



**Big Bend Community College**

12th Annual  
State of the College Address  
May 10, 2007

**“Always Climbing Higher”**

***Grant County Advanced  
Technologies Education  
Center  
Building 1800***

**Community College District No. 18**

7662 Chanute Street N.E.  
Moses Lake, WA 98837

**\*\*ALWAYS CLIMBING HIGHER\*\***

Good evening and welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> State of the College address.

We live in a community and a district of great ideas and accomplishments. Consider Grand Coulee Dam, Wanapum and Priest Rapids Dams, the Port of Moses Lake and Big Bend Community College. Only then can you begin to appreciate the vision and determination of our local residents. It's easy to dream, but to convert dreams into reality is the real trick. I hope your attendance tonight increases your pride in Big Bend, your college.

Tonight I've again borrowed a paraphrase from one of our great national retailers, so tonight as we "climb higher" we are visiting the proposition that as far as Big Bend is concerned, "People R Us." Throughout this evening I'll introduce you to students, our "most important product," staff, our most important resource, and partners, who help us "bring good things to life!"

Let me begin the evening by recognizing the Trustees of Big Bend Community College. Appointed by the Governor to 5 year terms since 1967, (you'll recall that prior to that time our governing board was the Moses Lake School District directors), they represent your constant voice in charting the direction of the college. The chair, from Othello is Cecilia DeLuna-Gaeta, regrettably she is unable to be with us tonight; the vice-chair from Ephrata is Katherine Kenison, from Quincy is Trustee Mike Blakely, also from Quincy is Trustee Bob Holloway, and from Moses Lake is Trustee Felix Ramon.

These folks and the trustees before them establish the mission of the college. They also set out expectations, called ends statements. We measure our efforts to meet the college mission by how well we perform strategies for each ends statement. These statements include things like:

**Access**...this means not just enrollment in classes, but an awareness and use of the resources we can offer;

**Student achievement**...this refers to the quality of the education gained by our students, enhanced by goal planning we provide;

**Partnerships**... is recognition that the college is an integral part of the economic fabric of our district and that much of what we accomplish for our students is the collaborative efforts of businesses, institutions, and agencies;

**Climate**... refers to the appropriate feelings of respect, belonging and safety we offer to our students, our staff, and our communities;

**Cultural enrichment** ...is a major obligation of our mission as an institution of higher education. We are charged to create an awareness of unique cultural attributes and to pass on an appreciation for the richness that diversity adds to our life.

The board receives six detailed monitoring reports on the ends statements each year.

**PROPERTY**

Property is always an important topic in the Columbia Basin and it's no different at the college. Last year I reported that the board re-acquired property at the south campus.

The 11 acres of the soil conservation district property represents a potential windfall for our students as the board carefully evaluates potential leases or sale of the land.

Taking a proactive stance with respect to other property issues, the trustees, in concert with the Big Bend Community College Foundation, began a process to change the zoning of some of the 154 acres of college property on the campus.

You can see from this chart, the College Parkway set apart a portion of the campus for possible business development. The trustees have authorized a request to re-zone most of this property as urban commercial and this large parcel as urban light industrial.

There is no intention to sell any of the college property in this location, but the board would entertain leases for business activity compatible with the college. Its important to note that re-zoning would not prevent the college from developing property for our own use.

#### TRUSTEE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Trustees receive no salary for their service. They do however receive travel and per diem that is reported as income. Since 1999 every trustee has signed over her/his per diem check to create the "Trustees Scholarship Fund" which supports part time students, who make up more than 50% of our enrollments.

#### FOUNDATION ACTIVITY

The Big Bend Community College Foundation, formed in 1971, is the best friend our students could ever have. This group of 20 individuals with unwavering devotion to the students and the college, work to raise and prudently invest funds for scholarships, equipment, staff development and facilities. And while scholarships are the major contribution, the foundation has raised \$85,000 for a one for one match with the state. This has created an exceptional faculty award fund, administered by college trustees, in excess of \$240,000. This past year six faculty members had professional development activities funded to the tune of almost \$9,000.

