

Welcome

In 2004, we convened our first all-campus meeting at the beginning of the fall semester in quite some time here at Pitt Community College.

Now as we enter the 2006-2007 academic year, my fourth as your president, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this morning and day of preparation for the important work just ahead.

I hope that your summer went well, that you were able to escape some of the sweltering weather we have had here in Pitt County, or at least retreated to a spot where it didn't really phase you. If not, everyone take a big breath and let out a noticeable sigh. Come on, let's do it in unison – one, two, three. My wife sometimes catches me delivering that sigh and discourages me from so visibly displaying my weariness. Now that I have embarrassed her, let me really do so by having her stand and thanking her for the support she has provided for your president over the summer and the past year.

Now that you have that sigh out of your system, I can let you know that we have a pretty full agenda for you today in this day of easing back to our duties. The good thing is that we do not have our first classes staring you in the face today or even tomorrow, thanks to last year's Calendar Committee, so you should have time to get ready for what appears to be a strong student enrollment this fall.

And speaking of students, you will notice on your agenda that we have two of our finest students speaking this morning and I will be describing several more in my remarks. This is extremely appropriate, as I declared this time last year that during 2006 we would create a more "student-centered" environment at PCC. It is why we are here, as our mission proudly declares, "To educate and empower students for success..."

What I hope you will take away from this morning's program is a little bit more of the "big picture" of the College. We get so immersed in our own areas of work, and that is important, but we have to look back and forward and project out to make sure we are moving in the right direction and together.

Before we begin, allow me to introduce a few honored guests. Members of our Board of Trustees – Mr. Paul Davenport, Mr. Randy Collier. Members of PCC Foundation Board – Mr. Kenneth Ross, Chair.

Introduce New Employees – Over the past year, we have added a number of new employees to the faculty and staff here. I ask that you stand and be recognized when I call your name and to remain standing until we go through the entire list.

Finally, I want to recognize and thank my “TEAM,” the people with whom I confer daily, the members of the President’s Leadership Team. These are the individuals who model the collaboration we all need to display, and without their strong support I would not be able to accomplish my duties as President – Everett (expanded position), Spell, Nobles, Miller, and Pamela Hilbert. Let me say just a few words about Dr. Pamela Hilbert, who began here in June after 6.5 years as Vice President for Instruction and Student Support at Carteret CC. It is always a little awkward to speak with someone’s supervisor about their interest in a position elsewhere, but Dr. Joe Barwick, President at

Carteret, had very positive things to say about what she had accomplished there. I have only confirmed that impression in the past two months – she is a thoughtful, experienced, and very creative leader who is truly dedicated to students and our employees. I am pleased to present her to you as our “New” VP for Academic Affairs.

State of the College

Three years ago when I arrived at Pitt Community College, I did not really know how good the College was – the faculty and staff, the students, the traditions. I was impressed with those of you whom I met then, but the excellence of PCC has been confirmed countless times in conversations with alumni, community leaders, educational leaders across the state. Your active involvement in state associations, with the NC Community College System, in the Southern Association, our accrediting body, and in your own discipline’s review processes and representatives. A few weeks ago I met with a consultant from the Board of Nursing, and we were roundly praised for our graduates and the quality of our training.

PACE

You may remember that one of the first campus activities I conducted was a debriefing of the PACE campus climate study which had been conducted before my arrival. That was a great learning experience for me, as I heard a lot of ideas on how the College could be improved from those who know best what we are doing – yourselves!

This spring with the leadership of Brian Miller we repeated the PACE survey with employees, and I urge you to look over the results on our website. I am pleased to announce that we are ranked as a “consultative” environment by those who responded – better than the lower developmental levels of “coercive” and “competitive,” but not yet at the level of “collaborative” in a majority of areas. Perhaps the most disappointing index is the lack of a spirit of trust or confidence in one another among all members of the college community. This “spirit of cooperation” is something which was also brought out in the Noel-Levitz student survey last year and is clearly something we need to work on to increase teamwork and coherence in our steadily growing and changing campus.

Leadership

At last year's convocation, I borrowed from Terry O'Banion's Learning College work the need for a "student-centered environment," and I will come back to this point in just a moment when we go through the report card on this past year's strategic goals. What I want to stress here is the concept of **shared leadership** which has been identified as so important by many writers, including Pamela Eddy in an article in Community College Review this summer. Shared leadership involves "embracing organizational learning so leadership will be a responsibility shared by all members of a community based on understanding, competence, and creativity." This leads to the teamwork and collaborative interaction which we want to strive to attain.

This June, we hosted the third PCC Leadership Institute and it was a great success thanks to the shared leadership of the planning committee. I would like Brian Miller, Vic James, Tammy Atchison, Cindy Jernigan, Bill Hofler, and Greg Robison to stand and publicly recognize them for their work. I was very impressed with this summer's group of participants and I am looking forward to Leadership Institute 2007, which will also be in Raleigh on June 6-8. Would the 2006 class please stand – if you have not

participated in the past, you should speak with this group about their experience. Now remain standing, and let's have the participants in Leadership Institute 2004 and 2005 also stand. This is definitely a demonstration of our Institute's motto – "leadership is defined by contribution, not position."

