

The State of the College Address 2007

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President**

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Good Morning and Welcome.

It is great to see all of you. I want to first express my appreciation to all of the support staff, A/P staff, and faculty who were here with us working at the College this summer. You all made it possible for us to continue serving our students and our community. At this time I would like to recognize our new Vice President of Student and Educational Services, Trevor Kubatzke.

Welcome back to all of you who were not around this summer. And a special welcome to all of you who are with us for the first time. Would all of our new staff and faculty that have joined us since last fall please stand. Let's give them a warm Delta College welcome. We are so glad that you said "yes," Delta is my first choice to work and grow.

I love this time of the year as our classrooms and hallways fill with students eager to learn and grow. I am reenergized and so delighted that I have the honor of serving this great college as president.

Today I have the privilege of giving the State of the College address. I will be sharing some formal remarks and then we will have some time for interaction at the end. Let's begin.

Charles Dickens wrote in his "A Tale of Two Cities", that "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way . . ." One might think that Dickens was sitting somewhere in Michigan and watching what is going on in our economy and state legislature.

OUR WORLD TODAY IS NOT THAT DIFFERENT THAN THE ONE DICKENS WROTE ABOUT:

In today's global community we are in many ways also conflicted:

- We are connected and we are divided;
- We have starvation and plenty;

- We have terror and we have peace;
- We have environmental challenges and we have technologies; and most importantly....**We have a world of opportunities!**

IN OUR COUNTRY:

- We have a new 110th Congress;
- We have hunger and poverty;
- We are a country at war;
- We have economic concerns;
- We are a country of hope, creativity, and innovation;
- We have pressures for increased accountability;
- We are free; and
We have a country full of opportunities!

IN OUR STATE:

- We face an \$1.8 billion budget shortfall;
- We have people without work and without hope;
- We have legislators who are not able to reach consensus on the budget;
- We do have a new “No Worker Left Behind Program”... And
- **We have the opportunity to make a difference!**

IN OUR TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY:

- We are facing high unemployment rates;
- We are dealing with the loss of manufacturing jobs in the area – Delphi;
- We have opportunities for growth in health care, and with companies like Dow Chemical, Dow Corning, and Hemlock Semiconductor;
- Vision TriCounty is planting the seeds for more unity in economic development.

Our community has great potential.....And Delta College will help it to reach that potential!

We at Delta College, in response to the State wide and regional economic crisis, have managed to carefully grow and position ourselves to meet the challenges of the future. This would not have been possible without the community-wide participation that occurred in March of 2006 at Delta College’s first strategic planning summit.

It was here that over 450 faculty, staff, and community members set the foundation of a new College mission, vision, and values statement that provided the necessary focus for us to create a new and exciting strategic plan.

Today, armed with our 2006 to 2010 strategic plan we are prepared to meet our State and regional economic difficulties head-on, and succeed in addressing the learning needs of our community and its citizens.

The means by which Delta College proceeds in meeting its mission, vision, and values depends entirely on the ability of faculty and staff to understand our responsibility in addressing the strategic focus areas clearly identified in our strategic plan.

These focus areas, critical to our future success, are:

1. Student Success
2. Program and Service Excellence
3. A Focus on People
4. Building Community Relationships, and
5. Maintaining Financial Stability.

And, as always, Delta College must strive for excellence in everything we do.

The state of our College today is healthy and filled with the promise of an even better tomorrow. But, without a thorough understanding by everyone in this room of what it will take to meet the challenges facing our college, we could miss the target and unintentionally realize what Dickens called... “the worst of times, an age of foolishness, and despair”.

Today, I am going to review with you the tools at our disposal to ensure a greater tomorrow. These include the four areas you experienced in yesterday’s Connection Exercise.

We must all have a working knowledge of our strategic initiatives and be able to identify, collect, and report key performance indicators of institutional effectiveness across all areas of the college.

Today we shall celebrate who we are, what we have accomplished, and where we are going!!

WHO ARE WE?

