

# **Delta College State of the College Address**

**Dr. Jean Goodnow**

**August 2009**

Good morning and welcome to fall semester 2009. I hope that you had some quality time to refresh and reenergize this summer. We have a very challenging year ahead of us and, as always, it will take every Delta employee to make it successful.

A team of faculty, staff, and I recently attended the Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN) Summer Institute in Dearborn, Michigan. During this informative meeting the importance of having fun at work was strongly emphasized.

So...with that in mind and realizing that each of you may, from time to time during this next academic year, need to keep several balls up in the air at one time, I offer you now some time to practice. (TOSS THE BALL) For the next minute I want you to keep these balls in the air.

-----

Last August, during Learning Days, we looked at the challenges that Delta College was facing. We acknowledged the difficult job market, the troubled State and Federal economy, and we voiced our strong support for our troops in a complex war.

Unfortunately, many of the problems we faced a year ago in our economic and political environment are still with us today.

We continue to support our troops and watch our troubled economy with a patient, yet proactive approach. This approach is one that accepts the realities of our State and regional economy while building on the strengths of Delta College's mission, vision, and values.

One hope for the future is being proposed by President Obama.

During a recent editorial in the Washington Post and **in a** major policy address to the nation, President Obama stated that one of the ways of "cleaning up the wreckage of the recession" and to "rebuild something better in its place" is greater support for community colleges in America.

The President continued, "In an economy where jobs requiring at least an associate's degree are projected to

grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience, it's never been more essential to continue education and training after high school," "It's time to reform our community colleges," the President said, "so that they provide Americans of all ages a chance to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to compete for the jobs of the future."

Obama emphasized that, (quote) "We can reallocate funding to help them modernize their facilities, increase the quality of online courses and ultimately meet the goal of graduating 5 million more Americans from community colleges by 2020." (unquote)

During his formal remarks last July at Macomb Community College in Warren, MI, President Obama specifically called for:

- Congress to provide \$2.5 billion for construction and renovation for our nation's aging community college facilities;
- \$500 million to develop new online courses; And,
- \$9 billion for "challenge grants" aimed at spurring innovation at the colleges;

The heart of the President Obama's program is the grants, which will require colleges to compete by designing innovative new programs or revamping existing curriculum.

The construction money will be used to kick off capital fundraising campaigns at colleges, sparking billions more to repair aging and dilapidated buildings.

The money for new online courses would be used to develop Internet- based modules that could be shared by colleges all over the country to reach more students.

The money is included in the budget bills that Congress is debating, and, if approved, would begin being spent during the first half of 2010.

(PAUSE)

It is reassuring to know that we have support from the President of the United States. But, we must keep in mind that the current recession, and combined automotive and banking industry collapse, has made the national bail out scenarios difficult, and politically dangerous.

In the State of Michigan, the budget continues to face a Billion dollar overall shortfall, saved only this year because of the Federal injection of emergency stimulus funds.

- Michigan's unemployment rate remains the nation's highest and has nearly doubled since this same time last year.

- The automotive industry in Michigan, **as we have known it**, has ceased to exist;
- The injection of new Federal stimulus funds will only help the state out of its current deficit and not provide new funding opportunities. As a matter of fact, without additional injections of Federal stimulus dollars, State funding to Michigan's community colleges in fiscal years 2011 and beyond will bring significant challenges to our future revenues.

#### IN OUR GREAT LAKES BAY REGION:

- We are still dealing with the loss of manufacturing jobs, but;
- We are exploring ways in which our three county's public and private institutions and organizations can

work together to build a more vibrant and successful future.

- Dow and its joint venture partner, Kokam America, have selected Midland as the site of a new battery manufacturing facility to supply the automotive industry and power the next generation of hybrid and electric vehicles.
- The anchor zone around the Hemlock Semiconductor plant is being developed to bring more new jobs into our area.
- And, we are persistent with our efforts to renovate our Allied Health Building to meet the wellness needs of 2010 and beyond.

We at Delta College are a living, breathing, example of the success that a community college can bring to a region's citizens during both good and bad economic times.

Today, we need to do more than just sing the praises of our shared values and community college mission. We must now all "Walk the Talk" and together see "The Big Pick-chore".

The 2009-2010 academic year will bring record numbers of traditional and non-traditional students. The demands on our resources will be stretched at times to the limit.