2005-2006 Strategic Goals

1. Assessment & Accountability – The Learning Centered College –

We have had broad involvement by staff and faculty in a variety of specific ways to study what we are accomplishing in student learning, student service, interacting with each other, and many other areas. It is not just a matter of how well an individual or a department has done, but what specific improvements have occurred and how we can learn from our reflections on our experiences. This is the oft-heard "closing the loop" phase which Dr. Larry Dendy has described. In the folder of materials you received, please find the "Strategic Goals Progress" sheet and you will see the studies and efforts partially listed.

There has been good progress by individual faculty and some academic divisions on the assessment of student learning, and Dr. Betty Adams from the NC Community College System will share with you this morning why this effort is important. With the number of new positions and new people in place, not to mention the part-time faculty, it is essential that we record our work with assessment and the lessons we have learned so that increased value can be directed to students.

The Performance Measure Task Force headed by Dr. Brian Miller made many positive recommendations last year, but the impact of these changes will take time. For now, I must inform you that Pitt has once more failed to attain “Superior” ranking because of the comparative grade point average of our transfers and the pass rates on one department’s certification exams. Because of this, we will not earn part of the \$7 million targeted for performance incentives in this year’s budget. That is disappointing, but we will redouble our efforts to achieve this standard.

In the coming year, we will monitor our own standards for quality indicators in three important areas: Student retention; employee professional development, and employee searches. Reports to the Board of Trustees will be made mid-year on our progress.

2. College Environment & the Master Plan – One of my more discouraging days in North Carolina was the meeting with Senator Clark Jenkins to learn that the NC Senate was not going to vote on our local sales tax proposal. My article in The Reflector, which is reproduced on Campus Cruiser, captures this disappointment. Nevertheless, there are many positive developments:

- Completion of the Robert Humber Bldg. renovation
- Creation of the Greenville Center for Continuing Education, BLET, and other programs
- Student Center design work
- Planning for the Fulford Bldg. addition

- Completion of the first phase of the Public Safety Training Center, the Firing Range near North Pitt HS
- Thanks to the PCC Foundation, development of the Minges-Overton baseball field
- Planning for improved signage on campus

We will continue efforts in the coming year to identify our significant facility needs and to solicit sources of support to help meet them.

More on this in this year's strategic goals.

3. **Outreach to the Community** – Following through on the “Communications” goal of the previous two years, we have greatly increased and enhanced our written communications to the public. This is where I would really like to thank VP Susan Nobles, Jane Power, Rob Goldberg, and Institutional Advancement staff for an outstanding Annual Report, the new PCC Post, Career Focus, and the regular press releases, TV shows, and articles which get the word out on Pitt Community College. Their leadership with events like the Scholarship Auction, Holiday and Boat Shows, and many other fundraising efforts has greatly benefited our students, employees and programs.

New efforts such as the Pitt Pass program with Greenville Utilities and city of Greenville employees, our Weekend College, and high school outreach with concurrent enrollment students provide tangible services off campus, something we will be increasing in the coming year.

Campus and public service are an important part of Outreach to the Community, and I know that many of our employees are engaged regularly in a variety of civic, religious, or service organizations which improve the quality of life for many. Certainly one of the major ways we serve our students (and ourselves) is through the PCC Foundation, which in the last year provided over \$100,000 for student scholarships and mini-grants for faculty, supported a multitude of campus events such as Academic Excellence, Student Ambassadors, increased endowed scholarships for students and classroom equipment, and started a major campaign to provide lights and a restroom/concessions facility for the Baseball program.

Vice President Nobles wanted me to inform you that The PCC Foundation's Annual Faculty and Staff Fund Drive will be held August 21-

Sept. 11. We are seeking 100% participation. This event demonstrates to our Foundation Board and to the community leaders that PCC employees support the college. The Foundation will be seeking significant support from the community this year for several capital construction projects (Baseball building, Fulford Building, and Student Services Building) as well as scholarship programs. It is always important to be able to tell community leaders that the college's employees financially support the foundation's efforts.

2006-2007 Strategic Goals

In developing College goals for 2005-2006, I have worked with the Board of Trustees and the President's Leadership Team to follow up on our accomplishments this past year and to target efforts on our most salient needs.

1. **Student Enrollment and Completion** – The challenge of a community college is providing access and quality in student learning, which is why it is so important that the assessment effort is a regular and ongoing process at PCC. We will continue to provide help for

students through programs like Visions, Horizons, the TRIO Student Support Services, and Tutoring Services. But President Martin Lancaster has signaled to all NC community colleges the growing interest of the federal government in graduations and completions. We know that our students' lives are complex and challenging, but our college will increasingly be measured on its success in bringing students to achievement of their educational goals.

