

From the desk of Neeta Sane

2009 is shaping up to be a year of new challenges and new responsibilities for our community, HCC and myself. First, let me congratulate Trustee Abel Davila on his election as Chair of the HCC Board of Trustees. The board re-elected Trustee Diane Olmos Guzmán as Secretary and Trustee Christopher Oliver as Deputy Secretary. The Trustees have bestowed upon me the honor and responsibilities of Vice Chairman. I am looking forward to working for improved student success and making HCC an even more significant community asset.

Last fall I was appointed to the Diversity Committee for the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) and elected to serve as Vice President and Chair-elect for the Asian Pacific Islanders

and Native American Trustees Association (APINATA). APINATA operates in connection with Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). At HCC, I look forward to spearheading diversity initiatives as the Chair of Diversity Committee of HCC Trustees. As the Chair of Athletics Committee of HCC Trustees, I am glad to inform you that in January 2009, we launched

By working with local businesses and community leaders, HCC trustees ensure that the education that is vital to the Greater Houston area's economic success is accessible and affordable.

a system-wide intramural athletics program for HCC students. Also, I enjoyed the teamwork as I served as the Chair of the 2008 Annexation Committee of HCC Trustees. With a collaborative effort, we annexed Alief into HCC System in the November 2008 general election with over 80 percent of the votes.

Community colleges are a vital component of our higher education system, serving 12 million people each year, almost half the undergraduate students in the U.S. They are known across the nation for their contribution to the 21st century workforce, for the practical skills they build and for the jobs they help create by addressing current and future needs. By 2010, more than 80 percent of all new jobs will require training and education at the postsecondary level.

With tuitions at public universities skyrocketing and outpacing the family income, community colleges have become excellent resources for quality education at a fair price. Many people across the country are turning to their community colleges. In the Houston area, res-

idents are turning to HCC. It is HCC's mission to train workers who will recreate the vibrant economy that America so desperately needs and who are key to our community's future. By working with local businesses and community leaders, HCC trustees ensure that the education that is vital to the Greater Houston area's economic success is accessible and affordable.

Houston Community College, with its 60,000 student population, is exceedingly meeting the needs of a diverse population and the growing educational demands of the 21st Century.





Southwest Alief Academic Center



Southwest West Loop Academic Center



Southwest Stafford Learning Hub



Southwest Missouri City Academic Center

State-of-the-Art Facilities for a State-of-the-Art Education

In 2002 Houston Community College began a capital improvement program for the District. The goal was to enhance student success through state-of-the-art learning environments. As a part of the program, HCC built two new facilities and renovated two buildings in 2008 for Southwest College, the largest of HCC's six colleges.

The Stafford Campus serves nearly twice the enrollment of other HCC campuses largely due to the rapid growth of southwest Houston over the last 20 years. The new Learning Hub for the Stafford Campus is a spectacular 120,000 square-foot facility. Completed in December 2008, it provides 30,000 square feet of new classroom and lab space and accommodates 3,290 additional students.

"The campus means that we have brought a dimension of education to Stafford and the entire community that was totally unavailable 20 years ago," says Stafford Mayor Leonard Scarcella. **"The enhancement of the campus has elevated the learning experience and educational opportunities for students, providing so many more amenities Stafford students had not had before."**

Students began attending classes at HCC's new Missouri City Campus last fall. Situated on a 50-acre site at Sienna Plantation, this campus offers undergraduate and continuing education courses to residents of Fort Bend County. HCC built the campus because of the growth in the area and to provide community services, including a new public library. The 45,000 square-foot Academic Center, completed in July 2008, has 22 new classrooms and labs for 2,162 students.

