Dear Colleagues:

**Completion Agenda: Building a Blueprint for Change at SCC**

One of the highlights of my week was the workshop I hosted last Friday composed of both my administrator colleagues and members of the recent Solano Leadership Academy. The advantage of having the members of the Leadership Academy in attendance is that they provided for an inclusion of staff and faculty into the conversation.

At this three-hour session, approximately 40 of us delved deeply into the concept of what is known as the Completion Agenda, a national movement that reaffirms the need to assist our students to complete their education because “a highly educated population is essential for economic growth and a strong democracy.” Though an ongoing dialogue on the topic has been active for several years, I thought that the time was finally right to formally bring Solano Community College into the nationwide exchange of ideas. Thanks to the support of Trustee Monica Brown, who recommended Claire Borge and Audrey Jacques of Fairfield Unified School District. Ms. Borge and Ms. Jacques gave an excellent presentation on the Common Core Curriculum; thus, allowing our leaderships a glimpse of the academic preparation of the students who will come to our College in the years ahead.

Workshop participants were asked to read *Empowering Community Colleges To Build the Nation’s Future*, a handbook published by American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). During the workshop, we systematically reviewed the seven recommendations of the report: (1) Increase completion rates by 50% by 2020; (2) Dramatically improve college readiness; (3) Close the American skills gap; (4) Refocus the community college mission and redefine institutional roles; (5) Invest in collaborative support structures; (6) Target public and private investments strategically, and (7) Implement policies and practices that promote rigor and accountability.

Our discussion highlighted where SCC has work to do and where the College is excelling. I have asked the various participants to review the information with their constituents and then to submit a report of recommended action items for SCC. Finally, I will then compile a comprehensive report for the Governing Board based on the various College-wide recommendations.

In summation, the Completion Agenda illustrates a community college road map while adding nothing brand new to our goals; nevertheless, our work should allow us to better focus on and be more accountable with what we are already doing.
A Phone Call That May Transform Lives
Three years ago, Dr. Kenya Williams, Principal, Vaca Valley Adult School, California State Prison (Solano), called and met with me to invite Solano Community College to provide education for those incarnated in Vacaville. Due to various roadblocks, we were unable to take advantage of the opportunity. Though not a panacea, I believe; however, that providing college courses to the prison populations could be very beneficial in several ways:

- We are able to change some lives, and if we need a living reminder of what we can do, let’s recall Earl Taylor’s remarks.
- We have a responsibility to educate inmates who may end up being released in our community.
- Because of the prison’s proximity to SCC, there is significant potential for our faculty and these students to interact. Currently, there are already out-of-the-area community colleges in the state (see below) teaching by correspondence at the Prison.
- There is the potential for us to earn a significant amount of FTES as well.

The message from the Prison was that if we could not make the project happen soon, they were going to work with other community colleges that have approached the officials to have such a program. So, on Tuesday, August 26, several of us visited the Prison to meet with officials and inspected the space that is available for instruction. Three community colleges: Lassen, Palo Verde, and Coast Community College are already teaching there. Nevertheless, the demand is still high for SCC to get involved. We are targeting potentially 200 students, which would make a big difference in our enrollment for our spring 2015 semester. A presentation will be made to the Governing Board next week about the program. I look forward to discussing this opportunity with interested faculty.

SCC Graduate is Recipient of Five State Awards
Professor Karen Cook has brought to our attention that SCC student, Justin Duhow, received five awards in the 2014 California State Fair Industrial & Technology Education Competition. His “V-Tail Quadcopter,” a quad-rotor remote controlled aircraft design received the Best of Show Award, First Place in his Division Award, the State Fair "Outstanding Project" Award, the "E. Bragg Donor Award,” and the "Go Engineer 3D Modeling SolidWorks Donor Award.” Mr. Duhow designed his aircraft (and built a prototype for the competition) at SCC using SolidWorks 3D solid modeling software. Justin will be attending U.C. Davis this fall, majoring in Mechanical Engineering, after graduating from SCC last May.

Emmy Award Winner 2014 (66th Emmy Awards – August 25)
Ms. Christine Ducoing, Chemistry Professor, alerted the College yesterday that “My nephew, Cary Joji Fukunaga, won Outstanding Director for a drama series, True Detective, last night.” Congratulations to Mr. Fukunaga and to his proud Auntie. Professor Ducoing, perhaps you can persuade this outstanding director to speak at our College.

