

Nov. 3, 2014

## Battling Low Enrollment

Now that the fall enrollment numbers have been reported, college and university officials are beginning to examine the factors affecting enrollment.

In terms of funding issues, Illinois does not stand alone. In Pennsylvania, the [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) reports that while total enrollment for the 14-state university system declined by 2 percent this year and 8 percent overall since 2010, the four-year slide is beginning to abate. Three universities posted increases, while many saw gains in freshman and transfer students.

Compounding the issue is the fact Pennsylvania had its state appropriation cut by 18 percent several years ago. The combination of lost enrollment and less state funding has resulted in higher tuition, program realignment and cuts to faculty and staff.

This year, the system is asking that the reduced state apportionment be raised by 12 percent. The hope is that tuition would not need to increase next year, which would in turn encourage students to enroll knowing they would have less debt upon graduation. The University of Pittsburgh is also seeking a 14.7 percent boost in its base state appropriation, noting that when adjusted for inflation, Pitt's funding is at the lowest percentage since the 1960s.

The state of Mississippi is also in a battle over funding education at all levels. [Community College Daily](#) reports that during a recent legislative budget hearing, the heads of both the state's community college and public university systems asked lawmakers to cut a collective \$312 million out of their budgets in order fully fund the K-12 school funding formula.

Meanwhile, a new survey by the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#), in partnership with the Council of Independent Colleges and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, asked small private colleges and midsize state institutions about their fall enrollments. Of the 368 surveyed, 38 percent reported

that they didn't meet goals for freshmen enrollment or goals for net tuition revenue. On the plus side, a similar percentage did meet both of these goals, while the rest met one or the other.

David Hawkins, Director of Public Policy and Research at the National Association for College Admission Counseling, noted there are a number of factors affecting enrollment, including a decrease in high school graduates, prospective students choosing work in an improving economy over school, and anxiety about rising costs and job prospects for graduates.

He said that while colleges may settle into new patterns, this is still a time of change and challenge for higher education. I believe his observation is right on the mark. So much will change during the next decade, and I've often talked about my predictions for higher education, one of which is we will continue to see institutions change, merge or close over the coming years.

Just recently, [Benedictine University at Springfield](#) announced a radical change in its direction. Next fall, it will no longer offer undergraduate programs for traditional-age students just out of high school, instead focusing on its adult undergraduate and graduate programs. The University cited a need for \$40 million in upgrades just to stay competitive, with no guarantee of a return on its investment. Unfortunately, as a result of the change, approximately 75 out of 100 full-time employees will be laid off.

Mr. Hawkins also spoke about the decline in high school graduates, a very real factor facing schools across the country. According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, more than half of the states in the U.S. will see declining high school graduates during the next 10 years. [In Illinois](#), it will be a moderate decrease to about 138,000 after a high of approximately 151,000 in 2011-2012. It's one factor forcing institutions of higher education to be more creative and aggressive in their pursuit of students to convince them at an earlier age about the merits of a college degree.

The Chronicle of Higher Education survey noted that public colleges in particular were seeking students outside traditional geographic boundaries, with one in four enrolling 5 to 10 percent more out-of-state and international students. Interestingly enough, [Inside Higher Ed](#) reports that Iowa's Board of Regents is backing a funding plan that would encourage its three public universities to enroll more Iowans. For example, the University of Iowa enrolls nearly 14,000 of its 30,000 students from out of state. If it doesn't attract more state residents, under the proposed plan, the university could lose up to \$60 million over several years.

While the plan has not been passed by the state legislature, Iowa has gone on the offensive, launching a massive campaign to increase in-state enrollment for fall 2015. Meanwhile, private institutions and community colleges are concerned about the proposed plan and the effect it will have on their enrollment as well as on local economies.

It's a challenging time for many institutions. Still, while the survey said that the smallest private colleges struggled the most, it was noted that some did thrive due to an awareness of who they serve, attractive offerings, relevant niche programs and strong marketing.

This should have a familiar ring, because College of DuPage does all of these things extremely well. These factors certainly have contributed to our enrollment being up significantly over the last several terms when most other colleges and universities were faced with decreases.

