A Push for College Completion

As a member of “Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count,” Triton is one of more than 160 institutions in 30 states to develop and implement a student-centered model of institutional improvement. The initiative provides a framework for systematically and objectively reviewing college policies, programs and services with regard to their impact on student success. With college completion at the forefront of many of our initiatives, Triton College faculty and staff continue efforts to promote student success in life-changing ways.

According to President Obama’s Completion Agenda, community colleges should aim to double their number of Graduates by 2020. Triton's share of meeting that goal is to have approximately 5% more graduates each year. Through the continued efforts of our students, faculty, staff and community partners, we are currently performing above our target and exceeding that goal.

Strategic planning efforts aimed at college completion revolve around several topics, with key discussions on equity issues, a revised developmental math curriculum and proposed student success strategies for enhancing placement test preparation and revamping college success courses for at-risk students. Through ‘Achieving the Dream’ and student success initiatives taking place across campus,
the institutional strategies focused on college completion begin with improving college readiness and creating a culture of shared ownership.

April 30
Triton College Job Fair, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Student Center Cafeteria (B Building)

April 30
Village of Hillside Honor Day, 5:30-7 p.m., Botanical Gardens.

May 18
47th Annual Triton College Commencement Ceremony, 3 p.m., Akoo Theater in Rosemont.

May 3 through June 2, 2013
Cernan Earth and Space Center Public Shows: Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. (except May 18 for the Monthly Skywatch) and 9 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Sundays.

Admission ranges from $8 to $10 for adults and $4 to $5 for children and senior citizens. (708) 583-3100 or (708) 456-0300, ext. 3372, www.triton.edu/cernan.

All events are open free to the public, unless otherwise stated.

CONNECT WITH US

Strategic Planning: A Collaborative Effort

With Triton College well into the fourth year of its five-year Master Plan reflecting its commitment to student success, the college is currently developing a new comprehensive, strategic plan that will be more community-focused yet still enhance the college’s mission to support student success. Associate Vice President of Strategic Planning Mary-Rita Moore said the development of the new plan, which will take effect following the completion of the Master Plan in 2014, will include the knowledge and opinions of area community and business and industry leaders in an effort to better serve the communities in the college’s surrounding district. "Anytime that we can understand our stakeholders’ needs helps us to be more informed and prepared to advance," Moore said.

The plan, which will be developed through the assistance of consulting firm Maher and Maher that has worked extensively with community colleges around
the country, will identify the goals of the institution through conducting an environmental scan and hosting an external stakeholder and senior staff planning retreat to develop the framework of the plan. The planning process has progressed with the development of an environmental scan, including a community-wide survey which took place in January. The environmental scan is designed to provide: 1) a deeper understanding of what internal college and external community stakeholders from a variety of sectors think and believe about Triton, as well as their expectations of the college, and 2) an economic and workforce data analysis that provides a better understanding of the business, education, and labor market climate throughout Triton's district.

A two-day strategic planning retreat was recently held at the college and included participation by approximately 80 members of Triton’s faculty and staff, partnering schools and the business community. The objective was to obtain broad and deep input from internal and external college stakeholders to enhance the development of Triton’s new strategic plan and its future investments and activities. Participants collaborated to develop strategic recommendations, with a focus on: increasing college readiness; improving college completion rates; and closing the skills gap. "The retreat was an important step in the development of Triton's new strategic plan. Bringing community and college stakeholders together to collaborate and recommend future direction is essential," added Moore.

Following a keynote address by Ms. Maria Flynn, Vice President of Jobs for the Future, an economic opportunity group, participants engaged in panel discussions with a variety of community leaders, including: Dr. Donna Carroll, President of Dominican University; Dr. Steven Isoye, Superintendent of Oak Park and River Forest High School; Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, Superintendent of Proviso Township High Schools; Dr. Karen Hunter Anderson, Vice President of the Illinois Community College Board; Mr. Byron Zuidema, Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration; Mr. Ray Bentley, Chief Program Officer for the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, and; Ms. Sylvia Wetzel, Chief Learning Officer for Bison Gear and Engineering.

Mixing business with sustainability at chambers event

More than 100 chamber members representing 17 area districts attended Triton College’s Multi-Chamber of Commerce After-Hours event on Feb. 20. At the event, attendees learned about green practices that could impact their businesses as well as their communities from guest speaker Anthony Santarelli, director of program development for the Illinois Green Business Association.
The communities that were represented at the event included Bellwood, Bensenville, Brookfield, Forest Park, Franklin Park, Schiller Park, Harwood Heights, Hillside, LaGrange Park, Maywood, Melrose Park, Mont Clare/Elmwood Park, Northlake, Oak Park, River Forest, River Grove, Riverside, Rosemont and Westchester.