If somebody comes to Delta College to take a class, to meet, to work out, or just to visit, can they tell what kind of people work at this institution? Do we provide a warm and welcoming environment? Do we provide an experience for our guests and customers that encourages them to come back? The answer to this depends heavily on the Delta College culture. It is through this culture that each employee of Delta finds the direction and welcoming spirit that sets our College apart from others and gives our public a positive experience.

So if our culture defines who we are, where is this culture defined? We need only to go to our College’s Mission, Vision, and Values.

Our Mission is to educate, inspire, challenge, and support a diverse community of learners.

Our Vision is that we are committed to making Delta College our communities' first choices to learn, work, and grow.

Our Values promote and advocate for respect and appreciation of differences. Our Values foster a welcoming environment of openness and appreciation for all.

Our strategic priorities demand a culture that embraces diversity and teaches respect for members of every group. Our action plans infuse diversity, respect, and global understanding into our classrooms and the Delta workplace. This is who we must be, and this is what the Delta culture should be all about.

Finally, we are also a diverse group of people who bring a wide variety of experiences and expertise to work every day:

Let's start by taking a look at the pieces of our "people" puzzle.

Today Delta employs 518 full time employees;

- 41% are members of our faculty
- 23% are Administrative/Professional Staff Members
- 19% are Support Staff
- 11% work in Corporate Services
- 5% work in Facilities Management
- 1% work in Food Services

We also serve a diverse group of students who bring a wealth of ideas, experiences, and hopes for the future into our classroom:

According to fall 2006 enrollment statistics Delta College enrolled:

10,118 students.....

42% came from Saginaw County

28% came from Bay County

15% came from Midland County, and

15% came from outside our community college district

The diverse background of Delta's employees and students is reflective of the overall population of our Tri-County area.

Our discussion of WHO WE ARE would not be complete without taking one more good look at our Delta College "Values".

As you can see on the screen our Values are clearly described in this creative drawing. We can see that Delta College is a diverse learning-centered community. We can also see that our values embrace Excellence, Integrity, Respect, Innovation, Teamwork, and Leadership.

The only way we can be sure to live our values is to clearly remember them each and every day. We need a clever way to memorize them.

Now, here is **your** opportunity to help us learn our values...and win fabulous prizes.

I am sure that when you were young you used a wide variety of methods to memorize certain words, slogans, or phrases; such as:

- The lines on the Treble Clef in music are EVERY GOOD BOY DOES FINE (E-G-B-D-F)
- In math you might use FOIL to remember First – Outer – Inner – Last
- Of course you remembered the 4 directions on a map by saying - NEVER EAT SOGGY WAFFLES (N-E-S-W)

And, I am sure **all** of you used: George Ellen O'George Rode A Pig Home Yesterday to remember how to spell Geography (G-E-O-G-R-A-P-H-Y).....Well maybe not, but none-the-less you still get my point.

We need to use a similar method to easily remember our values.

The faculty or staff member (or members) who come up with the best method will win either an I-Pod or up to four \$25 gift certificates to our Bookstore (depending on the size of your team). Remember, you can work alone or in a team to come up with **your** creative memory helper.

The judges, deadline, and further details about this competition will be announced next week on the Delta L. This should be a lot of fun and very helpful to the entire College.

WHAT HAVE WE ACCOMPLISHED THIS PAST YEAR?

The tools used over the past year to move from great to greater grew out of a college wide effort to create a strategic plan. The strategic plan that each of you received when you came into the Lecture Theatre is supported by a foundation of over 45 years of excellence in education and innovation. This plan is the key tool that will help us define the present and create a better future.

Other tools have evolved from our college wide strategic plan. One such initiative is the eLearning strategic plan developed by our eLearning Committee led by Assistant Professor of English, Ray Lacina. This group is ensuring that our electronic learning tools are utilized with skill, creativity, and purpose.

Another outgrowth of our College strategic planning process is the IT strategic plan.

