

from the desk of Neeta Sane



There is no better time for Houston Community College to be essential in the life of our community than now. The current economic environment has compelled many in the Houston area to reevaluate their knowledge and skills, and in doing so, they know they

need to get the education necessary to compete for the many new and different jobs our area offers. Many residents of the greater Houston area are turning to HCC for the education and training they seek. This past school year, HCC passed an enrollment milestone when our unduplicated enrollment reached over 60,000 per semester, the largest in our history.

To meet the needs of HCC's rapidly growing student body, Houston Community College dedicated the new Missouri City Campus with a ribbon cutting ceremony in May. The 45,000-square-foot Academic Center is located at 5855 Sienna Springs Way and Sienna Parkway in Missouri City. The Missouri City Campus Academic Center is the cornerstone of a 50-acre master-planned site. This new, state-of-the-art educational facility accommodates 2,162 students in 22 classrooms/laboratories, 13 lecture rooms, 7 multi-purpose rooms and a science laboratory. The center will also house student services and faculty offices.

Also open for classes, but not yet dedicated, is the Stafford Campus Learning Hub. This spectacular 120,000 square-foot facility, completed in December 2008, provides 30,000 square feet of new classroom and lab space, a spectacular library and additional parking. The facility has a capacity for 3,290 additional students and is a needed addition to HCC's largest campus.

HCC observed another milestone as over 3,000 students graduated from the college in May and over 1,300 of those came to the commencement ceremony and walked across the stage to receive their Associate's degree, certificate or GED. Speakers throughout the ceremony commended the graduates in front of a 5,000-plus crowd at Minute Maid Park. They recognized that graduation for each student would not have been possible but for their determination, hard work and ambition, and that HCC acknowledged each and every graduate with a great deal of pride.

And a new tradition began with the 2009 Graduation ceremony – HCC's new alma mater made its debut. The song, "Always Grateful," was written and arranged by HCC's Dr. Aubrey Tucker for this HCC graduation class of 2009 and for the graduation classes to come.

The college congratulates the students who have the drive and ambition to follow through to graduation. HCC is making every effort to connect with those who have been traditionally underserved and unfamiliar with an education culture. Student success and that of their families and community depends upon their determination to follow through with their goals. HCC is ready to help each and every student realize those goals.




New Stafford Learning Hub



Southwest College graduates in the opening procession at the May 2 Commencement Ceremony



Dr. Fena Garza, President, HCC Southwest; Neeta Sane, Trustee, District VII; Mary S. Spangler, HCC Chancellor, and local dignitaries cut the ribbon to the new Missouri City Campus.

HCC Receives Gates Foundation Grant

Houston Community College has been awarded a grant by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education and MDC, Inc. as part of a national initiative to expand groundbreaking programs to boost the college completion rates of low-income and minority students.

HCC is one of only four education institutions in Texas to be awarded with a grant as part of a larger

\$16.5 million effort. HCC will receive \$743,000 over three years to expand our programs to Houston students who need assistance.

In today's economy, access to post-secondary education and training is essential for individual career success. Estimates indicate that 80 percent of today's new jobs require education or training beyond high school and that those jobs represent the fastest-growing and

highest-paying segments of the new economy. HCC provides such opportunities to more than 100,000 area students each year.

The grant will allow HCC to provide greater services and more helpful programs for new students in terms of tutoring, career exploration, peer support and other services. The program is designed to ensure students not only get off to a successful start in college, but that they also receive the assistance they need to persist and succeed.

The need to boost academic skills in first-year students is one of the most significant problems confronting higher education. HCC is honored to play a role in identifying innovative programs to efficiently boost basic skills, particularly among at-risk students, to help them earn the college degrees that will prepare them to succeed in the global economy.

HCC Geared to Go Green

Houston Community College is poised to promote climate neutrality by instituting an initial three-fold program that is geared towards energy conservation and reconstituting waste. Concern about the impact of global warming through the emissions of greenhouse gases through personal, commercial and industrial use of fossil fuels is growing. It is imperative for America's institutions of higher education to lead the crucial race to find global warming solutions and to be on the frontline of efforts necessary to neutralize the effects.

In recognition of its responsibility towards this effort, HCC is now a signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). In signing the commitment document, HCC accepts the challenge of pursuing climate neutrality, in part, by reducing its own carbon emissions footprint. The college has established three steps towards meeting the goals of the ACUPCC. The first of these requires HCC to become more energy efficient and to develop sustainable green projects. Secondly, HCC will in-

troduce green job programs for students. Lastly, the college will leverage existing and new partnerships with external entities that have a committed interest in reducing our impact on the environment.