Vaca Select Committee
The Vacaville Select Committee met last week and received a very good presentation from the College on the Educational Master Plan and the Facilities Master Plan. I/VP Diane White and
Executive Bonds Manager Leigh Sata informed the Committee of past and present Measure Q plans. From now on, Mr. Sata and I will be going to different elected bodies to share both what Measure G has accomplished and what Measure Q intends to do. We are targeting the City Councils, the Boards of Education, and the County Supervisors.

**Dr. Donald G. Wallace of Palo Verde College Conference Call**
I received a letter from the Superintendent of Palo Verde College asking for my permission to allow Palo Verde to come to Solano County to offer multiple Fire courses of our choice. Our conversation was cordial and mutually supportive. Palo Verde presents a comprehensive Fire Training program, and we intend to have a comprehensive non-credit Fire program. We discussed getting our leaders together to discuss the proposal. We believe that there are some activities Palo Verde will be able to help us achieve. A Fire program team and I will be seeking potential ways in which a partnership can enhance SCC’s existing program.

**Conference Call with Solano County Office of Education (SCOE)**
I/VP Diane White, Outreach & Public Relations Manager Shemila Johnson, and I met with several administrators from SCOE to discuss the potential for the College to offer classes at the Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF). There are several options at the JDF for minors who are incarcerated. Some of these students are high academic achievers, but lack the option to attend a postsecondary institution. The officials at SCOE would like the College to find a way to support access for the young people into higher education. We intend to meet a second time to see what we can do, especially if we can explore a combination of technology and face-to-face instruction.

**Visit with Benicia Unified School District (BUSD) Superintendent**
On Friday, I met with Benicia Unified School District Superintendent, Ms. Janice Adams, to discuss several partnership opportunities between the College and BUSD. We touched on a previous attempt to foster a joint Automotive program and how to revive the program for next year. Furthermore, Superintendent Adams expressed an interest in collaborating with Middle College High School in the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District. We agreed to visit Contra Costa College to explore the Middle College concept together on September 12. Finally, we discussed the possibility of a joint effort in telecourses. She is very much open to exploring this idea and will accompany some SCC colleagues to view a demonstration of the technology at Cisco Systems in San Jose.

**More Bills from our Legislatures**
The legislature must pass the final bills this coming week. One bill, SB 1391, is of interest to SCC regarding our potential work with the State Prison that would make it easier for colleges to offer courses there. Here is an excerpt from Elias Regalado from the Chancellor’s Office:

“SB 1391 (Hancock) Inmate Educational Programs: Computation of Apportionments, proposes to:

1. Waive the open course requirement for community college courses offered in state correctional facilities.
2. Allow attendance hours generated by community college credit courses to be funded at the credit rate and non-credit courses to be funded at the non-credit rate.”
(3) Require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Office of the Chancellor of
the California Community Colleges to enter into an interagency agreement to expand access to
community college courses that lead to degrees or certificates that result in enhanced workforce
skills or transfer to a four-year university.”

“Pay It Forward” College Financing Concept from the AACC Legislative Update
The focus of the July 2014 Issue of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities’
(AASCU) Policy Matters Brief features the “Pay It Forward” college financing concept of
paying for college. Bills have been introduced in several states (and enacted in Oregon) to study
the feasibility of pilot projects of the “Pay It Forward” (PIF) concept. The PIF college financial
proposals are intended to address three existing challenges to financing higher
education: financial barriers to college access and completion, high post-college debt, and
occupational choices restricted by low salaries hindering loan repayment. The brief is critical of
these proposals for either not adequately addressing these challenges or being redundant to the
extent state and federal legislation that do so. In addition, according to the brief, “PIF financing
poses an array of other problems that could lead to increased college costs, further inefficiencies
in the higher education financing system, considerable long-term administrative burdens for
states and institutions, and damaging long-term consequences for state economies, institutions,
and the students they serve.”

The Earthquake
SCC was fortunate that the recent earthquake did not cause any structural damage to our campus.
I sincerely hope that the earthquake did not cause any major damage to you, your family, and
your property. I want to share the College’s sadness for our neighbors in Napa who suffered
through the earthquake, and to offer any help to our colleagues who might have been affected by
the quake. Please let me what we can do to help you, or let me know if you know of someone
who could benefit from our support. This goes for faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent-President

“Opinion has caused more trouble on this little earth than plagues or earthquakes.” Voltaire