Carefully assembled by the IT Strategic Planning Committee (a college wide representative group) this plan defines how our college's extensive investment in information and communication technology will be utilized to ensure student success,

program and service excellence, financial stability, and the building of positive community relationships. All key strategic focus areas of the college wide plan.

These are only a few of the many examples of strategic planning going on throughout our college.

As we move into academic year '07-'08 we will be working with College internal and external stakeholders in assuring that all have a voice as well as an opportunity to participate in the implementation of the College's strategic plans.

On a related front, we have made a significant change in how we ensure that we are always moving towards improved performance and excellence in learning.

This new accreditation process and tool is called AQIP: The Academic Quality Improvement Program. Under the Chairmanship of our Vice President of Instruction and Learning Services, Don Halog, our AQIP Steering Committee is responsible for guiding the implementation of continuous improvement principles that are featured throughout the College strategic plan.

The AQIP Steering Committee can not, however, be solely responsible for the success of academic quality improvement.

It will take each and every one of us to make AQIP a success.

I encourage all of you to get involved in areas that interest you. I understand that this responsibility presumes a major organizational cultural change.

We will be using data to measure our progress in the form of key performance indicators. To get to this point, the AQIP Steering Committee and the College as a whole will receive assistance from the Center for Organizational Success.

This center now in its third full year provides three primary services for all Delta College employees:

Organizational development -

Which commonly includes continuous improvement of the overall organization, learning college initiatives, communication systems, teambuilding, conflict management, problem solving and renewal processes. It is a conscious effort to develop our College's capabilities so that we can attain and sustain an optimum level of performance as measured by efficiency (**doing things right**) and effectiveness (**doing the right things**).

Professional development-

The COS helps employees learn to perform more effectively in their current jobs and gain new knowledge and skills for career advancement. And, the COS provides for....

Personal development -

By focusing on renewal, growth, change, and continuous improvement, the COS brings professional growth opportunities for all individuals within the institution.

As all of you know, we have spent a great deal of energy and time developing strategic plans and working on our AQIP effort, however, many other new innovative programs and services have taken root at Delta over the past year.

Hard at work, our Curriculum Council reviewed and approved 351 course actions (including 93 new courses) and 29 program actions (including 1 new program) during the 07-08 academic year.

This past year saw the birth of the Electrical Utility/Lineworker Certificate/Degree Program and the beginnings of a new Entrepreneurship Program.

E-Learning student enrollment has nearly doubled with the increased use of Educator Software in the classroom and on-line.

Because of the increased use of the internet by our students, we have added E-Advising to our on-line student services.

In addition, we have implemented Degree Audit which allows students to check their progress toward their declared program of study at any time online. Using Degree Audit, students can also see how their earned credits can be applied to other programs of interest.

Naturally, all of these new initiatives became a reality because of you, our faculty and staff. So, I would like to say “**thank you**” to all who worked tirelessly to implement these new programs and services over the past year.

I am also pleased to say that over this past academic year we have had so many individual accomplishments and awards won by our faculty and staff that I dare not attempt to list them all for fear that I might omit someone by accident.

However, there have been many benchmark accomplishments this year that also directly reflect our values. These deserve special mention:

1) Datatel, Inc. acknowledged that 10 of its community college client institutions were named “tech-savvy” by the Center for Digital Education and the American Association of Community Colleges. Demonstrating our value of **Innovation**, Delta College was one of these top-ten “tech savvy” institutions. Determination of excellence was based upon the utilization of technology, and how this technology improved the College’s ability to serve students, staff, and faculty. Only one other Michigan community college, Macomb, was within the top ten of over 200 colleges across the United States.

2) This past year saw the development of a multi-year contract agreement with the Faculty and the Facilities and Food Service staff that provides for inflationary salary

increases and medical benefits that are designed to promote wellness and manage future benefit costs. The negotiations between Administration and Facilities Management and Food Services staff demonstrated exemplary **Teamwork** with open discussions of common interests and collaboration. Teamwork was also at the forefront when Faculty and the Administration successfully used an Interest Based Bargaining approach to reaching agreement. I am very proud of the team's use of this process and hope that this will set the stage for future agreements.