To determine ways in which HCC can use energy efficiently, the college conducted an energy audit. The audit identified several savings opportunities that included better utilization of lighting and temperature control systems. Recycling at HCC is an additional green opportunity that the college expects to institute in Fall 2009. Implementing a recycling program district-wide has been a challenge for an institution that covers 623 square miles with 38 separate physical facilities. The challenge is willingly accepted by the HCC faculty and staff who are excited about protecting the college's resources and streamlining its operations.

Achieving climate neutrality is critically important to the environment and to HCC as the college actively pursues a more sustainable future for its students, its immediate community and the community at-large.



Southwest College students attend the College and Career Conference as part of HCC's Achieving the Dream program.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Houston Community College Report to the Community

HCC Nurtures Multiculturalism



Neeta Sane, HCC Board of Trustees Vice Chairman, Trustee District VII, addresses the audience at the Diversity Summit in Sugar Land in May.

The diversity of the greater Houston area has enriched the region with global interests, propelled its status as a center for the world market and created an opportunity for Houston Community College students and graduates to work in a vibrant economic environment.

HCC recognizes the advantage diversity offers and leverages those advantages into greater opportunities for its students. HCC reaches out to the different cultural communities of the greater Houston area to attract students, to gain support for their efforts in attaining their educational goals and to align potential employers with a highly qualified workforce that is able to compete in today's global market.

Among the multicultural events HCC participated in this year was the Texas Diversity Council Conference held in Houston in April. To highlight the impact of diversity in business, the

Texas American Asian Leadership Summit was part of the conference. Summit sessions provided opportunities to develop career and leadership skills.

In May, Trustee Neeta Sane spoke at the 2009 Diversity Summit in Sugar Land. Trustee Sane explained how the diversity of her district enriched the living and educational experiences of its residents. She also expressed how a diverse community benefits HCC students by providing a global environment in which to work and study.

HCC also continued its effort to bring awareness of the lack of minority males entering higher education. HCC held the first in a series of events aimed towards changing a dismal national trend. In May, more than 300 minority male students from the greater Houston area gathered at the HCC West Loop Center for the Minority Male Initiative Conference to learn how important it is for them to take control of their future.

HCC is committed to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance and respect in a multicultural society. The diversity of the greater Houston area and that of HCC provides an unending resource for educational opportunities, employment opportunities and earning potential that benefits each student, their family and their community.

A Great Job is Only an Education Away

Houston Community College kicked off a dynamic education awareness campaign this summer with HCC Partners for Jobs. The information juggernaut brings together leading Houston-area employers and organizations in a grassroots effort to help Houstonians get the training, education and job opportunities they need.

With greater dependence on post-secondary education and workforce training, especially in a challenging economic environment, there is an increased need for HCC's career training programs. About 80 percent of today's new jobs require education or training beyond high school, and those jobs represent the fastest-growing and highest-paying segments of the new economy. HCC provides training opportunities for these jobs to more than 100,000 area students each year. However, many more individuals in our region could

and should be accessing HCC's career training programs.

In the next few months HCC and its partners will heighten awareness to workforce training that can lead to job opportunities. The campaign watchword is "A Great Job is Only an Education Away."

HCC's partners who are working with the college to develop this outstanding campaign are MITTON Media, Comcast Cable, the City of Houston, the Greater Houston Partnership, the Houston Chronicle, HoustonJOBS.com, HR Houston, Jobs Ministry Southwest, Workforce Solutions and job search expert, Rick Gillis.

Information about the program can be found online at:

HCCPartnersForJobs.org.



Houston-area employers and organizations join HCC in the HCC Partners for Jobs campaign to let the public know that A Great Job is Only an Education Away.

upcoming events

July

Stafford 4th of July Parade
Friday, July 3, 2009
7:00 p.m.

August

Alief Community Health & Civic
Resource Fair
Saturday, August 15, 2009
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Alief Hastings Ninth Grade Center
6750 Cook Rd.

September

HCC Southwest
Stafford Learning Hub
Ribbon Cutting
Tuesday, September 1, 2009
11:30 a.m.

September

Alief International Parade
Saturday, September 26, 2009
9:00 a.m.
Bellaire
(between Wilcrest and Cook Rd.)