We also know that in the NC system, our budget allocation is based on our enrollment. Let me interrupt here to report to you on some of the specific information Susan Everett, Ricky Brown, and I received last Friday from System Office:

- We will receive almost \$1.2 million in equipment, highest level ever, thanks, in part, to our strong enrollments in the Construction & Industrial Technology Division
- Over \$800,000 in Enrollment Increase funding, with a hope that we will receive more later this fall if our increase exceeds 5%
- \$25K for the Greenville Center, our first "extra" allocation for an off campus Center

- \$27K for Nursing, the first installment of hopefully a much greater allocation for Health Sciences Division in the 2007-2009 Biennium
- A chance for as much as \$1 million in capital funding (which must be matched by local funds)
- **Salary increases** not determined as of yet, but 6% (+2% bonus) for professional staff and faculty and 5.5% for staff has been determined by the General Assembly – I will be getting back to you after reviewing the detailed information which Susan Everett, Ricky Brown, and I received at System Office and consulting with the Board of Trustees later this month. One thing I want to be sure to say – please don't contact your elected representatives and complain about why you didn't receive a salary increase in August. We are working as quickly as possible and any increases received in the September paycheck will be retroactive to July.

Retention of current students to completion of degrees and certificates is the best way to increase our overall enrollment. Therefore, we will

develop even more approaches to up our numbers, and most of those will require that **teamwork** which I mentioned earlier.

2. **Extending Learning to the Community** is a logical progression of what we have been accomplishing with Pitt Pass, the Biotechnology and Bioprocessing Center at the TEC Center across the Tar River, and the Greenville Center. We will be expanding at all these sites and programs in the coming year, plus we have also been asked to coordinate educational programs at the new Bernstein Center beyond the airport which will provide medical and dental services.

I will be convening a Task Force to plan and implement a review of additional off-campus credit and noncredit programs, partly because it helps us realize our mission more fully and partly because we are simply out of facilities on the main campus. Considering Farmville, Ayden, downtown Greenville, and other locations will be part of their charge, as will determining what support services will be needed to deliver programs.

We also must remember what an important role technology, including distance learning, has played in our growth. We were one of the early leaders, and our students benefit greatly the increased access and truly significant and distinct learning experiences we are providing.

Thanks to the faculty and staff who have laid the foundation for this important and sometimes overlooked part of our operations.

- 3. PCC Long Range Plan, 2007-2011** – Just before the SACS review in 2003, the College developed a set of long range goals for 2003-2007, and now it is time to renew that process, consider challenges and opportunities in the next four years, and provide the “big picture” frame for our annual Strategic Goals. This will require review of our many institutional studies over the past year, gathering input from community members, and formulating a plan which will help realize these goals in the foreseeable future. They must be bold but realistic and certainly in tune with our growing county and region.

Part of the groundwork for this effort has been accomplished. We will assume that the college mission is still solid after four short years, and a committee led by Brian Miller and including Susan Nobles, Donnie Lee,

Darlene Smith-Worthington, Altrice Gales, and Nicole Nicholas has proposed a Vision statement for the college. This vision, which still must be endorsed by our Board of Trustees, will provide added direction for our Long Range Plan.

Vision Statement

Pitt Community College will be:

- *A Catalyst* for transforming the individual and community.
- *A Recognized Leader* for accessible, attractive and educationally enriching programs and services.
- *A Creative Partner* for developing educational and economic opportunities.
- *A Competent Steward* of public trust and confidence.

Students

I wanted to conclude my remarks by reminding us why we are here, the students whom we serve on a daily basis. The following are not unusual profiles at all. We all know several students who have even greater challenges, and many more who are more fortunate. But it is important to

remember why there is a community college in Pitt County and why all of you have extremely important jobs to do. In the next few weeks, you probably won't be thanked appropriately, but the fact that you are facilitating these successes through "educating and empowering," as our mission states, is rewarding by itself. I thank you for all that you are doing.

At 16, Liz (not her real name) was always tired. She frequently slept in her high school classes. She was living alone in an old trailer beside her aunt. Her mom had many personal problems and she was not mentally, physically, or financially able to assist her. Liz worked 36 hours per week at Food Lion. She didn't have time for sports, dates, or prom. She had bills to pay and work to do. Liz was recommended by her high school counselor to PCC's VISIONS Program. During her junior and senior years in high school, she began receiving special tutoring and mentoring by Debby Gray, the VISIONS coordinator. She graduated from North Pitt High School in 2005. She will be a second year student at PCC this fall and she is on track for graduating from PCC in May.

J. is a 38 year old student attending PCC through Weekend College. He graduated from North Pitt High School in 1986 and has worked full time at Greenville Utilities for the last 11 years. J. became part of PCC during the Pitt Pass campaign in the spring of this year and was able to take advantage of the “Delayed Start” classes. He is a student in the Associate in Arts degree program and has already registered for two more weekend classes for the fall. J. currently maintains a 3.3 GPA and is said by his instructors to be the perfect example of a weekend college student. J. said, “Pitt Community College is great. Weekend College has given me the opportunity to go to school around my work schedule and still have time for my family.”

To me, these two short stories bring our mission to life. I hope the student's you'll work with this year gives our mission life to you as well.

It would not be Convocation without some photos from “That was the Year that Was.” Thanks to Deborah Clark, Rob Goldberg, Gretchen Baugh, and others for this assortment of memories from 2005-2006. Those of you brand

new employees, if you want to reconsider joining this group, you'll have to check with your supervisor.