"As businesses in our city expand and they seek qualified and educated employees and as new residents move to Missouri City, the advantage of having quality undergraduate and continuing education opportunities close to home is crucial for us," says Missouri City Mayor Allen Owen. **"It builds on the sense of community that we are so proud of in our city, and the addition of the Fort Bend County library soon will offer the complete package of learning."**

The Alief Campus opened for classes in January 2008. The former Chevron building, now the Academic Center, was transformed into an ideal collegiate environment complete with student interaction areas and 23 classrooms and laboratories with state-of-the-art technology. Completed in September 2008, renovations to the West Loop Center added 70,000 square feet and created space for 3,666 additional students, 39 new classrooms, a food court, faculty offices and student areas. HCC and Southwest College continue to enhance the learning experience for a growing community.

So Many Programs, So Many Choices



Dr. David Housel talks to students Lizbeth Romero and Mariana Praxediz at the College and Career Conference held at the West Loop Center February 28.

Many young people, especially those coming right out of high school, really do not yet know what they want to do, what they can do or what they want to learn. To help solve their dilemma, HCC offers a series of College and Career Conferences to educate freshmen about the variety of programs offered by the college. HCC Southwest College will hold three con-

ferences this spring, the West Loop Center hosted a conference February 28 and will hold another Saturday, March 28 and the Alief Campus will host one Friday, April 17.

Around 350 students attended the February 28 conference at West Loop. The students learned about computer science, digital communications, teacher education, property management, music, criminal justice, banking and business technology. The conference also informed the students about scholarship opportunities and job placement counseling.

David Housel, along with Arnold Goldberg, Betty Fortune and Weldon Elbert,

organized the first College and Career Conference four years ago as part of Southwest's Achieve the Dream program. The idea for the conferences developed because the educators felt that students needed more information about the different programs available at HCC. The students enrolled in GUST 1270, Guided Studies College and Career Planning, are required to

attend. Students get an opportunity to meet the instructors, one-on-one, and to explore their career choices a little more closely.

Dr. Housel has been a professor at HCC for seventeen years, and has taught Developmental Studies at HCC Southwest College for the last fifteen. He understands how important it is for students to know all the options available to them.

"After each conference I talk with my students about their experience," says Dr. Housel. "Most say they would not have gone had it not been mandatory, but are glad they did and feel they learned a lot. Some students thought they knew what they wanted to do, but the conference opened up many more possibilities to them."

Whether students attend HCC to prepare for transfer to a four-year university or to train for specific jobs, if they are interested in what they are studying, their success is far more likely. With the guidance provided at the conferences, students at HCC Southwest are given the tools they need to make the decisions that are right for them and their future.

Students Sign On for STEM Support

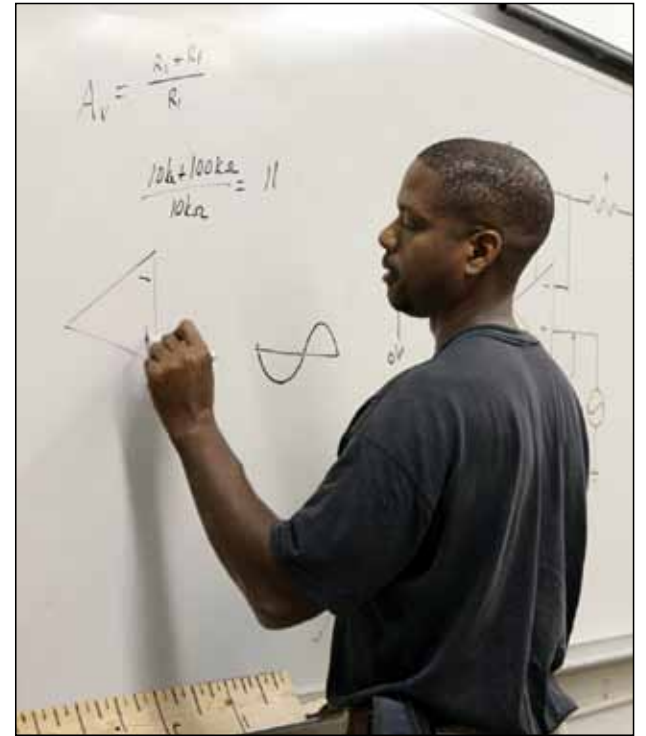
Last fall Houston Community College Chancellor Mary S. Spangler took a unique approach to developing programs to improve access and success for HCC's students. In response, HCC's faculty and staff submitted a number of innovative proposals in a rigorous competition. Proposals for Achieving the Dream projects were also solicited. The principal purpose of Achieving the Dream is to help students, primarily students of color and low income, achieve greater academic success.