According to President Patricia Granados, “The multi-chamber event provided business and industry leaders of our district the opportunity to make new connections with business colleagues and Triton staff. Building strong connections with our local businesses is extremely important as we look to enhance curriculum and develop career opportunities for our students”.

In recognition of Sustainability Month and Earth Day (April 22), Triton College’s Sustainability Center has collaborated with various departments on Triton’s campus to host discussion forums, to provide opportunities to practice sustainability, and to further educate members of the surrounding communities on how to live a greener life.

Upcoming events:

**May 4** – Community Recycling Event, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., North parking lot on Triton’s campus

Triton College will collect electronics, clothes and shoes to recycle with Vintage Tech Recyclers and USAgain. The collection is free of charge.

**May 11** – Adena Woods Clean-Up, 9 a.m. to noon, Robert M. Collins Center

Community members and students can take part in the clean-up of Adena Woods, a recently adopted portion of the Cook County Forest Preserve by Triton College. The clean-up crew will also work on controlling invasive species, such as garlic mustard and buckthorn.

To get involved, contact Sustainability Center Coordinator Adrian Fisher at (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3578, e-mail afisher@triton.edu, or visit www.triton.edu/sustainability.

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**Celebrating diversity at Triton College**

Recognizing the campus’ diverse student body, Triton College celebrated the achievements of African-Americans with many educational and social events during Black History Month in February.

Black History Month festivities on Triton’s campus were built on the theme “A Past of Dignity … A Future of Hope” with the goal of educating and motivating students to strive for success. The series of events addressed a wide range of
February kicked off with an opening ceremony, featuring reflections from Triton students, staff and faculty along with guest speaker Roderick K. Hawkins, vice president of external affairs of the Chicago Urban League, who spoke to students on the importance of an education for a bright future. “Take your education seriously,” he said. “Learn as much as you can while you’re here. Your instructors and counselors here believe you will succeed and are available to help you reach your goals.”

Throughout the month, various events were specially geared toward Triton students and staff, while also welcoming members of the surrounding communities to attend several events of importance to the broader community including the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and the Health and Wellness Fair. On Feb. 18, the Triton College Library hosted the National African-American Read-In, with Congressman Danny K. Davis as the opening presenter, an advocate of literacy. “I read everything I could get my hands on when I was growing up, and I still do,” he said to the audience. “It is my belief that if you learn to read and learn to read well, you can learn anything else because reading is the basis of everything.”

The Triton community, as well as government and local village officials, attended the closing ceremony that recognized guest speaker and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle who was presented with the first Black Heritage Council Image Award. “We can learn a lot from black history,” Preckwinkle said, noting the achievements of Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., among others. “Rosa Parks was an American hero – extraordinary in a way that we should all emulate her courage and commitment… Martin Luther King’s story tells us that change can come if you don't give up… Black history is American history.”

New initiative, inspirational stories from alumni shared at legislative event

Increasing college completion and readiness among students remains at the forefront of Triton College’s mission to foster student success. And through a new pilot program proposed by Triton’s Education Taskforce, the college aims to reach a younger audience than its usual demographic to put more students on track toward higher education.
A new initiative targeting high school students in danger of dropping out of school before earning their high school diploma was introduced to area legislators at a Jan. 28 event, titled “Inspiring Voices,” held on Triton’s campus. The breakfast was attended by U.S. Congressman Danny Davis; Illinois State Senators Don Harmon, Kimberly Lightford and John Mulroe; Illinois State Representatives Camille Lilly, Chris Welch, Michael McAuliffe, Kathleen Willis and Luis Arroyo; staff from Senator Durbin’s office and Cook County Recorder of Deeds Karen Yarbrough, as well as Triton College’s administrators and Board of Trustees.

The event engaged attendees with amazing success stories from some of Triton’s alumni, as well as informed them of Triton’s goals for serving the community, facilitating dialogue and opportunity for collaboration.

Interim Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences Mary Ann Olson shared pending plans for the new initiative as a pilot program that would provide selected high school students the opportunity to pursue a high school diploma and an associate’s degree at Triton College simultaneously within five years. By collaborating with area high schools to develop a curriculum, the proposed program would serve an underserved and at-risk population of students in Triton’s surrounding district.

Olson said, “We want to make a college education attainable for those students who may need additional direction and support.”

Triton College Board of Trustees Chairman Mark Stephens concurred. “This program could impact the future of the students in this district, and we look forward to exploring it further,” he said.