Among the activities funded:

John Swedburg, assistant chief pilot, was funded to attend the Big Sky Airlines ground school. He gained experience with the beechcraft 1900's systems that will result in a new course for our program. He also developed connections with Big Sky that can result in more employment opportunities for our aviation students.

Chris Riley, history instructor, attended a weeklong workshop by the National Endowment for the Humanities on John Adams. He was able to develop two projects, one for US History regarding John Adam's role as a defense attorney for British soldiers involved in the Boston massacre, and one for American Government where students study objections registered by citizens in the 1780 Massachusetts Commonwealth Constitution ratification debate.

Rie Palkovic, art instructor, attended and participated in the Oxford Round Table Conference based on C. P. Snow's book "The Two Cultures" which deals with the divide between arts and humanities and math and science.

Pat Patterson, music instructor, led the BBCC Community Chorus on a trip to New York where they participated in the performance of Handel's Messiah, in Carnegie Hall.

Matthew Sullivan, English instructor, attended a month long writers' residency program at the Vermont Studio Center, where he worked on a novel and a manuscript of short stories in an environment where established writers hold workshops and one-on-one manuscript critiques.

Under the leadership of Foundation board member Howard Skaug, the "Access to Good Health" campaign raised enough money to purchase two computerized manikins for training nursing students, an adult named "Gerry Atric" and an infant named "Scooter." Campaign funds also supported Interim Director of Health Sciences Katherine Christian earn her master's degree in nursing.

This month, the Aviation Maintenance Department took delivery of a biplane which had been converted to a crop duster. The BBCC Foundation purchased the aircraft for the program. If it can be restored to fly again that will be done. If not, the parts can be sold to collectors for more than the purchase price of the airplane.

All major colleges and universities maintain extensive alumni lists for fund raising purposes, however very few two-year colleges do so. Nevertheless, the BBCC Foundation has invested considerable effort to build an extensive alumni list of 7,000 names. One alumnus they contacted, Captain Steven Lloyd, is a graduate of our commercial pilot program and is retired from Federal Express (FedEx) as a 727 pilot.

Steve started his career as a pilot in 1969 when he learned to fly at Big Bend. He sold his car in order to have enough money for tuition and flight fees for the first two quarters, and then he had to drop out and go to work. In a year he had saved enough to return to school. Eventually he went to work flying overseas cargo for Flying Tigers Airlines. FedEx purchased this airline in 1989 and Steve finished his career as a 727 Captain for FedEx.

Captain Lloyd attended the initial dedication of the ATEC brick campaign and met one of his old flight instructors, Buck Wheat. While talking to foundation and college staff he offered that Federal Express might be interested in donating one of their retiring 727 aircraft.

Dr. Clyde Rasmussen, our new Dean of Professional/Technical Education, followed up on that offer, and the result is that on the 24<sup>th</sup> of this month Federal Express will fly in at 9:30 am a 727 freighter to be donated to the college. It will not fly again after its arrival, but will be capable of taxiing and demonstrating major aircraft operating systems for both the aviation maintenance program and the commercial pilot program. Captain Lloyd will join us to receive the airplane. He hopes the donated aircraft will be both a learning tool

and an inspiration for students. “I initiated this donation because Big Bend gave me the opportunity to have a fantastic career. The instructors are all dedicated, experienced men and I drew on what I learned there throughout my career.”

Sometimes you just need to be in the right place at the right time. That was the case with Steven Lloyd and that is the case with the Weinstein scholarship. Weinstein Beverage owners, Pat and Susan Weinstein, wanted to do something for students in Wenatchee and Moses Lake, two communities in which they have major operations.

After a short conversation with my office, Doug Sly of the foundation joined in and has continued to work with the Weinstains. The result is a healthy annual scholarship fund of \$20,000 to support low-income students with the capability of providing intervention funds to keep these students from dropping out due to financial problems.

This intervention scholarship is setting a new model for student financial assistance and may be the scholarship of the future. In the first four months of the scholarship 17 students were helped to stay in school. It is interesting to note that the range of this intervention assistance was from \$40 to \$1,300. In this time where the public generally overestimates the cost of higher education it is interesting that such small sums can keep a student in school.