So far, we are maneuvering well through the changing landscape of higher education. As noted above, we must always be aware of whom we serve and strive to meet their needs and continue to set ourselves apart from the rest, demonstrating the excellence that takes place at College of DuPage.

## **Commerce and Community Breakfast**

Last week, I had the opportunity to host more than 60 community leaders at a breakfast, bringing them up to speed on the happenings at the College and sharing with them how this institution can better serve their needs.

I touched on several topics, including offering a limited number of baccalaureate degrees on this campus, our

strong financial health and recent attacks by outside political groups. The feedback received was positive and our guests were duly impressed with our physical plant and our accomplishments despite the struggling economy.

The College has been very successful in the past five years, growing our enrollment while continuing to respond to the needs of the market. We recently spent \$1 million on our Advanced Manufacturing Center to prepare for the future workforce needs of DuPage County industry. As I told our guests last week, the U.S. gave up leadership in the manufacturing arena many years ago, but we are seeing – and in some cases leading – the resurgence in our own communities.

We continue to grow training opportunities in other areas as well, first with the construction of the Homeland Security Education Center and now with construction of the Homeland Security Training Center. When completed next summer, this 40,000-square-foot building will feature additional state-of-the-art equipment to allow first responders various training scenarios both with simulator technology and a live shooting range. No other community college in the country has this type of facility.

The College Board of Trustees recently approved reducing tuition, something we've been able to do because we have such strong financial footing. Last June, we closed out the year with \$177 million in our reserve. In addition, we've spent more than \$600 million on construction during the past decade, purchased additional equipment for various programs and consistently raised salaries over the last five years. At the same time, we've increased our enrollment while numbers remained stagnant or dropped across the country.

In the past few months we have received criticism from outside political organizations attempting to use us to propel their own agendas. But when I asked whether those in attendance had heard any "noise" in the media, not one person raised their hand. All the good we do at this institution is overwhelming our detractors. We will keep sharing the stories about the excellence of our faculty, programs and students to offset this negative folly.

And we will continue to do our part not only for our students but community members and local businesses

alike. Several of our guests had ideas about collaborations and partnerships between the College and various entities. We've already taken steps for additional conversations to see what possibilities are open to us.

In all, the event was a wonderful opportunity to reach out to our constituent groups. My thanks to Community Relations Coordinator **Ami Chambers** and her staff and Director of Legislative Affairs **Mary Ann Millush** for organizing this event.

### **New 3+1 Agreement with National Louis University for Bachelor of Arts, Human Services**

Last week, College of DuPage and National Louis University announced a new 3+1 program that enables students to receive a Bachelor of Arts, Human Services degree earned from NLU with all courses completed here on our campus. [Click here](#) for photos from this event.

The new degree is designed for COD students who are working toward either an A.A.S. Human Services Generalist or A.A.S. Addictions Counseling degree. During the first three years of this program, students complete an associate's degree and additional general education credits and transfer up to 90 credit hours of College of DuPage courses offered at COD's tuition rate. The fourth year, students complete an additional 30 credit hours of courses taught by National Louis professors at College of DuPage at a reduced National Louis tuition rate. To ensure successful program completion, students enrolled in the program also receive concurrent advising from COD and National Louis University.

College of DuPage now offers 13 of these degrees with six partner universities that cover all academic discipline divisions at the College. I've spoken often about the value of the 3+1 program. It offers students an opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree at a reduced rate entirely on our campus. It's an innovative program that sets us apart and, most importantly, benefits our students.

[Click here](#) for more information about COD's 3+1 degree programs.

### **Circumnavigate the Campus**

Sod was installed last week on the west side of the campus. With that, we now have the opportunity to access and experience the beauty of our entire campus. OCC and Buildings K, L and M are but a memory. In their place is the soon-to-be Homeland Security Training Institute (July 2015) and possibly the new Teaching and Learning Center (estimated to open in 2017).

Before winter arrives, take a moment to walk the loop or drive in or home by way of the west extension of College Avenue. If you have a moment and are inclined, send me an email and let me know what you think.

