TO:       DCCCD BOARD MEMBERS  
FROM:     JOE D. MAY  
DATE:     MAY 16, 2014  
RE:       WEEKEND MEMO #10

GOOD afternoon! We had lots of excitement this week as our efforts in workforce development received a boost from Goldman Sachs and coverage in the news media.

Let me share those events with you:

Have a great weekend!

Joe May

(Note: For the best viewing experience, please use the latest version of Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Opera, or Apple Safari.)

El Centro College
On April 22, the Office of Student Life hosted its annual “El Centro’s Got Talent” show. This year’s program was filled with a variety of acts, including singers, spoken-word artists, dancers, and poets. Students in the audience participated in impromptu dance contests and winners were presented prizes.

On April 24, the annual Student Recognition Ceremony was held, celebrating the academic and service achievements of El Centro College students. College President Dr. Paul McCarthy and other administrators presented students and staff with awards and offered words of encouragement for continued success in their future endeavors. On April 25, El Centro College students and staff were challenged to compete against each other in the biannual Students vs. Staff Volleyball Game, which was held in the gymnasium. The teams battled it out the entire game, until a victor was declared. This semester, the staff walked away with the victory. However, the students have vowed to come back next semester, with a challenge of taking home the “gold!”

The Bill J. Priest Campus of El Centro College hosted two open house events on April 30 and May 1 to showcase the Welding, Industrial Maintenance Mechanics, and Machine Shop Labs. Some of the areas
of focus were the robotic welding station, industry standard CNC lathe and mill, 3D modeling printer, and welding simulators. Instructors and staff were on hand, and also students from the programs who manned several stations. During the events, the Workforce Training Department welcomed and informed well over a hundred excited and enthusiastic visitors, including employers seeking to hire. El Centro College Bill J. Priest Campus wishes to extend a huge “Thank you” to everyone who attended and helped make both open house events so successful.

On April 30, the Financial Aid Office at El Centro College concluded its 3rd Annual Financial Aid Awareness Month with a grand finale event. The mission was to educate students on the necessity of early completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, understanding Satisfactory Academic Progress, building a budget, and the reality of living within your means. The Financial Aid Office would like to thank the Dallas Credit Union, Texas Guaranteed, radio station Hot 97, and all the El Centro College volunteers who contributed to helping make the event a success. Two hundred twenty-two students signed in and participated in the Reality Fair, Financial Aid literacy sessions, competitive games, and the dance contest.

El Centro College’s very own Chris Nguyen, president of the Student Government Association, was asked to give her personal story and also to introduce Texas State Senator Wendy Davis at her rally at Paul Quinn College on May 8.

Eastfield College

Advance Student Success — A record 501 students received associate degrees or technical certificates at Eastfield College’s 43rd annual commencement ceremony held at the Curtis Culwell Center in Garland on May 10. Also, a record 84 students from Lakeview Centennial High School Collegiate Academy received their associate degrees from Dr. Jean Conway, Eastfield College president, prior to their high school graduation (June 7). The keynote address was delivered by Government Professor Dr. Cindy Castañeda, winner of the Eastfield College and DCCCD 2014 Minnie Stevens Piper Excellence in Teaching Award. Trustee Sonny Williams brought greetings from the DCCCD Board of Trustees.

A group of 150 Eastfield College students and their family members attended the annual President’s Recognition Reception on May 1. The event recognizes students named to the President’s and Vice President’s Honor Roll as well as other student leaders and award winners. Eastfield College President Dr. Jean Conway presented each of the students with a pin of achievement. In other student recognition news, Eastfield College’s Psi Eta Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society inducted more than 75 members at a ceremony on May 3. Friends, family, faculty, and staff were in attendance and offered congratulations to the inductees and new officers team. Karla Monjaras was also honored as Outstanding Member of the Year. Guest speakers for the ceremony included representatives from Iota of Texas, PTK alumni chapter at The University of Texas at Dallas, who charged the new inductees with academic success and degree completion. This past year, Eastfield College’s Psi Eta Chapter was honored as Most Improved Chapter of 2014; it was awarded for its Honors in Action project at the regional level and was named one of the Top 100 Chapters at the PTK international convention.