For example:

A full time automotive student from Moses Lake and a graduate of Wahluke High School is in his last quarter of the program and has run out of money. He was awarded \$1,100 for books and tuition and will now graduate in June.

A Quincy High School graduate wants to be an ESL teacher. He works in the orchards to get money for school. He rises at 5:00 am to catch a GTA bus to BBCC. He and his family paid for tuition and books for spring quarter. An award of \$125 allowed him to add an English 101 class for a full 15-credit load.

A GED graduate in 1996, with four children has a full time job earning \$19,000 annually. She attends Big Bend and wants to become a registered dietitian and paid for her tuition and books. She needs help with childcare and received \$600.

A single woman working as a teacher’s aide also coaches girls’ sports. In addition, she teaches English to adults two nights per week and cares for her mother. She wants to become a high school counselor. She received \$200 for books for spring quarter.

A 40-year-old field worker is a new student this quarter. She received \$40 to use for her admission fee and placement testing the day after meeting with a BBCC counselor, and is now one of our students.

## SCHOOL DISTRICTS

There are 15 public school districts in the BBCC college district. Together we represent the only groups with formal responsibility for public education in Grant and Adams counties and the Odessa school district of Lincoln County.

Most of these school districts serve large populations of low income, first generation students whose primary language spoken at home is not English. Most of our grant efforts are devoted to providing counseling, advising, placement, and instruction to these students.

Big Bend visits with all of these school districts every year via staff visits to local communities, and student visits to the college campus. These contacts reach as far into the districts as 6<sup>th</sup> grade and are designed to keep increasingly detailed contacts through their senior year. We believe continuing their contact with the college will help to encourage them to stay in high school and continue their education after high school graduation.

Our school districts also represent outposts through which students and community members can make contact with the college. This fall we will have interactive video classrooms in Mattawa\*, Royal City\*, Warden\*, all three are new sites since last year, and our existing sites in Othello, Soap Lake, and Grand Coulee. This arrangement can allow students and adults to take college courses without travel to Moses Lake.

We also offer college in the high school where qualified high school teachers teach college classes for BBCC in the local community, again eliminating the need to commute to Moses Lake.

## TECHNOLOGY

The fastest growing mode of instruction at BBCC and throughout the state is on-line instruction. Remember video taped telecourses? Well, on-line classes provide a rich visual environment with regular interaction for every student and the instructor. Carefully planned by both the instructor and the student, there is more intense individual contact between student and instructor than in a traditional classroom setting. Some students take only on-line classes, while most fit in one or two on-line classes with their regular classes.

Our new Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Rachel Anderson, is developing more on-line classes originating from BBCC to be offered each year. Even our traditional classes are enriched with a blended approach offering the far-reaching capabilities of the Internet.

Soon students will be able to access any of their classes, e.g.: traditional, interactive video, and on-line over their home computer, or MP3 player, or Ipod. Laptop computers, cell phones, and PDA's with wireless capabilities will require wireless broadband service across the entire campus.

## PEOPLE

I noted earlier that one of the trustee's ends statements concerned climate. We believe that staff stability, as evidenced by low turnover and longevity is a positive reflection on campus climate. For example, we currently have 13 employees who have been at BBCC for 30 or more years and 27 employees who have been here for between 20 and 29 years. This includes all employee groups, faculty, classified, and administrative/exempt.

The literature of higher education has been speaking of this first decade in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as one of major staff turnover, primarily through retirements. When one door closes, as the saying goes, another opens. With that let me say that we've been fortunate to attract some truly exceptional staff this past year, both as replacements and for new positions.

Nursing has seen a new Director, Ann Mulkey, and two new faculty members, Lisa Corsie, and Jennifer Brooks; our medical assistant program is off to an excellent start due to the efforts of Mandy Mann. A new welding instructor, Gordon Kaupp has added opportunity in the welding program. A new program, the opportunity grant, was enhanced with the hire of Andre Guzman.

Classified staff recently hired include Starr Bernhardt, and Anne Carter in Institutional Research. Barbara Riegel has returned to the college in the business office. Yvonne Ponce has joined us in payroll.