### **Potential Fraud**

On Oct. 15, a press release was issued by College of DuPage officials pertaining to the possibility of fraud committed by one of our former colleagues. The press release stated:

*In December of 2013, College of DuPage officials uncovered a possible case of fraud by an employee of WDCB, the College's radio station. The College immediately reported the matter to law enforcement officials, and the College has been cooperating fully during the investigation. The College also immediately informed its external auditors of the potential fraud. Based on the pending investigation and possible legal proceedings, no further comment will be given at this time.*

This matter continues to be investigated by the DuPage County State's Attorney. They will determine if a crime has been committed and, if so, whether they will prosecute. Once we know their disposition, I will share appropriate information with College employees.

I share this with you because, once again, the political action groups that have been harassing the College are poised to criticize College officials for allowing fraud to occur undetected. They know little about the facts. What information they do know came by way of a confidential internal memo prepared by me and sent to the Board of Trustees to inform them of the possibility fraud may have been committed. A member of the Board shared that memo with members of the political action groups who now want to use this event as evidence of our lack of internal controls and poor fiscal management. The scenario is no different than \$20 million in promised

state capital funding we hoped to receive to help construct our Teaching and Learning Center.

Seems certain people and organizations want to besmirch the reputation of our College. They will not succeed despite their best efforts.

## **COD Hosts Symposium for High School and College Math Faculty**

Last Friday, the College served as the host for a joint effort co-sponsored by Glenbard School District 87. The purpose of this symposium was to analyze and discuss, from a practitioner's perspective, major shifts that are occurring in mathematics education with a focus on the successful transition from high school to college.

While a June 28 New York Times editorial indicted both K-12 schools and U.S. colleges for math scores that leave the U.S. "battling it out for last place among developed countries, along with Hungary and Lithuania," there has been little attention paid to the concerns that must be addressed in order to implement a major shift in math expectations and performance at both the high school and college level.

This shift took on a new sense of urgency last summer, when it was announced that a new assessment known as the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) would be used as an accountability measure for high schools. This new assessment has two different subtests that include a "performance-based test" in early spring and an "end-of-year" test in late spring. Students' scores on the PARCC assessment can exempt them from placement in remedial-level college courses, and some expect that these exams may be used for college admissions decisions within the next five years.

The new PARCC exams are built to assess student mastery of skills identified in the Common Core State Standards that Illinois adopted in 2010. Many suburban high schools administered the PARCC field tests last spring, and the feedback is that these tests are very different than the math exams they had taken previously. Not only do the tests expect a much higher level of proficiency from students, but they expect students to apply math in scenarios, not just complete operational problems.

The agenda for the symposium centered on three key shifts that are being asked of math educators as a result of this changing landscape. Panel participants were professionals from the field who are currently grappling with these changes in suburban high school and college classrooms.

About 130 educators participated in the event in SRC 2000, and COD was represented on the panels by math faculty members **Bob Cappetta**, **Jim Bradley** and **Erica Hotsinpillar**.

## **Addison Regional Center Open House**

The College of DuPage Addison Regional Center will host an Open House this Saturday, Nov. 8, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

During the Open House, aimed at prospective students and community members, representatives will be on hand to provide information and answer questions about educational opportunities available at the center, including the Cosmetology program and the Commercial Driving License (CDL) Truck Driving School, which currently boasts a 100 percent employment rate for graduates. Participants will also have the opportunity to tour the center's recently renovated Cosmetology facilities and professional salon. For more information, please call ext. 4600 or email [mchugh@cod.edu](mailto:mchugh@cod.edu).

Also, I want to thank Liberal Arts Dean **Daniel Lloyd** and Art Professor **Jennifer Hereth** for providing student art work for the reception area of the new Cosmetology program facility. The Horticulture program also provided plants that add to the welcoming space.