Triton College’s University Center Provides Access and Affordability

In an uncertain economy, students continue to seek degrees beyond an associate’s or certificate program; and with education costs on the rise, Triton College is dedicated to providing affordable access to continued learning and development. The newly expanded University Center allows students to continue their education conveniently from Triton’s campus by pursuing a
bachelor’s or master’s degree. Currently, 230 students seek advanced degrees across various educational disciplines from one of six university partners: National Louis University, Benedictine University, Governors State University, Southern Illinois University, Eastern Illinois University and recently added Dominican University.

“I am extremely pleased to expand our partnership to include Dominican University,” said Triton College President Patricia Granados. “The quality programs and services that Dominican provides will be of great benefit as we look to enhance access in support of our students’ success and completion.”

Dominican University President Donna Carroll adds, “Our partnership with Triton College and its University Center opens the door to exciting, new opportunities for both of our institutions to collaborate more effectively in meeting the needs of students who want to pursue a bachelor’s degree from Dominican University.”

In addition to Triton’s new partnership with Dominican University to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies, National Louis University recently included a new bachelor’s degree in Special Education to be offered beginning Fall 2013.

“We appreciate that National Louis University has chosen to offer this additional option through our University Center for students to pursue their bachelor’s degree,” said Triton College President Patricia Granados. “Offering a bachelor’s degree in special education complements our growing education program and will bring awareness to this specialized field.”

“We identify the field of special education as a growing need in Illinois and we want to attract more students to this difficult field to address this need,” said National Louis University President Nivine Megahed. “We truly appreciate this continued expansion with Triton College and hope we can strengthen this partnership further.”

Triton’s University Center continues to expand its offerings for students to pursue their educational and professional goals beyond a two-year degree. Financial Aid may be available to students who qualify.

The University Center is conveniently accessible to students on the first floor of Triton’s Student Center (Room B-111). For more information, visit www.triton.edu/universitycenter or call (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3130.

Alumni Spotlight: Joseph R. Kozenczak (Class of 1970)

Joseph R. Kozenczak is a Private Detective specializing in Missing Persons with North Star Consultants, a private investigative firm.
located in Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Kozenczak is the former Chief of Police for the Des Plaines Police Department. He also served as the Chief of Detectives and was the arresting officer and Chief Investigator in the John Wayne Gacy serial murder investigation. Parade Magazine and the International Association of Chiefs of Police selected Mr. Kozenczak as one of the top ten police officers in the nation. He has lectured in Death Investigation at the F.B.I. Academy in Quantico, Virginia and to other investigative groups both nationally and internationally. Mr. Kozenczak is recognized as an expert in Missing Person issues. During his career, he has published numerous articles in professional publications, including several law enforcement periodicals. Along with his wife, Karen Kozenczak, Joseph has published articles nationally and internationally on a variety of topics including serial murder investigation, evidence technician training programs, the use of the polygraph during the Gacy Case, arson investigation, police discipline, and the Multi-Agency Investigative Team (M.A.I.T.) Program.

In 1970, Mr. Kozenczak received an Associate in Science Degree A.S. in Police Science and Administration from Triton College. He continued his studies earning a Bachelors of Liberal Arts from DePaul University and a Masters of Public Administration from Roosevelt University. Mr. Kozenczak is also a graduate of the famed F.B.I. National Academy.

On February 7th, the Alumni Relations Office welcomed Mr. Kozenczak to campus to speak of his experiences involving one of the nation's most notorious serial killers, John Wayne Gacy. Author of "The Chicago Killer: The Hunt for Serial Killer John Wayne Gacy," Kozenczak shared stories about his career in criminal justice to an audience of Triton alumni, students, staff and community members.
Community Advisory Committee Welcomes New Members

The Triton College Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed in the spring of 2008 for the purpose of assisting the college in its outreach to the community. CAC includes approximately twenty individuals from the district Triton serves, representing a cross-section of the communities and industries that are prevalent in the area.

We are pleased to announce the addition of three new members to the committee: Mike McGuigan, General Manager of Double Tree-Hilton in Rosemont; Dr. Phylistine Murphy, Assistant Superintendent for Bellwood School District 88; and Cindy Vitek, Riverside Elementary School Teacher. These three individuals, along with other members of our CAC, serve as a guide in facilitating feedback and recommending initiatives that yield better outcomes for our district community.

CAC meets quarterly, and has addressed such topics as Student Success, the college's Five Year Master Plan, the upcoming Strategic Plan, and a variety of academic programs and services. In the past, Committee members provided input and suggested changes to the Master Plan for greater clarity and relevance to the community. They have also suggested new programs to meet the needs of the area's workforce and recommended partnerships that might be developed to the benefit of district residents and the larger community.