Meet Community Educational Needs — Almost 180 DCCCD and area high school students, along with faculty and staff, attended the District’s annual Man-Up Conference at Eastfield College on May 9. Participating high schools were Skyline, W.W. Samuell, and Dr. John Horn. The conference theme was “Empower, Enlighten, and Embrace.” Texas State Senator Royce West delivered the keynote address, which was followed by lunch and breakout sessions with special speakers: Desmond Blair, project manager at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children; Jeronimo Valdez, founder and managing partner of Valdez Washington LLP; Richard Miles, founder of Miles of Freedom; and Romilio Castillo, professor of
Learning Framework at Richland College. The conference was organized by a student conference committee and sponsored by the Eastfield College Office of Student Engagement and Retention. WFAA-TV (Channel 8) also filmed a segment of its 2 Chairs series from the event, interviewing Eastfield College Speech Professor and Men’s Empowerment Coalition Advisor Courtney Brazile, who coordinated the conference along with committee members, Latrell Nelson and Danny Garcia, and one student from Skyline High School. The 2 Chairs video can be viewed at http://www.wfaa.com/news/local/2-Chairs-Young-minority-men-talk-about--258708731.html.

The Eastfield College School Outreach program, in partnership with the Office of Student Engagement and Retention, hosted the 2nd Annual Admitted Students/College Signing Day at W.W. Samuell High School on May 2, in conjunction with statewide GenTX College Signing Day. More than 90 graduating seniors from Samuell participated in the event. Students received a certificate of acceptance, a welcome letter signed by Eastfield College President Dr. Jean Conway, a next-steps guide, and the opportunity to win promotional items from the college and the District. After watching an acceptance/welcome video and receiving congratulations from Eastfield College staff on their acceptance, students were given the opportunity to speak with Financial Aid staff, create an eConnect account, select a program of study, complete a Rising Star application, and chat with current Eastfield College students about their college experience. A photo booth was also provided for students to take pictures with each other and their certificates of acceptance.

Brookhaven College

Student and Employee Success — Brookhaven College’s Alpha Delta Pi Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society received the President’s Volunteer Service Award from President Barack Obama; it was presented by the Corporation for National and Community Service (U.S. federal government agency). Brookhaven College PTK members completed more than 1,000 hours of community service at the college and off-campus. This year, the chapter began a new tradition to honor Brookhaven College professors for their dedication to teaching and student service; members nominated several professors for the Outstanding Professor Award. Sheri Van Court, English for speakers of other languages professor and club advisor, stated that after extensive committee work, chapter members voted and Charlie Warnberg, English professor, was selected to receive the 2014 Outstanding Professor Award.

Employee Success — Brookhaven College Art Department staff has been active in its professional development and exposing students to the broader community of professional artists at a number of conferences. Art faculty Lisa Ehrich, Susan Mollet, and James Tingey, and art student Amy Titus, participated in the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts Conference in Milwaukee, WI. Art faculty David Newman participated in the Southern Graphics Council International (SGCI) (Printmaking) Conference in San Francisco, CA, serving as professional development mentor to five SGCI members and exhibiting in the “Bridges” exhibition. Brookhaven College art students, Ken Rajspis and Anita Thurmond, also participated in the conference.

For the 12th year, Roy Allen, Jr., professor of music at Brookhaven College, has been invited to be an adjudicator at the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest (TSSEC) on May 24 and 26, in connection with the University Interscholastic League. The TSSEC is the culmination of contests throughout the state. This year, it will bring together more than 20,000 high school music students who have received superior ratings at the regional level. Approximately a hundred college/university music professors are selected nationwide to judge the contest.
**North Lake College**

**Our Students** — On April 23, North Lake College hosted an artists reception and awards ceremony for the 2014 North Lake College Student Art Exhibition, on display in the Gallery. More than $1,000 in prize money was awarded to 35 talented art students.