3) Our Delta College Quality Public Broadcasting stations brought home four national programming awards. Of particular note is the fact that two of these shows are regularly scheduled programs that demonstrate Delta's dedication to **Diversity**: "Soul Issue" and "Somos Hispanos". I am very proud of our Public TV and radio stations and how they play an integral part in Delta College living up to its mission, vision, and values.

4) As a **Learning Centered Community College**, Delta was accepted this year into the Higher Learning Commission's Assessment Academy. With this acceptance, the Commission no longer is requiring a monitoring report. Our Assessment Academy has adopted three action plans: A). Support student success through a user-friendly intake process for first-time students, B). Assess the effectiveness of the developmental education programs, and C). Integrate the assessment process into occupational programs.

5) Being committed to **Innovation and Excellence**, Delta College has been a dedicated member of the Continuous Quality Improvement Network. We are one of the members of the CQIN Community Colleges that is participating in the Innovation Curriculum and Vision Implementation Projects which will continue to drive Delta College toward a culture of innovation.

6) For the third consecutive year Delta College has been selected one of the "**Top 20 Companies in the Training Outsourcing Industry**" by Training Industry, Inc. Delta College's Corporate Services continues to demonstrate that it is best suited for world-class outsourcing engagements. This year, as it has since 2004, Training Industry, Inc., (A company committed to creating awareness about best practices in the training industry) contacted over 275 companies to assess their expertise, experience, and capabilities. And, again this year, our Corporate Services Division has met and exceeded all of the criteria of **Excellence** set forth by this respected company.

There is no question that this past year has been one of planning and introspection. We have taken on many significant projects and programs that also reflect our values and positively affect our College into the future:

- Mary Beth Looby, Professor of English, has continued to oversee the growth of Delta's Developmental Education Program. I would like to share an edited version of the "video tour" that developmental students will take as they begin classes this fall. If you would like a copy of the DVD in its entirety please contact Mary Beth Looby.

- Teresa Stitt, Associate Dean of Community Development, created the new **Student Leadership Academy**. Funded by the Delta College Foundation Distribution Committee in 2006, this innovative program helps develop student leaders. The program is to be completed in two phases.

The first phase was to design and implement a leadership training program for students, and the second phase is to provide an avenue for students to demonstrate new skills on campus.

Eighteen students met at the Hartley Outdoors Education Center on May 11th and 12th to complete two half days of intense leadership training. The training was coordinated and implemented by the Delta College Leadership Academy Committee consisting of six Delta College employees; Teresa Stitt, Emily Clement, David Baskind, Connie Watson, Linda Plackowski, Connie Colvin, and a local consultant, Dan Andrews.

This fall, these eighteen students will return to campus to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours to assist with a wide variety of College sponsored programs and events.

This past year has also seen the beginnings of our first AQIP action projects:

1. The coordination of a Developmental Education Program.
2. The development of an Effective Employee Professional Development Planning Process.
3. The implementation of an external study to Measure Community Perceptions of Delta College by the research firm CLARUS. The results of which are just beginning to be analyzed. This study will enable the college to respond appropriately with a “value added approach”.

On August 14, Kathi Swanson of CLARUS Corporation was on campus to share the results with a representative group of our faculty staff and with our Board of Trustees. I would like to take a minute to share a brief summary of CLARUS’ findings:

DELTA COLLEGE STRENGTHS:

- Of those community members interviewed by CLARUS, 80% were familiar with Delta (this is a 40% increase from the 1996 study).
- We have a great market share in our area high schools. Delta enrolls a major percentage of area high school graduates.

DELTA COLLEGE OPPORTUNITIES:

- First, the study found that we are not reaching a segment of the Millennial Generation and Generation Y with our story. We can increase our enrollment by

recruiting and retaining students in the 20-24 year old age range that have not chosen to come to college directly out of high school.

