

2009 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION SPEECH TO ALL STAFF

JANUARY 16, 2009

Good morning and Happy New Year.

I hope that your vacation was peaceful and regenerative.

Delta College will continue in 2009 to serve our district with excellence in education.

With the start of the new semester, please remember that each and every one of you play a key role in helping us to achieve our vision of being our communities' first choice to learn, to work, and to grow!

Delta College is the leader in real life education and many new and exciting projects await your participation in 2009! Leading these projects is AQIP and its introspective culture of evidence.

A year and a half ago I talked to you about the challenges we faced nationally, regionally, and locally. Today we face increased challenges, but through determination and innovation we are still in a position to face these challenges with new opportunities.

In our Country we will see our first African-American President sworn into office next Tuesday. This will be an extraordinary event in U.S. history and will certainly shake up world attitudes and institute long term change. Our new President and his Congress are facing challenges that would make Spiderman, The Bionic Woman, and Batman wince. But seriously, our country is at a cross roads. In the midst of a recession, we are also facing hunger and poverty, war on at least three fronts, and new universal calls for accountability.

And yet, the United States is still a country of hope, creativity, and innovation. We are free; and **we have a country full of opportunities!**

President-Elect Obama included community college infrastructure as a part of his vision and plan that he will take to Congress. The Association of Community College Trustees stimulus proposal to the administration requested \$5 Billion for community college infrastructure.

And, just finishing her 15th year teaching English at the Delaware Technical Community College is Jill Biden, who you might recall just happens to be the wife of Vice-President Elect Joe Biden. Now this is a friend in high places. Ms. Biden has indicated her desire to return to the classroom at some point in the future, somewhere in the Washington

D.C. area.

Jill Biden is deeply experienced in community colleges and our diverse population. Having her as the Second Lady of our Country can't help but bolster the community college movement.

IN OUR STATE:

- We continue to face a Billion dollar budget shortfall;
- Michigan's unemployment rate remains the nation's highest, with increases in 16 of Michigan's 17 major labor markets, including Bay and Saginaw Counties.
- More than 240 Michigan communities benefit from an automobile related facility within their borders. If one of the big three automakers were to go bankrupt this would not only have a disastrous effect on Michigan's communities, but it would also have a massive effect on all sectors of our nation's economy.
- 30 years ago, Michigan was considered a relatively wealthy state as measured by per capita income. We were in the top ten of the nation, now we are well below the national average.
- Still unknown is the timing and size of the State's share of the Federal stimulus package. Some estimates have Michigan's share around \$1.5 Billion, which is about the size of the combined State's 2 year general fund school aid shortfall.

This injection of new funds may only help the state out of its current deficit and not provide new funding opportunities.

IN OUR TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY:

- We are still dealing with the loss of manufacturing jobs in the area; but,
- We have opportunities for growth in health care, and we are persistent with our efforts to renovate our Allied Health Building to meet the wellness needs of 2010 and beyond.
- The newly named Great Lakes Bay Region Board of Directors is fostering unity in economic development, sustainability, and quality of life for our community.

This new Brand Name for our Tri-County area (Great Lakes Bay Region) was created by a group of marketing experts under the direction of the “Vision Tri-County Board”. The key to the success of our region is collaboration, shared values and vision.

I was honored, as your President, to be appointed to the original Vision Tri-County Board, and I will continue to serve on the newly named Great Lakes Bay Region Board of Directors to ensure that Delta College is a major player in the overall quality of life and success of our region.

THROUGH ALL OF THESE CHALLENGES THAT FACE OUR AREA'S CITIZENS, DELTA COLLEGE SHINES BRIGHT. THIS GLOW IS CONTAINED WITHIN EACH OF YOU, AND YOU CAN MAKE THE POSITIVE DIFFERENCE. ONE DEGREE, ONE GOAL, ONE SECOND CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE OUTCOME OF OUR COLLEGE'S FUTURE; IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND GREAT!

It's part of the American psyche to be fascinated by success. For decades, researchers have analyzed and explored why some people, businesses, and institutions make it to the top and others do not.

In his newest best selling book, *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Malcolm Gladwell discusses the psychology of achievement.

Traditionally, we have been taught that the Horatio Alger myth of "pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps" was the best route to success. But Gladwell thinks there are larger forces at work when it comes to achievement. In his words, "The values of the world we inhabit, and the people we surround ourselves with, have a profound effect on who we are."

One of the most valuable points that Gladwell provides is that "Achievement is talent plus preparation." But he argues that in the success equation of gifted people -- whether we're talking about hockey players, Bill Gates or The Beatles -- preparation is far more important than sheer talent.

Gladwell argues that athletes, musicians, chess champions, even computer experts all need both talent and time to help them reach the top echelon. In other words, "Practice isn't the thing you do once you are good. It's the thing you do that makes you good."

Gladwell's insightful book maintains that success follows a predictable course, and it's not the brightest people who automatically succeed. We need to recognize the significance of the culture that we are a part of, who our friends are, what family we come from, and even where we were raised geographically.

At Delta College our shared values are based upon diversity, integrity and respect. From a foundation of leadership, we use innovation and teamwork to achieve excellence.

It is a combination of building collaboration, a willingness to work extraordinarily hard, and the ability to recognize opportunities that ultimately will lead to success.

David Schwartz, in his book, *The Magic of Thinking Big*, describes it this way: *"Every step forward pays dividends. Success is determined not so much by the size of one's brain as it is the size of one's thinking...Thinking big does work magic."*

You can move a mountain with enough commitment and drive. The “I can” attitude generates the magic”

For us to reach the goals within our shared vision, every employee must be part of the process, work as a team, and live our values in everything we do at Delta College.