**Our Community** — Friends of Coppell Nature Park (FCNP) hosted its 8th Annual Music in the Park fundraising dinner on April 12. FCNP is a nonprofit organization committed to supporting Coppell Nature Park through fundraising, publicity, education, and maintenance of the Park. North Lake College Interim President Christa Slejko attended the event, held at the newly completed Biodiversity Education Center. Slejko also attended the Grand Opening of the Center (located in Coppell Nature Park) on April 22 (Earth Day). North Lake College is one of the partners of the Center and will contribute to its offerings; the Center will provide educational programs on conservation and the environment. The Biodiversity Education Center features artwork, “Signs of Nature,” by Chris Fulmer, former North Lake College art faculty, throughout the sustainable facility.

North Lake College held a Skills Development Fund (SDF) check presentation ceremony on April 16. Andres Alcantar, chairman and commissioner representing the public of the Texas Workforce Commission, signed and presented a check for $895,319 to Christa Slejko, North Lake College interim president. The grant will provide instructional services and customized training to 659 eligible employees of CONEXIS and Mentor. Other officials present at the event included Don Williams, Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce and Dennis Webb, Councilman (District 3) for the City of Irving.

**Our Employees** — Olga Murr, North Lake College circulation supervisor for learning resources, attended the 2014 Texas Library Association Conference in San Antonio, April 8-11. More than 1,600 library personnel from across the state attended the conference to discuss emerging technologies and new trends in collection development, and how to use these to better serve students. Numerous authors, illustrators, and speakers conducted seminars throughout the four-day conference.

**Mountain View College**

Family and friends gathered to recognize more than 40 Mountain View College students who were inducted into the Mountain View College Omega Omega Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. The ceremony took place May 2 in the college Performance Hall. Cathy Edwards, Mountain View College office of student life director, gave an inspirational speech, entitled “The Dash.”

The Mountain View College Office of Advising will participate in the University of North Texas’ University Counselor Advisor Network and North Texas Community College Consortium Academic Advising Conference on May 22 at Collin College - Preston Ridge Campus. Mountain View College’s Freddy Rodriguez, Ruth Correa, and Gilda Nunez will present “Advising as Coaching: Get Results with Realistic Advising Strategies” and discuss how to help the student build a successful academic plan based on mutual accountability. The methodology involved in the advising model was combined with the components of Texas Completes and Texas Success Initiative, in alignment with Mountain View College strategic planning.

**Trinidad “Trini” Garza Early College High School at Mountain View College**

Daniel Faz, sophomore at Trinidad “Trini” Garza Early College High School, has won the Grand Prize in the Dallas Water Conservation 2014 High School Visual Art Contest. His artwork will be featured across the city of Dallas to represent one way of conserving water. Faz was awarded an iPad; his teacher, Phillip Keller, received a $250 gift card. The announcement was made on May 9 in the Flag Room of Dallas City Hall. To view Faz’ winning drawing, go to [Grand Prize Winners](#).
Cedar Valley College

Our Faculty and Staff — Cedar Valley College Veterinary Technology Programs hosted their first annual Open House event on May 5. With a total of 64 attendees, the event was a huge success! Thirty-eight individuals attended for program advising or enrollment, and 26 participants stayed for the entire Open House event. Between both programs, Cedar Valley College faculty and staff advised 24 students and processed 11 new applications. The event allowed Veterinary Technology to open its “programs doors” to a wide range of students and their parents, while creating a new tradition to help increase student enrollment and awareness of the Veterinary Technology Programs at Cedar Valley College.

Our College Initiative — On May 9, Cedar Valley College staff members Dr. Ryan Thornton, Bob Stewart, Shaun Johnson, Joe Colbert, Jonas Young, and Fred Osei-Frimpong chaperoned 20 young male students from the Cedar Valley College Male Initiative program to the District’s annual Man-Up Conference, held in the Eastfield College Performance Hall. The event featured an opening session, rally, and breakout sessions. The keynote speaker was Texas State Senator Royce West, who shared insights and advice on the importance of evaluating the “Man in the Mirror” and knowing that success starts with yourself. The conference provided instructional and social experiences for the young men and exposed them to positive life skills and educational resources. The event was a great success, with several of them pledging to get more involved in campus-based Male Initiative programs. The 2014 Man-Up Conference was sponsored by the Eastfield College Office of Student Engagement and Retention and coordinated by Courtney Brazile, Eastfield College speech professor.