- Second, in order to attract this younger generation to Delta College, those of us who are boomers (and that is a large number of us) must be more sensitive to the way in which Generation X, Y, and Millennial look at life.

The 4th AQIP action project is “The integration of a Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).” This tool was first administered this past Winter Term.

The results of this survey will provide us with the critical information to improve Student Learning and hence student success. Since we decided to do both the faculty and student sections of the survey, the information gained will help point us in the best direction for professional development. Our ultimate goal is to increase faculty – student engagement in the classroom and with that increase student retention.

As a result of the findings from our CCSSE and CLARUS reports, new action plans will be identified. In addition, AQIP challenges us to continuously seek ways in which we can improve upon our systems and methods of operation and instruction.

This past year, I appointed two task forces:

The first, The Centers Task Force, was charged with, ONE, undertaking a comprehensive review and evaluation of the role and functions of the three primary off-campus Delta College Centers, and TWO, providing a series of recommendations regarding their future. The Centers Task Force concluded that we need to make improvements to our off-campus offerings including scheduling more courses, and making physical improvements.

My second appointment was for an Athletics Task Force to assess the greatest strengths and weaknesses of our Athletic Program. In addition, they were asked to identify the areas in need of greatest improvement, and identify the contributions to the campus and community that athletics makes. After careful study, the Athletics Task Force concluded that we should continue to support an athletics program. In addition, the Task Force recommended a $\frac{3}{4}$ time Athletic Director.

With the conclusion of the reports from the Centers and Athletic Task Forces, you will soon be seeing the first action steps come into fruition. First, the Ricker Center is seeing many physical improvements that will help ensure student success. And second, Student Services will be hiring a $\frac{3}{4}$ time Athletic Director. This demonstrates Delta’s commitment to our students’ right to a holistic college experience.

This September, I am establishing two new task forces. The first is the **Diversity Task Force** which will be co-chaired by Charissa Urbano, Professor of Biology, and Linda Holoman, Director of Multicultural Services.

At the end of the last academic year, Margaret Mosqueda, our Dean of Student and Education Services, and Barry Baker, our Broadcasting General Manager, prepared a DVD that is a wonderful primer on diversity at Delta College. Here is an edited version of that video.

The complete DVD of this Diversity Report is available at the LLIC.

You may have noticed that Don said in the video that we would be participating in a cultural climate survey that will be facilitated by the COS during the 07-08 academic year. I encourage you to participate openly and honestly as it will help us to measure all aspects of our culture, in addition to diversity.

The second task force that I am establishing this September will focus on sustainability: Delta College's efforts at going "green". This new task force will be co-chaired by Linda Petee, Administrative Assistant in Facilities Management and Mike Finelli, Assistant Professor of Residential Construction.

This task force will be charged with engaging the college in an ongoing dialogue about environmental sustainability and with integrating sustainability with campus programs in education, operations, and community service.

Delta College's environmentally sound "Going Green" efforts are only one dimension of sustainability. A broader definition of sustainability can be described in the following manner:

- Staying relevant;
- Staying profitable;
- Meeting today's needs without impacting the needs of the future;
- Seeing the future and creating an infrastructure to get to it; And,
- Continuous training and INVESTING IN PEOPLE;

As you can see, sustainability is closely related to the principles defined by our 5 strategic focus areas. It is really about building a culture of excellence. It is about our values long term.

All of the previously mentioned tools for success when used alone are helpful to a degree, however, in order for these tools to have maximum impact on a successful tomorrow, they must be connected like the pieces of a puzzle.

We will not be able to see the full picture of success through the isolated use of any single tool. The true promise of greatness will be realized once we tie these efforts together into a college wide collaborative and interconnected series of activities, research, and projects.

As David Redman, Associate Professor of Math & Computer Science said at the conclusion of Delta College's Middle School Mathematics Competition last April when

the entire group of faculty, parents, and students successfully completed the World's Largest Jigsaw Puzzle:

“We want to show the students that’s how mathematicians and computers solve problems. Take a huge, unbelievable problem, and as long as you organize it really well and break it into easier, smaller pieces, you might hope to do something that you would never have dreamed of doing otherwise.”

