius Marsellus Clay, Jr. also known as Muhammad Ali, Petitioner v. United States (1971)" during an event this Wednesday, Sept. 17, in HSC 1234. The film "The Trials of Muhammad Ali" will be shown at 7:30 p.m., with a pre-film discussion at 7 p.m. [Click here](#) for more info.

Bjarne Ullsvik Dedication

Last week, I mentioned that our stadium was dedicated to honor **Bjarne Ullsvik**. I wanted to share some photos from the dedication, and you can [click here](#) to view them.

Bjarne first became involved with College of DuPage in 1992 after retiring from Illinois Bell with 26 years of service. From 1992 until 2002, he taught almost 70 sessions of Personal Finance and Micro Economics. After retiring as a part-time instructor, he began volunteering in 2003 for the ABE program and later became a tutor for the GED program. Bjarne's planned gift is designated to the

Football Program Fund, New Philharmonic Orchestra, the GED Scholarship Fund and the Study Abroad Scholarship Fund.

Shared Fleet Vehicles

You recently received an email regarding the shared fleet vehicles for use by administrators, faculty, and staff for college-related activities. The information is worth repeating.

Reservations, key management, internal chargebacks and utilization tracking have been the responsibility of the Purchasing Department, while Facilities Operations and Maintenance is responsible for vehicle maintenance. Effective Sept. 1, scheduling responsibilities have transferred to the Faculty/Staff Support Center, while vehicle maintenance remains the responsibility of Facilities Operations and Maintenance. This transfer will allow for longer hours of operation and increased client accessibility. Responsibility for off-hours key management will continue to reside with the Police Department. Charters, First Student and Enterprise Rental requests will continue to reside with Purchasing Department.

For more information, instructions and forms, please visit the [Staff Services website](#).

Enhance COD

Keep the ideas coming! Put "Enhance COD" in the subject line and email me your idea – what it is, how it can be implemented, what the timeframe is, how and why it benefits the College, and any other pertinent information. Submissions will be evaluated each month, and the winning idea will appear in the first COD This Week of every month.

COD in the News

- [Suburban Life Newspapers](#) writes about Motion Picture/Television Associate Professor **John Rangel** and his latest film, "The Girls on Liberty Street," which was recently released online.
- WDCB's contributions at the recent Chicago Jazz Fest were recognized in a lead story in the [Chicago Reader](#).
- The [Chicago Tribune](#) ran a story from the DuPage Community Foundation about a

partnership between 360 Youth Services and Loaves and Fishes Community Services. Interviewed is COD student **Carson Sperber**.

- The [Daily Herald Business Ledger](#) writes about former student **Gina Klafeta**, who has started her own business after creating an allergen-friendly, nondairy frozen dessert called Nana Crème.
- [Suburban Life Newspapers](#) also published a story about nominations being sought for the COD Foundation's Distinguished Alumni Award.

Excuse Us for Bragging

- COD High School Admissions Representative **Rio Almaria** received this note of thanks from **Nyela Wells**, Senior Professional Development Coach with Leap Learning Systems: "I wanted to write you a letter of appreciation for the time you spent with me yesterday and then today helping to arrange a college visit at the College of DuPage for 30 of the students we see in our Readiness Ability Marketability Progression (RAMP) program. [Leap Learning Systems](#) (LEAP), is a highly regarded not-for-profit that has helped thousands of high school students in our language-focused academic prep programs. Your assistance in reaching out to high schoolers in our current program will be time productively used by your department. By broadening college options for our students, many of whom come from families where college has not been a ready option, both our organizations will benefit. Your positive and welcoming response to our 'cold call' heartens me and my colleagues at Leap. I look forward to meeting you in person and letting you meet some of our high school stars. Thank you."
- Our new percussion instructor **Ben Wahlund** recently presented a recital, which included marimba, vibraphone, drum set, snare drum and electronics, as part of the Music Fridays @ Noon. The talk attracted approximately 50 people. This was part of a continuing series of free programs featuring the College of DuPage Music Department, with performances and presentations by COD faculty, students, alumni and guests. [Click here](#) for a complete schedule. My thanks to **Professor Lee Kesselman** for creating this ongoing successful series.
- Library Professor **Debra J. Kakuk Smith's** article "Online Caregiving Resources" was recently

published in the Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet (JCHI). Debra's article is based on her online [Care Giving Resources Guide](#), originally created to support COD's employee caregiver support group. The guide quickly expanded to include local, state and national resources supporting not only COD employees but also local, regional and national caregivers. An experienced consumer health advocate, Debra will lead a hands-on 45-minute Caregiving workshop on Wednesday, Dec. 3, at 3 p.m. in the Library, Room 2024, jointly offered by COD's Teaching and Learning Center and the COD Library's SOS [Health & Wellness Workshop Series](#).

- **Mardelle Fortier** has published two poems in "Distilled Lives, vol. 2," a poetry anthology sponsored by the Illinois State Poetry Society. **Kevin Stein**, Illinois Poet Laureate, noted: "The poems of 'Distilled Lives' sweetly inveigle the timeless from what only fools mistakenly regard as quotidian. Their geographies of place and heart are...topographies of the human given voice and measure against silence."

Rumor

I recently received a question about the rumor that ran in last week's CTW regarding email. The rumor dealt with the Senior Management Team and whether emails are monitored. I said that no one is monitoring anyone's communication through email.

The writer wanted to know how I received a copy of the faculty email that I shared in the Sept. 4 CTW. Again, as I noted last week, no one is monitoring anyone's communications through e-mail. In the case of Mr. Hansen's e-mail cited on Sept. 4, a hard copy of it had been provided to an administrator.

If you've heard a rumor or have a question, please send it to [Brian Kleemann](#).

Finally, I received a note from Vice President for Student Affairs **Earl Dowling** regarding a recent Glen Ellyn Chamber luncheon he attended. Earl was seated next to a real estate broker who had nothing but praise for Waterleaf restaurant and the College as a whole. As a broker, the gentleman said he enjoys giving

potential homeowners driving tours of the College, which he says is one of Glen Ellyn's best assets. While we all know the value of this institution, interactions like these are always nice to hear.

Have a nice and productive rest of the week.



Dr. Robert L. Breuder, President