Our College — Cedar Valley College held its 36th annual commencement ceremony at the Inspiring Body of Christ Church in Dallas on May 15 at 7 p.m. More than 350 students received associate degrees or technical certificates. The keynote speaker for this year’s commencement was DCCCD Chancellor Dr. Joe May.

Our Community Outreach — On May 17, Cedar Valley College will be hosting the free Empower Series community workshop, entitled “Property Taxes and Real Estate,” sponsored by Comerica Bank, National Association of Black Accountants, Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce, and Cedar Valley College. One of the guest speakers/presenters will be Scottie Smith, a Houston native, who has an extensive background in real estate. Smith specializes in sales, investments, property analysis, and valuation of multi-family and single-family properties in Texas. He has been recognized nationally as an exceptional leader in real estate, and locally as a leader in providing housing for the public (by the mayor of the City of Denton). The other featured speaker/presenter will be Niral Gandhi, a shareholder and attorney at property tax law firm, Estes & Gandhi, P.C. He represents property owners that seek to minimize their tax liability by reducing their assessed values. Estes & Gandhi, P.C. represents property owners at the administrative level by filing valuation protests and appearing at Appraisal Review Board hearings; the firm also files suits appealing erroneous Appraisal Review Board orders when necessary. Prior to establishing his law firm, Gandhi was employed as an associate attorney at a property tax law firm in the Dallas area.

Richland College

Sustainable Community Building — On May 13, members of the Richland College Global Education Development Advisory Council (GEDAC) were guests of the Raindrop Foundation of Dallas, an educational, charitable, social, and cultural organization founded by Turkish-Americans in Houston in 2000. Richland College Continuing Education currently offers English classes at the Raindrop Foundation’s Dallas campus. Jennifer Bowden of the World Affairs Council of Dallas joined the Richland College GEDAC for a cultural presentation, tour, and luncheon of traditional Turkish food, hosted by Huseyin Sari, Raindrop Foundation educational affairs director and Dialogue Institute of the Southwest regional director.
**Student Success** — The Richland College Travel, Exposition, and Meeting Management (TEMM) program held its 11th Annual Scholarship Luncheon and Silent Auction Fundraiser on April 9 at Royal Oaks Country Club in Dallas. The event, organized by TEMM students, welcomed prospective students from Dallas and Richardson ISD high schools who were enrolled in Travel Academy courses. During the luncheon, they learned about industry trends and career opportunities. A total of $5,000 in scholarships was awarded to students to attend Richland College. Bill Boyd, industry professional and retiring TEMM Advisory Board creator and chair, was honored for his numerous contributions to the TEMM program.

**Employee Success** — Debbi Richards, Richland College director of corporate and community relations, was honored by the Dallas County Juvenile Department and Roger Taylor, manager of field probation services, as an Outstanding Volunteer for her dedication, commitment, and volunteer service to the Neighborhood Diversion Committee Program from 2010-2014. This program offers first-time youth offenders an opportunity to agree on voluntary conditions that closely resemble probation, but are imposed by a probation officer instead of the court. Successful completion of the agreed conditions allows these youth to avoid appearing in court and prevents them from permeating into the juvenile corrections system.

**Institutional Effectiveness** — On May 7, Richland College EDUC 1300, History 1301, English 1302, and Government 2306 faculty participated in Richland College’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), “Learning to Learn: Developing Learning Power,” Faculty Training Reflection Session. During this focus-group session conducted by the staff of Richland College Office of Planning, Research, Effectiveness, and Development, faculty members discussed and evaluated how the four QEP training modules they completed during the semester helped them to understand the philosophy of “Developing Learning Power” and equipped them to implement “Thinking Routine” strategies in their classes.