Many of our students find that they are faced with many puzzles in their life. These life pressures can be very taxing on even the best student. That is why Delta College’s value of respect and acceptance is often the key to the success, as explained by this next Delta student.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Most State administrators that look towards the future in community colleges tend to dwell on the funding crises. No doubt, this is a critical issue; however, dwelling on legislative appropriations and the value of property taxes as the primary determiner of a successful future at Delta College is being shortsighted. There are many opportunities within our grasp that can positively shape our future and create an exciting environment in which to work and learn.

First of all we have one of the most important assets to ensure a great future and that is you our faculty and staff. Without a creative and innovative team of employees, no amount of State and Local money can ensure success. All of the tools for a brighter future discussed in my earlier comments came about not because of large budget increases, but because of individual faculty and staff dedication and commitment.

Just as these tools are providing Delta College with an exciting present, they will be a major player in how we continue to ensure that Delta is **“One of America’s Leading Community Colleges”**, as our Board Chair, Earl Selby, so often states.

Our future will be driven by innovation, sustainability, and the ability to be agile and responsive in an ever changing environment.

On the immediate horizon, Sue Montesi is working with area experts in developing a viable “Seniors” program. This will open the door of life-long-learning to a whole new subset of students and aspiring learners. - Watch for further information on the Delta L.

Beyond our greatest asset of faculty and staff is our facility. We are looking at the completion of several projects that will ensure our current facility is capable of meeting the student needs of the future.

Under the direction of Larry Ramseyer, our Director of Facilities Management, portions of our campus roofing system is being stripped and rebuilt with material that will be more energy efficient, hence, saving the college money in the future.

Other projects in progress are the redesign and improvement of our Mackinaw Road west entrance and fascia repair to improve our campuses external appearance.

The recently completed installation of Solar Panels that are affixed to the Colleges M-Wing roof was funded in large measure through a Federal grant and coordinated by Jack Crowell, Professor in the Math and Computer Science Division; Jay Anderson, Dean of Career and Continuing Education; Mark Robertson, Professor and Chair of the Science Division; and Matt Sullivan, Facilities Planner.

The Solar Panels will become the foundation for many student learning opportunities in a wide variety of disciplines. Even though the electrical savings from this project are minimal, the Solar Project does demonstrate our College's dedication to innovation and sound environmental practices.

Finally, we continue to keep our communication lines open with the State Legislature for our capital project to renovate our Allied Health Building.

Another initiative that is in the process of being launched is the Campus wide Emergency/Crises Preparedness plan, which will require all of your participation and cooperation to succeed. During the Spring Semester we conducted an emergency drill to test our campus preparedness. We learned a great deal from this exercise. Many of you took the time to send me thoughtful suggestions that we will integrate into our new Preparedness Plan. We will be holding campus wide drills again in the near future. Be assured that I take Emergency/Crises Preparedness very seriously.

I mentioned that we are making the first of several improvements to the Ricker Center. These projects are all about student success and excellence in learning. As you will hear in this next student video segment, the Ricker Center is another of example of the Delta Difference.

As I stated earlier, the state of Delta College is healthy and filled with promise. There is no question that there will be challenges to face, however, our opportunities for the future are greater.

The tools described today are available for your immediate use. Remember, life is a constant conflict of "best of times" and "worst of times". Only you can make today the beginning of an even better tomorrow.

In order to ensure that you do not feel isolated or out of the loop, I am creating a place on the President's web site that will allow you to ask questions, give opinions, and make suggestions. I will do my very best to respond to every inquiry.

We must stay connected, for without connectivity we are an incomplete puzzle picture that is difficult to understand and even harder to appreciate.

Michelangelo wrote in the mid 16th century: “The problem is not in setting a mark to high, but in setting it too low and just making the mark.” We are setting the mark high and we will reach it together.

Have a wonderful academic year.