## **2015 Benefits Open Enrollment**

Today is the first day of the Benefits Open Enrollment period, which will last until Friday, Nov. 14. During Open Enrollment, you can make changes to your benefit elections for the 2015 plan year. All changes will become effective Jan. 1, 2015, and remain in effect for the entire calendar year unless you experience a qualifying life event. If you do not make any Open Enrollment changes, all of your 2014 elections will carry over into plan year 2015 with the exception of the health care and dependent care flexible spending accounts (FSA).

Changes made during this period include adding, changing or dropping medical or dental/vision insurance;

adding or dropping dependents covered on medical or dental/vision insurance; enrolling in the FSA for 2015; and adding \$10,000 of Voluntary Optional Life Insurance, which can be done with no medical questions.

To make changes, [click here](#) for detailed instructions. Otherwise, if you have no changes to make, no action is required.

Changes cannot be accepted after 5 p.m. on Nov. 14. For questions or concerns, please contact [Benefits@cod.edu](mailto:Benefits@cod.edu).

## Great Pumpkin Decorating Event

Last Thursday's Great Pumpkin Decorating Event was a great success. Not only did 20 teams sign up to decorate one of the pumpkins donated by Jewel in Wheaton, but three more entries were also part of the competition. Human Resources took first place, with the Learning Commons second and Student Life third. The pumpkins were donated to Little Friends in Naperville. Thank you to everyone who participated.

## 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

- The [Chicago Tribune](#) writes about the Radiation Therapy field in a story that appears in Career Builder. The article features interviews with Professor **Jeff Papp** and COD grad **Kyle Garafolo**.
- [Naperville Community Television/NCTV](#) ran a story on the Engineering Club's first cardboard boat race at the Physical Education Center. Under the guidance of club advisor and Engineering Instructor **Scott Banjavcic**, club members formed seven teams and tested their knowledge of buoyancy and dynamics by constructing boats using only cardboard and duct tape. They then participated in a series of

races to test their design skills. [Click here](#) for photos from the event and [click here](#) for a video created by Multimedia Services.

- [Glancer Magazine](#) released its Readers Choice Awards, and the McAninch Arts Center was named Favorite Theater for the Wheaton/Glen Ellyn area. Congratulations to the entire MAC team.
- The [Northwest Herald](#) writes about **Fahn Cooper**, a former College of DuPage football player now playing at the University of Mississippi. The Ole Miss Rebels are currently 7-2 on the season. In fact, several former COD football players are making contributions to their current college teams, including **Danzel McDaniel** at [Kansas State](#), **Johnny Holton** at the [University of Cincinnati](#) and **Jack Ziltz** at the [University of New Mexico](#). And former player **Tim Shelley** is now with the [Tampa Bay Storm](#).

## Excuse Us for Bragging

- Congratulations to **Steve Elza**, who was named Teacher of the Year by the Illinois Board of Education. Steve is a full-time teacher at William Fremd High School in Palatine and an adjunct faculty member in our Automotive Technology program. [Click here](#) to read more about this honor in the Daily Herald.
- The Women's Soccer Team advanced to the Region IV Championship match, where they were defeated by Rock Valley. The team finishes its season with a 13-4-2 record. The Men's Soccer Team also advanced to the Region IV Championship match this past weekend, where they were defeated by Morton. Congratulations to both teams for their fine seasons.
- The Cleve Carney Art Gallery at the McAninch Arts Center will host an exhibition of new work by several of the College's full-time studio art faculty starting this Thursday, Nov. 6, and continuing through Saturday, Jan. 10. The exhibition features works by **Mara Baker, Charles Boone, Glenn Hanson, Jennifer Hereth, Kathy Kamal, Brad Killam, David Ouellette** and **Terry Vitacco**. An artist's reception will be held 3 to 6 p.m. Nov. 6, and a lunch chat with the artists is scheduled for noon Monday, Nov. 10. Both events will be held in the

gallery. Additionally, sculptor **Marina Kuchinski** will discuss her recent participation in the Arts/Industry Residency program at the John Kohler Arts Center during an artist talk at noon Wednesday, Nov. 12, in the MAC's Playhouse Theater.