A proposal submitted to the Achieving the Dream program by Dr. Betty Fortune, Interim Dean of Instruction at HCC Southwest College, was awarded for its strategy to support students taking high-risk courses. Dr. Fortune's project, Supplemental Instruction, is designed to have peer tutors assist students. Several courses at HCC Southwest College, such as biology, chemistry, English, GUST, history and math, are considered high-risk for students. However, the math courses tend to lose students at a much higher rate than others. Dr. Fortune wants to study the SI model to see if it will have a positive effect on student success in the Math 0312, Intermediate Algebra, courses.

This strategy is intended to support students in-

involved in the STEM curriculum, giving them the confidence and support needed to be successful in these courses. In today's global economy, growth in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) sectors continues at an accelerated rate. The greater Houston area has become a focal point for energy, advanced technology, engineering and medical economic development. There are currently not enough people qualified to work in areas that require STEM training. Students are not majoring in these fields of study at the rate needed to keep up with society's demand. A strong STEM program encourages students to investigate new possibilities within these areas.

Two sections of Math 0312 have been chosen for the study. The peer tutor attends each class session and meets with students outside of class. At the end of the semester the program will be evaluated to see if there is a difference in grades for students in the study compared to students taking the same class without this intervention. The program is designed to promote studying in a collaborative format and will benefit students by providing extra support in these high risk courses.



Peer support aids student success in HCC Southwest College math classes.

Ready When You Are: Online Core Courses That You Need!

For many students, the world doesn't revolve around traditional academic semesters. Sometimes they realize they need a course after the semester has begun. Sometimes full-time workers realize there is a course they need for that promotion. Sometimes high school students reconsider their plans to take a year off before continuing their education. Normally, these students would have to delay their education and wait months, but Houston Community College is doing something about that with a program called Ready When You Are (RWUR).

RWUR (rwur.hccs.edu) is a unique, eight-week in duration, flex-entry set of core curriculum online classes

offered at the beginning of each month. All online courses are guaranteed to transfer to every accredited college and university in Texas. RWUR classes are intended for highly-motivated, self-disciplined students with good computer proficiency and require college-level reading requirements. The courses are completely online, including all assignments, tests and final exams. They are taught by qualified and experienced HCC Distance Education instructors.

"HCC is committed to serving its students," says Dr. Stephen Levey, Executive Director, Instructional Resources & Technology. "If a student's world cannot accommodate a traditional academic timetable, HCC is

taking steps to accommodate them."

HCC is offering core courses in History, Government, English, Economics and Mathematics. Over 800 students have registered for 1110 RWUR courses so far this spring.

All HCC admission, registration, academic advising and financial aid guidelines and requirements apply to these classes. You can contact distance education counselor at decounseling@hccs.edu or call 713-718-5275 (choose option #4), and mention you are inquiring about Ready When You Are (RWUR) courses.

upcoming events

April

March of Dimes
Walk for Babies
UofH Robertson Stadium
9:00 a.m.
Sunday, April 26, 2009

May

Cinco de Mayo Parade
Downtown Houston
10:00 a.m.
Saturday, May 2, 2009

May

Black Expo
George R. Brown Convention Center
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
May 15-17, 2009

May

APAHA Gala
Marriott Westchase Hotel
6:00 p.m.
Friday, May 8, 2009

Register NOW!
Spring
Mini Term
Classes begin
May 18

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Trustee Sane's district go to
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