Delta College, like most community colleges in Michigan, derives a vast majority of its funding from three primary sources.

- One is State appropriation
- The second is local property tax
- And the third is tuition.

Unfortunately the Tuition revenue, even with dramatic enrollment increases, does not generate sufficient revenue, alone, to cover the cost of our student's education.

Equally unfortunate, State Funding and Property Tax Revenue are currently projected to be dramatically lower over the next few years. So, where is the hope for the future?

I can tell you one thing, waiting for a miracle from Washington, D.C. or Lansing, is not a good plan. The best plan in this economy (in any economy) is to count on the highly intelligent and creative talents of you, our Delta College Faculty and staff.

We must identify and consider all sides of potential opportunities, and make decisions to spend precious budget dollars and College resources with a creative, agile, and most important, innovative approach.

As Peter Drucker said, “Every organization – not just business – needs one core competence: Innovation.”

As I mentioned, a group of your Delta colleagues and I recently attend the CQIN Summer Institute in Dearborn. The theme of the Institute this year was “innovation.” Our team had the opportunity to hear a Keynote Address from the President of “The Henry Ford”, Patricia Mooradian.

“The Henry Ford” has been conducting research on innovation. Five “keys to innovation” have been identified as common themes throughout their research.

Ms. Mooradian delivered inspiring insights into those “Five Keys to Innovation” that I would like to share with you today.

The first key of innovation starts with **Curiosity**. If we want to cultivate innovation, we need to encourage a culture of curiosity. Think of all the questions that children ask us. From an early age, it's a constant stream of why?, why?, why?

The second key to innovation is: **Break the Rules**. Now, you know that I am not talking about the rules of law or common sense, but I am talking about stretching your imagination, be creative, and inventive. Innovation requires the courage to be different.

The third key to innovation is: **Collaboration is Power**. Most modern innovations are the product of intense collaboration.

The myth of the lone genius is just that, a myth.

Thomas Edison and Henry Ford both employed teams of talented specialists to explore possibilities together, because they knew that no single person has a monopoly on good ideas.

The fourth key is: **Meet True Needs**. Generally, the most successful innovators are those who recognize and solve the problems that address real needs.

The fifth key to innovation is perhaps the hardest: We need to **Embrace the Risk and the Lessons of Failure**.

Through the ages, the lessons learned from failure form the foundation of innovation... And they still do.”

It was Ms. Mooradian's closing comment that really resonated with me. She said "We can either make history, or, we can become history."

I invite all of you to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow with an innovative approach. We can not sit by and wait for someone to come to our aide. We must be proactive. We must be agile. We must be inventive and welcome constructive change.

As Charles Darwin said: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

I can not accept, nor should you, the existence of “CAVE People” at Delta College, Colleagues Against Virtually Everything. We all work in an exciting and positive institution of higher learning that needs your input and innovations.

Open your minds and add to the success of our students, our community, and the institution itself.

People, the state of Delta College today is strong! We have made tough decisions over the last decade that has allowed us to be debt free and able to meet the current cost of operation and services to our students.

Because of each of you, we have had a great year. Our environmental pick-chore is clear. At a time when many other institutions of higher learning are making significant reductions in overall operations, Delta College, as a whole, has experienced a wealth of accomplishments, and hence growth over the past twelve months:

- Our students enjoy a tuition freeze for the 2009 - 2010 academic year;
- Last year Delta's newly coordinated Developmental Education Team determined that the next step was to assess the success of our developmental program, which offers classes in English, Math, ABS, and CST. Developmental Education at Delta College is strong and through our culture of evidence we can document

this strength. This was a successful AQIP project during this past fiscal year.

- A second successful AQIP action project this past year was the continued growth of Delta College's Leading and Learning Together initiative.

This action project is a three-phase professional development program for full-time Delta employees.

The project included the creation of evaluation tools that assess the results of the program by measuring behavior change and improved work performance.

Leading and Learning Together is designed to enhance Delta College employees...

- Knowledge of Delta's Culture, including its values,

- Knowledge of Delta's systems and processes,
  - Knowledge of practical leadership,
  - And, ambassador training that focuses on how each individual's work interfaces with, and contributes to, Delta College's success.
- 
- Our third successful AQIP project this year was the development of a comprehensive Sustainability Plan.  
I can not begin to tell you how serious this issue is to me.