- WDCB's recently completed Fall Pledge Drive was a great success. The college's public radio station raised \$125,000 from more than 1,200 listeners, surpassing last year's fall drive by 25 percent. It's not too late for you to support WDCB with a tax-deductible donation by calling ext. 4200 or going online to [www.WDCB.org](http://www.WDCB.org)
- Students from Glenbard North and Glenbard South high schools accompanied Glenbard North teacher **Caroline Gonzalez** to the College as she had an ultrasound screening performed by Diagnostic Medical Imaging Sonography Instructor **Melissa McKirdie** in our Sonography Lab. [Click here](#) to view more photos. Several of the students are members of Glenbard North's Future Doctors Club led by Gonzalez. In addition to viewing their teacher's ultrasound, the students took a tour of the College's Health and Science Center.
- The College of DuPage Astronomy Club with Assistant Professor of Astronomy **Joe DalSanto** captured the Oct. 23 partial solar eclipse and total lunar eclipse on Oct. 8. A solar eclipse occurs when the moon gets between the earth and the sun, and the moon casts a shadow over earth. A solar eclipse can only take place at the phase of new moon, when the moon passes directly between the sun and earth and its shadows fall upon earth's surface. Please [click here](#) for more photos.
- A delegation of Student Leadership Council and Alter Ego Productions students attended the recent Association for the Promotion of Campus Activities regional conference, where the students took first place for Alter Ego Productions' "Spring it On" marketing campaign.
- If you missed any of the well-received Open Access Week sessions, you can [click here](#) to access all of the presentations, recording of the In-service day keynote, In-service workshop materials, recordings of webinars, and links to the OA Blog.

## Rumor

There is no truth to the rumor I will be retiring Dec. 30. I have a contract that extends through June 30, 2019, which I expect to honor.

We have much work yet to do which includes achieving our enrollment goal of 17,677 FTE, building an exciting Teaching and Learning Center, completing Phase II of the Homeland Security Education Institute and helping to get legislation passed that would allow Illinois community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees in applied technology and applied science.

A vibrant organization never achieves its agenda. Yesterday provides the building blocks for tomorrow. Our foundation is both deep and broad and it will allow us to attain even greater heights. Place, Product, Promotion, Price and PEOPLE are in place. Let's go get it done.

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

Finally, I received several notes during the past week praising the College. The first came from an employee who was meeting with the chair of a local educational institution's Board of Trustees who had never been to our campus. The employee suggested meeting for lunch at Waterleaf, and in his note he wrote, "He arrived early and spent some time driving around campus and then walking around the flower beds at the MAC. He was impressed with what he saw and remarked several times about how beautiful the campus was. He was bowled over by the lunch and picked up an information card about Waterleaf on his way out, promising to come back with his wife in the future. It can't be a bad thing when people leave our campus wanting to come back."

This last line nicely sums up why we support Waterleaf, the McAninch Arts Center and other events such as the summer series at the Lakeside Pavilion. Getting people to campus who may not come otherwise is key to helping them understand who we are and what we offer. And what we have to offer is pretty spectacular.

Second, I mentioned earlier that the College hosted a Commerce and Community Breakfast. I received a "thank you" note from Bob Scott, Westmont Village Trustee and Chairman of the Economic Development Committee for Westmont, who appreciated my candid report on our finances. He writes, "Your dollars and cents approach in what it takes to make sure COD

remains one of the premier community colleges was refreshing.”

He also appreciated how the College works on behalf of one of our populations. “It was gratifying to hear someone expound on the issues of disadvantaged residents who need to re-educate and find themselves part of the contributing community again. At the local level it’s difficult to deal with those issues since the state is the prime caretaker. Daily we see these people in need, but there’s only so much we’re able to do. Your approach surely helps those who need guidance and training in helping to get their lives back on track.”

He ended by saying the Village is proud to have one of our regional centers located in Westmont and invited a representative to speak at an upcoming village board meeting about opportunities at our center.

I look forward to hearing feedback after events like this. It reinforces that the College is on the right track while opening up potential new opportunities to explore.

Have a nice and productive week.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Breuder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "B".

**Dr. Robert L. Breuder, President**