

## **President's Report August 2015**

### **Construction**

*Eagle Pass Academic* – This project is progressing nicely. Contractor reports we are still ahead of schedule.

*Eagle Pass Technical Campus* – Contractor has begun erecting the steel for the addition to classroom building.

*Crystal City Library* – Our architect is in the process of preparing our documents to go out for bid on this project.

*Renewable Energy* – Our science department along with maintenance crews have been busy preparing for the installation of solar panels, rain collection system, wind turbine, and a system to create bio diesel. This project is funded by a grant in conjunction with Texas State University. The purpose of the grant is to encourage students across disciplines to conduct research on renewable energy. Our goal is to stimulate more students into STEM areas.

*Engineering Labs* – We have been retrofitting classrooms and physics labs into Engineering/Physics classrooms and labs. The rooms are receiving distance-learning equipment that will enable our faculty and students to communicate across the three main campuses. These improvements are funded with a Title V Cooperative grant with Angelo State University.

### **Partnerships**

*Dual Credit/Early College High School* – I will be spending more time on the road visiting our school districts. The recent changes in State Law have changed many of the rules governing dual credit. It is critical that we maintain positive relationships with all our districts and make sure we continue to meet their current and future needs.

I met with Eagle Pass ISD Superintendent to discuss the opportunity for the college to establish an Early College High School or expand dual credit offerings. We are making a formal proposal and presentation to their board on Thursday, August 13.

### **Other**

*Enrollment* – Fall 2015, we will provide preliminary numbers at the board meeting. Registration continues on all campuses through Friday, August 21st.

*Faculty/Staff Convocation* – Early in August we provided two days for staff convocation. It was a huge success and staff was very appreciative of being included in the training

and professional development opportunities. I would like to commend Dr. Amy Garcia, our Professional Development Officer for organizing the event. We will hold a similar convocation in the Spring and look forward to expanding the trainings in the future.

Our Faculty convocation will begin on Tuesday, August 18th at 9 am. The morning sessions will begin with President and Vice Presidents address, followed by a Quality Enhancement Plan overview session. The rest of the afternoon and following days are reserved for training, committee, and divisional meetings.

We look forward to another great start to our new academic year.

*Grants* – We have been notified by U.S. Department of Education that our grant application for Student Support Services has been accepted and funded. This is long standing program with the college. The program allows us to offer additional assistance to deserving students.

*TACC* – As I shared with the board, I have begun to serve as the Texas South region representative on the TACC Executive Council. This is a critical time, especially since the organization is refocusing our work and in the process of selecting a new director.

*SACSCOC* – We were notified on August 3, that SACSCOC was reassigning us a new commission staff person, due to retirements at their offices. I contacted Dr. Belle Wheelan and asked her to reconsider the change at least until after our reaffirmation. She agreed to the request. See documentation attached.

*QEP* – Your board packet includes our QEP – Rise to the Top. It will be submitted with our compliance focus report and will be reviewed by the On-Site Committee in late October. We made minor changes based on Dr. Kirk's observation and it is still subject to change based on the On-Site Committee's review.

*Audit* – This year every college and school district will take a drastic hit to their fund balance due to a change in accounting principals (nationwide). We have asked Eric Ede, our auditor to make a presentation to the board describing the change. The short description is as follows: As you know the college is a participant in the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) for employee retirement. TRS takes the place of Social Security. In Texas as in most states, has underfunded the amount expected to payout (unfunded liability). The college must record a percentage of this shortfall, although it is not a liability for the college it must be recorded as such. For us this will represent approximately \$5.4 million decrease in fund balance. We are not pleased with this reporting requirement, but it is out of our control.

*Palomino Festival* – The annual Palomino Festival is coming up on Labor Day weekend, September 5-6, at the Uvalde County Fairplex.

*Employee Loss* – One of our employees suffered a tragic loss of life. Josefina Verjan was involved in a car accident on Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. Her daughter, Vanessa Verjan, is also a college employee. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family.