When we at Delta College speak about sustainability, we are not just talking about the impact of this activity on our campus and learning, but to the entire planet.

As detailed in a new book written by Peter Bar-dag-lio and Andrea Putman, entitled “Boldly Sustainable”, “All living systems are in an accelerated, long-term decline. Biological species are disappearing 1,000 times faster than normal. Fifty percent of all species will be gone by the end of this century, an extinction rate that has not been seen since the dinosaurs disappeared 65 million years ago.

At the same time, 2.7 billion people (world-wide) are without sanitation and earn less than \$2.00 a day; more than a billion people have no access to clean drinking water; one billion people in our world are malnourished.” These are sobering thoughts!

We at Delta College will not bury our heads in the sand. We will use our collective energy, creativity, imagination, and intelligence to make a change in the delicate world we live in, a world that our students will be inheriting.

IMAGINE! How wonderful it would be to see our college and its students recognized as leaders in the future of world sustainability.

Just IMAGINE! A world in which everyone has fair and equal access to the earth's resources and a decent quality of life.

IMAGINE new technology that is designed to be inspired by nature and driven by renewable energy.

These future scenarios are imagined and hope is shared in this new book “Boldly Sustainable”. I hope each of you will find the time to read this eye opening resource for the future.

Delta College will seek to enhance the quality of life within our district and campus by promoting effective environmental stewardship. We recognize the interdependence of society, the economy, and the environment. Merely talking politically correct and not walking the talk is unacceptable.

Sustainability is a dynamic, evolving process that is both restorative and regenerative.

We must create a learning environment where the consequences of future choices affecting our planet and the environment are viewed holistically, for the long run. We must teach our students to be community leaders. They must leave Delta College with sustainable living concepts and practices that they can transfer to their families and communities.

Michael Crow, President of Arizona State University, said, "...our universities are mired in the Stone Age. They remain highly static and resistant to change, unwilling to evolve in pace and real time."

“Just as our prehistoric ancestors went about busting up rocks,” he said, “We view the world as something to break down and take apart rather than to understand holistically and live in harmony with.”

In Crow’s words, “*We seek to heat it, beat it, melt it, smash it, burn it, and blow it up.*”

It is time for us to move from this Stone Age attitude to the Age of Sustainability.

As Bar-dag-lio and Putman stated clearly, “We must adopt an approach that models collaborative learning, inclusivity, and mutual respect that will allow academic institutions to abandon the ivory tower with its well-entrenched silos and become a ‘community greenhouse’ where academic

departmental teams work across the college, addressing real-world sustainability problems, and discovering innovative ideas and knowledge to share with each other, our students, and the rest of our community.”

Innovation and critical thinking will be key to the success of this new sustainable world. Failure to take action today is unacceptable.

Finally,

(PAUSE)

IMAGINE: A world in which all current and future generations have an opportunity to pursue meaningful work and realize their full potential.

A new world in which our communities are strong and vibrant because they celebrate diversity, encourage collaboration, and emphasize quality of life over the consumption of stuff.

We must treat each other in a civil and respectful manner. We each bring to this college a unique talent, and individually as well as collectively, we make the Delta Difference.

These are not just ideas from the two fine authors of the book “Boldly Sustainable”, but these are the crux of Delta College’s Sustainability Strategic Priority.

- This past year Delta College has been very proactive and focused on the social, environmental, and economic efforts of sustainability in order to meet the American College and University President's Climate Commitment. Sustainability has been identified throughout our institution and our academic curricula.

### **Moving on....**

- Delta College is one of nine two-year institutions receiving Honor Roll recognition in the 2009 "Great Colleges to Work For" survey, announced in a special supplement of "*The Chronicle of Higher Education*".

The “Great Colleges to Work For” survey recognizes colleges, based on enrollment size, for specific best practices and policies, such as compensation and benefits, work environment, and institutional policies.

I thank all of you for making this recognition possible. Some 300 Delta College employees responded to the “Great Colleges” survey. Each of you makes this college a wonderful place to work. Please give yourself a round of applause.

Recently, 41 members of our faculty and staff attended a two day seminar at the Higgins Lake MacMullan Conference Center. Together, we explored the question: “What are the characteristics of a great college?”

These participants had the unique opportunity to exchange information and ideas, celebrate our successes, examine common problems, and seek out realistic, creative approaches to their solutions.