This is the season for New Year’s resolutions, and mine is a renewed commitment to excellence and shared values that include sustainability, innovation, and one degree more effort in everything that affects Delta College and the students we serve.

I challenge each of you to be a leader in ensuring that this year’s critical resolution for success is realized and exceeded.

In his book “212 degrees – the extra degree”, S.I. Parker demonstrates what it takes to achieve results beyond your wildest expectations. He talks about new ways to think about success and new ways to act.

(VIDEO)

We, who work at Delta College, must stop and take a reality check:

- We need to step it up
- Light it up (and I don't mean tobacco), and
- Turn it on

When I talked to you in the fall about my visions and dreams for this college, I also emphasized accountability. The first step in accountability is collaborative communications. Today, I again stress the need to understand the critical importance of a shared vision, and how that unity of understanding can lead us one degree closer to greatness.

Every employee must share and demonstrate the Delta Values and realize that Delta Is The Leader In Real Life Education;

- Just prior to the recent holiday vacation, Delta College's Diversity Task Force completed their report which included a new College definition of Diversity and a series of action recommendation to improve Diversity on Campus and at the Centers. The following is their definition:

“Diversity represents a learning and work environment of inclusion and equity for students, faculty and staff that fosters creativity, innovation and growth through

education, collaboration and communication. By creating a culture of diversity at Delta College, we welcome and appreciate differences in identity, experiences, expertise, ideas, and opinions of all people.”

The Task Force Members

Faculty Members: Eric Beckman, Wendy Burns,
Masood Mowlavi, Charis Urbano, Maria Sablo-Yates,
and Elizabeth Ullrich.

A/P Members: Thelma Bushong, Tamie Grunow,
Linda Holoman, and Howard Sharper.

Support Staff Members: Connie Colvin and Sylvia George

Student Member: Jacob Krzysiak

Every Delta College employee must promote learning, actions, and practices that incorporate social, environmental, and economic sustainability:

- Our faculty and staff have demonstrated that we at Delta are concerned about the human condition of our community and neighbors. During the past several months Delta College employees have participated in:
 - Food and Toy Drives
 - “The Turkey Trot”

- United Way
- Art Sale for the Pantry
- “Eat for Heat”
- “Reuse a Shoe”
- School Supplies for needy students, and
- The Humane Society

Delta has a social conscience and this makes a positive difference in our community.

Delta College is “Walking its Talk” on sustainability: Linda Petee and Mike Finelli continue to lead our efforts to meet the requirements of the STARS program and the President’s Climate Commitment. These on-going sustainability projects will ensure a healthy future for our campus and the overall Great Lakes Bay Region.

The College’s Strategic Plan and its Strategic Focus Areas must come alive and leap off of the planning pages and into our daily lives:

As an example of our progress, one of our key strategic focus areas is “Promoting success for all students in the classroom and in life”.

This focus area’s success is best demonstrated by the excellent progress made at Delta in meeting the needs of our students in the Developmental Education Program.

The College's Developmental Coordinating Team of **Marcie Carter, Liz Dewey, Trisha O'Connor, Katrina Nichols** and **program director Mary Beth Looby**, won Delta College's annual Endowed Chair Award to initiate an integrated studies learning community for first semester developmental students that will combine classes with counseling services. They expect to offer the learning community in the Fall Semester of '09.

This team has also organized a successful drive to collect school supplies for developmental students, started a List-Serv for students, attended a training conference to certify Delta's Developmental Ed Program, were featured on a League for Innovation I-Stream, and added an "Educator of the Month" feature to their Developmental Educator's website. I am very proud of this extraordinary teams many efforts.

Delta College always embraces innovation, creativity, risk taking, and experimentation, while respecting the need to build an institution that is committed to a "Culture of Evidence";

Delta College will meet the challenges of declining numbers of High School graduates with innovative learning methods to serve an increasing non-traditional student body:

I am pleased to tell you we increased our non-traditional dual enrollment from Fall Semester 2007 to Fall Semester 2008 by 34.4%. In addition, when comparing Fall Semester '07 to Fall Semester '08, our overall enrollment was increased by 5.17%.

On Tuesday night I was pleased to report to our Board of Trustees that our Winter '09 Enrollment had reached over 11,000 students.

The entire college lives and works on the principles of Continuous Quality

Improvement:

- Delta College has established 9 AQIP committees who are working hard at developing, defining and putting into action many plans and improved practices. An example of the progress being made can be found in our AQIP goal of “Helping Students Learn”, chaired by Biology Associate Professor, David Bailey. This committee has focused on Students Services and Academics that support student learning. They have reviewed processes in Admissions and Counseling.

Every student entering our halls during 2009 experiences what has become known as **“The Delta Difference”.....**

[Audio of Student Satisfaction]

Lewis Carroll wrote in his classic “Alice in Wonderland”:

“One day Alice came to a fork in the road and saw a Cheshire Cat in a tree. ‘Which road do I take?’ she asked. ‘Where do you want to go?’ was his response. ‘I don’t know’, Alice answered. ‘Then’, said the cat, ‘It doesn’t matter’”.

What we are doing at Delta College is moving down a road that is paved with wonderful opportunities. To ensure that the road we take **does matter**, we must all be traveling down the same road, and share the same vision and mission.

We must live our values everyday and communicate these values to our students and community. Our guiding principles are the foundation for greatness.

We have time now for questions.