We are currently searching to fill positions of Residence Hall Manager and Residence Hall Supervisor, Director of Financial Aid, Director of Health Education, and Mathematics Instructor.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The topic of the year for Grant County is economic development. We have seen a turning point for economic development in the Central Columbia Basin, especially with development of new industry in Quincy and Moses Lake and expansion of existing facilities. All of this has put a strain on our available workforce. Big Bend is proud to be a partner in these economic development efforts. We are working with employers, the school districts, economic development councils in both Adams and Grant counties, and with private and public job placement and training services to assist in solving both short term and long term training needs. We are a conduit for state and federal job training funds to help people acquire entry-level job skills and to upgrade skills of those currently employed.

While our adult population is a focus of much of this activity, so too is our effort, in collaboration with the school districts, to direct talented students into a workforce position while at the same time encouraging them to continue their education. Guided by Mary Shannon, Tech Prep is an example of a program that provides college credit for articulated professional/technical classes in the high school. Students who complete one or more tech prep class have already begun a transcript at Big Bend. To reinforce my point that no course of training is a dead end at BBCC, we note that many students who come to us with earned Tech Prep credits go into our transfer program.

Today, the typical worker attends some type of training and skill enhancement throughout his or her working life. There is no longer a dead end in education. While the ultimate educational goal of Americans is the bachelor's degree, most of us take more than the traditional 4 years to complete the requirements. While the data shows that

income increases with the level of education, it also shows that the earlier a person enters the workforce the greater their lifetime earnings will be.

Post-secondary education has broken from the outmoded K-12 pattern of lock step advancement and seat time leading to a high school diploma. Training and education at the college level takes whatever time is necessary to develop a mastery of skills. Our children and grandchildren will probably never quit attending some type of school or training as long as they continue to work.

#### PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER (PTEC)

We are seeking state funds to construct our next major building project that is designed to enhance and expand our support of economic development throughout district, the professional/technical education center or PTEC. We will seek funding in the 2009-2011 biennium. Yes, that's correct, it takes a long time to secure funding when you are one of 34 community and technical colleges.

This new facility, which may be built closer to the core of the campus rather than out among the existing technical education buildings, will house a growing and expanding division of transportation sciences. Here our existing college automotive program can grow and expand into newer technology fields of hybrid, natural gas, and hydrogen fuel. We see the need for new programs to provide training in diesel and fuel cell powered vehicles.

Our welding program has outgrown its existing facility and with the increasing demand for contracted training in specialty welding, a new facility is needed. Our industrial electrical and maintenance mechanics programs are seeing increasing demand from all of the new industrial business coming to the area. With a growing need for construction trades, it is only natural for a residential electrical component to be added as well as special training in heating, refrigeration, and air conditioning. Our commercial drivers license training needs a home and PTEC will be close to our drivers training track.

Working closely with WorkSource and local employers, we are aware of the need to recruit, skill screen, and train for both entry level and job upgrade. During training there is need for close contact with trainers and advisors for the support and coaching, so necessary to retain potential workers in rigorous programs.

Internship opportunities during training are of value, both for the benefit of the students applying new skills and for the benefit of the potential employers who are anxious to invest in good permanent workers. A place for students and employer-coaches to evaluate on-going and recently completed internships will also be located in this facility. Finally, the end product of this activity is a job; so placement services are key to making this entire training program serve both our students and employers.

PTEC will have at its core an employment resource center to provide all the above-mentioned support services in one location. So constructed, it will be the only facility of its type in the state. PTEC will not only house many of our professional/technical

programs but will have the staff and resources to help prospective students explore training opportunities.

#### UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Our transfer function is another major part of our mission, particularly in our relatively isolated district. To that end we have continued to pursue baccalaureate and graduate opportunities for our students and our residents. Our premier partner over the years has been Heritage University who has provided our students with high quality degree programs in education and business.

This year Central Washington University brought their first-degree program to Big Bend. Their bachelor's degree in flight technology is a perfect match for our commercial pilot graduates. And most recently we welcomed Washington State University to campus with a full schedule of distance learning degrees.