After spending time with these Delta College Colleagues, I can tell you one of the most important components of a **great college** are the **great people** who work in it.

Working on being great has even spread to our Board of Trustees. Two months ago, our Board held a special work session to investigate ways in which they could also go “From Good to Great”.

This full day in-service was spirited and our Trustees came away from this retreat with new ideas and a greater understanding of how they can benefit our College as individuals and as a Board.

- We are enjoying a near record enrollment (11,299 students). I want to thank our Faculty who took on additional students and opened up new sections; Student Service employees who handled all of the added enrollment, financial aid, counseling/advising, and registration; and all the rest of our staff who made this record enrollment possible.
- The Fast Start Program in our Pre-Chemical Process area has taken off with great success. 2 classes of students have graduated from the program.

80% of program graduates from the first class received job offers from Dow Chemical, Dow Corning, or Hemlock Semiconductor. 100% of the second class received job offers.

- LifeLong Learning classes today enrich and improve our non-traditional student's lives. One of our newer Lifelong Learning Programs is the "50+ Just Like Gold Program". Under the direction of Sue Montesi, this program provides continuing education, learning opportunities, re-careering, quality leisure time, and social interaction for Delta College's community residents 50 years old and better.

- Delta College's measure of success and room for growth is now easily documented within our newly designed Dashboard. The dashboard will provide us with the data we need to continue our quest for continuous quality improvement and foster innovation.

I would like to take a minute to show you some of the features of the dashboard.

- These are our main gages. They provide a quick and easy way for us to check on progress toward our goals.
- Let's look at market penetration. By clicking on the green question mark, you will see a brief description and legend. By placing your mouse over the gage, you will see data. By clicking on

the arrow, you will be able to access more detailed data.

- Here is a slide of the detailed data, which can be drilled down even further
- This is a view that allows us to drill down by county
- Let's look at another "gage" – Degrees Conferred
- This chart represents the drill down information on Associates Degrees Conferred
- This chart represents the drill down information on Certificates Conferred.

In his keynote address at this year's Continuous Quality Improvement Summer Institute, Mike Hardie, Director of Quality and Product Development for the Ford Motor Company said, (Quote)

“You can’t improve anything unless you know where you’re coming from. Innovation is the improvement to the standard.” (Unquote)

Still in its developmental stage, Delta College’s Dashboard will soon be available for all faculty and staff.

(PAUSE)

- The Virtual Lobby in our Counseling/Advising Center has improved service for our students. From checking in, to exiting the advising session, our students move smoothly and more efficiently through the counseling/advising process.

- Located in our Counseling /Advising area you should visit our new Transfer Center. Ferris State and Northwood University have full-time personnel and Davenport has half-time staff on site to talk with our students about their transfer options.
- One of our goals last academic year was to increase Dual Enrollment at Delta by 10%. I am pleased to inform you that, when compared to Fall 2007, Dual Enrollment grew by 36.4% in Fall of 2008, and we want to grow that number by another 15% by this same time next year.

- The Student and Educational Services Division has also been developing areas that impact Student Engagement, such as Applied Behavior Studies (ABS), My Connection, and other activities that focus on Student Retention.

In April, the Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Casey Cornelius as Associate Dean of Student Engagement. The Associate Dean's position will help shape and further develop these initiatives.

- In the spirit of true Shared Governance, this last year saw the inclusion of Support Staff into the Senate.

Thank you for making this possible.

- Equally good news was the awarding of over \$1.5 Million Dollars in Title III Grant Funding to Delta College over the next five years.

Trevor Kubatzke, our Vice President of SES is our Title III Project Manager.

- Delta has continued to develop Strong community Linkages with regional economic development agencies (Saginaw Future, Midland Tomorrow, and Bay Future) to assure companies interested in locating in our region that we can help them develop a strong and qualified workforce.
- As of last week, all classrooms and common areas on campus and at the Ricker Center have wireless Internet access.

- And, Q-TV was named “Michigan’s Public TV Station of the Year”...we are very proud.

These are only a few of what you, Delta College’s faculty and staff, have accomplished. The common thread running through every new accomplishment is the belief that we can always do better, and that Delta College is truly an institution whose future is dependent on innovation.

Folks we hold our future in our hands. We must not wait for money to rain down on us from Lansing or Washington. As nice as that may be, no amount of money would ever be enough without having a community of faculty and staff who believe that we are strong, our mission is solid, and

our commitment to student success can not be diminished by external events.

As Tom Kelley wrote in his book, “The Ten Faces of Innovation”:

A lack of resources and tools can prove to be the spark that helps you to seek out and make new connections.

When you find yourself lacking money or staff, being resourceful is sometimes the best way to reach innovation.

We can not know for sure how future fiscal year revenue streams will impact Delta College, however, we can make intelligent guesses based upon current environmental scanning of our region, State, and nation.

There is no doubt that the future will be filled with challenges and we will have problems.

That means we must face some difficult realities and answer some difficult questions:

Pamela Cox-Otto, CEO of Interact Communication, Inc. and a 20 year leader in America's Community Colleges, asks these questions:

- Can we retrain workers for the jobs that exist in our communities?
- Can we identify the skills that are going to be needed by industry and prepare students now, (PAUSE) when business and industry aren't even sure what comes next?

- The giant employers of the past are giving way to the small entrepreneurial employers of the present. Can we help small businesses step into the growing gap?

The short answer to each question is: “Yes, We Can!”

Ms. Cox-Otto also states that we cannot wait for the money to flow. “Yes, We Can!” is not about getting the state and federal government to make up for years of neglect. It’s about being the heroes we have always been in our hearts.

CAVE People, please stop whining about the condition in which our students arrive.

Yes, many are under-prepared or otherwise struggling.

But, on any given day, the quality of teaching at Delta College is a model for educational institutions of all sizes.

Our faculty know that they are not there just to teach, but also to inspire, support and nurture.

We do live in interesting times. Can anyone doubt it? We have always wished for the moment when we could show our worth, our quality, and we now have the opportunity.

We must not fail.

### **VIDEO: WELCOME THE RAIN**

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "It is today that we must create the world of the future".

We must create Delta's future together, as a team. Bill Bradley, retired NBA Basketball star once said:

“Respect your fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about one another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another achieve it.” I think this quote illustrates our culture at Delta College.

A couple of months ago, our Executive Council had the pleasure of hearing a presentation from our Division Chairs. Throughout the presentation, the Chairs talked about the candid way in which they work together.

They are a model of teamwork on this campus – and I have no doubt that they are leading our divisions toward a common goal – helping our students succeed.

The Division Chairs are just one example of the teamwork that all of you demonstrate every day. The collaborative efforts of our faculty, A/P and support staff, and all of our food service and facilities management employees are what will get us through the lean years.

I am going to leave you today on a high note, and a word of caution.

One of the rewarding parts of my job is to read the messages that our students send to me. These positive messages enforce the fact that our team of employees is striving to make “Delta College our communities’ first choice to learn, work, and grow!”

Listen to this wonderful letter from one of our student's who found an answer to one of his problems from one of our own...Athletic Director, Greg Mallek.

“I am sending this email thanking Delta College and most importantly Greg Mallek for assisting me in my first semester in college. I had so much fear entering college at 43 years old. Due to a program called My Connection I was able to do quite well in my first semester. I hope Mr. Mallek is personally thanked by the college for putting up with me in my first semester. This is a wonderful program, and I am amazed at how many students returning are not aware of it. I will always be thankful to Greg by encouraging me in the process. I even experienced the death of my Father during this semester and was still blessed to pass all my courses, with the encouragement of

instructors and Mr. Mallek. I would love, when I progress farther down my educational goals, to give back.

Thank you, to all the staff and for Greg Mallek for taking many personal hours to assist me.” Sincerely, Jerry

Teague. Thank you Greg!

We must be here for all of the Jerry Teagues in our community today and long into the future. As I pointed out in the beginning of my speech, the state and national environmental pick-chore is cloudy at best.

The hope of revenue increases for Michigan’s community colleges from two of our main funding sources, State Appropriation and Property Tax, appears impossible; the hope of level funding is equally questionable. The most probable scenario is one of considerable revenue decline.

How we meet this formidable challenge rests with each of us in this room.

Please leave the Lecture-Theatre this morning with a positive attitude, a commitment to innovation, and belief in our common mission, vision, and values. Together we will ensure a bright tomorrow.... We must “Welcome the Rain”.

Have a wonderful fall semester!

# Questions