Professional/Technical students aren't the only ones in need of counseling, advising, and coaching. Working with CWU and Eastern, we have developed an intensive transfer-advising program known as "Transitions to Success." A similar program with Heritage University is termed "dual enrollment." Both aim to provide timely and accurate program planning and advice to a cohort of students with the same transfer goals. Not only do we expect to see students report improvement in the quality of advising for the transfer students, but also we hope to see an increase in retention of these students through the completion of an associate's degree.

We believe that an essential component of any transfer program is study in fine arts. Six years ago we remodeled a storage building to house and expand the art program in safer, more spacious quarters. Yet this was just seen as a temporary step until such time as we could obtain state funding for a facility especially designed for Fine Arts Education. This month we go to bid for a 13,000 square foot fine arts building, with a budget of about \$3.2 million.

A component of this project is the construction of a new formal entrance to the campus off of Randolph Road. In this rendering you will note a landscaped entrance with a drop off turning circle and GTA pick up area. We also will provide a lighted reader board to inform all college bound traffic of college and community events and announcements.

Our university partners represent just a few of the productive and growing partnerships for Big Bend. We provide traditional and specialized training for area agencies and businesses. In turn, businesses provide us with needed equipment and supplies, many times unique to their industry. They can also provide instructors for specialized programs.

#### INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Our business and industry partners join with us on our Occupational Advisory Committees to keep our training focused and up-to-date with industry standards and practice. We currently have 15 Occupational Advisory Committees with 135 members from business and industry.

Close community contacts provided the information we needed to start a program for medical assistants. Already in its first year, Mandy Mann has recruited more than 30 students. We are about to conduct a needs analysis for a graphic arts program which could be housed in the new fine arts building.

## STUDENTS

Last June at commencement (the 43<sup>rd</sup> for Big Bend) the trustees and I welcomed this couple walking across the stage to each receive their degrees. This was a grandmother and her grandson. What better picture could there be to show the character and range of our student population?

You may also recognize this BBCC graduate from last year's ceremony, our own Trustee Bob Holloway.

This year we have had an outstanding slate of officers in student government. While performing a highly demanding task of managing student activities for the college, ASB officers acquire and practice leadership and management skills. They have a responsibility to direct a budget of more than \$130,000.

Each year, we have the privilege of nominating two Big Bend students to the All-Washington Academic Team. This statewide recognition of academic excellence includes a \$750 scholarship, a personal greeting and congratulations with the Governor, and a chance to tour the state capital and meet with some of our local legislators. This year I would like to introduce you to Andrew Dahlke and Omar Barron.

Just as our students take great pride in their achievements so too do we. The 2007 legislative session just adjourned last month. It was a remarkable session for all of education including higher education. Of particular interest to Big Bend was the effort to contain the rising cost of tuition. The pattern of tuition increases leading up to this session was particularly troubling as more of the increasing costs of operation were being placed on our students in the form of substantial tuition increases.

The Governor proposed no tuition increase for the biennium. Our State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Big Bend trustees endorsed that position. In the reality of political compromise however, while we did not get a flat tuition stance, the legislators did agree to a small 2% tuition increase for each year of the biennium, a modest victory for our students.

The rate of unemployment for our college district is at a record low number. Usually, when most of our residents are working, we see fewer enrollments in college. That has been the case for the last two years, yet as I have already noted tonight, the need for trained, literate employees has never been greater. Our challenge, which we are addressing with our school districts and business and industry partners, is a vigorous information and recruiting campaign to grow our trained workforce and to increase our enrollments so that the size of the workforce can be sustained for more growth.

I will leave you with this challenge tonight and report to you at this time next year on our success in meeting this critical need for our communities.

As always, I personally appreciate your support and affection for Big Bend Community College. I hope you are proud of your creation and the resource we represent, particularly in our staff and also our facilities. Those of you who attend commencement have heard me say this repeatedly as I ask all faculty, administrators, trustees, and staff to rise for recognition... "Graduates, ladies and gentlemen these women and men are the heart and soul of Big Bend Community College. They are our most important resource." I truly believe that and I know you do to.

Thanks for being here, drive safely and lets meet here again next year...

Good night.