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Gravitas, Winter 2008

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The Institute for Community College Development

GRAVITAS

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WINTER 2008

A Newsletter for A New Kind of Leader

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Cornell University Develops New Web Accessibility Tool for Community Colleges

Does the design of your website discourage prospective students?

By William Erickson, Research Specialist; and Sara VanLooy, Project Assistant, Employment and Disability Institute, Cornell University

The Employment and Disability Institute (EDI) at Cornell University has completed a three-year research project on community college Web accessibility and online student services, and developed an online Web access toolkit to improve the usability of college websites.

Community colleges play a vital role in educating students with disabilities and are a crucial link to better employment. A survey of 700 community colleges found that the majority use the Internet to provide admissions and financial aid applications, course catalogs, class schedules, course registration, and billing online. Some colleges have made some of these services available only on the Web, with serious implications for students with disabilities who will encounter potentially insurmountable barriers if Web pages are not well designed.

Technology can open doors to education for students with disabilities, but inaccessible websites can pose significant barriers for people who are visually impaired, deaf, or have (cont. page 4)

Left: John Doyle, a blind student scientist at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, demonstrates a touch-feedback computer technology called TouchWeb. (AP Photo/ Bebeto Matthews)

Accessibility and usability testing of a sample of community college Web pages found…inaccessible pages, unclear instructions, confusing navigation, and unfamiliar terminology.

This study led to the development of an online **Web Access Toolkit** for college administrators.

EDI's online **Web Access Toolkit** can be found at: **www.webaccesstoolkit.org**

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Institute for Community College Development

A SUNY and Cornell University Partnership

ICCD's Gravitational Leadership Program Calendar

Web Seminar Series
on the* Core Skills *of Communication, Collaboration, Ethics, and Mentoring

Register for one or more:

"The Ethics Trap: How to Be True to Your School (and Yourself)"
February 20, 2008
1:00—2:30 EST

"1 + 1 = 5, or The Power of Collaboration in Community Colleges"
March 19, 2008
1:00—2:30 EST

"Getting the Thinking/Talking Public (and Politicians) on Your Side"
April 16, 2008
1:00—2:30 EST

"Mentoring the Next Generation So You Can Retire Someday"
May 7, 2008
1:00—2:30 EST

See page 5 for more information.

Core

Community College Labor Relations
April 16-18, 2008
ILR School, Cornell University
Ithaca, NY

Organizational Integrity

Leadership Tools for Women
June 6, 2008
Rockland Community College
Suffern, NY

Core

Are We Still "Democracy's Colleges"?
Leadership Issues Series
July 27-30, 2008
ILR School, Cornell University
Ithaca, NY

Advocacy

Successful Teaching Conference
October 30-31, 2008
Ramada Inn Hotel and Conference Center
Ithaca, NY

Organizational Integrity

Community College Media Relations
December 3-5, 2008
Marriott Washington
Washington, D.C.

Advocacy

From the Director: Are We Still "Democracy's Colleges"?

When I was new to community colleges in the late 70's, I heard them referred to as "democracy's colleges," or "people's colleges." It was this mission that inspired my decision to stay at community colleges and continues to engage me as a leader.

Our goal for this summer's Leadership Issues program, "Are We Still Democracy's Colleges?", is to look at how this mission can be fulfilled in the twenty-first century. How do we serve "illegal" immigrants and their children? What does the new wave of returning GI's, many with disabilities, need from us?

Is educating students for participation in a democracy different now than it was in the 1950's? What can community college leaders do to be better advocates?

We are in the planning stages for this program, so your suggestions for topics and speakers are welcome.

If you'd like to share your thoughts on community colleges as "democracy's colleges," please email me at **Barbara.Viniar@cornell.edu.**

Barbara Viniar, Ed.D.
Executive Director

For more information about ICCD's Gravitational Leadership Programs

contact Patrick Feely, Program Coordinator, (607) 254-2797 or by email at pef6@cornell.edu.
www.iccd.cornell.edu

Entrepreneurial Internship Programs: A Survey and Analysis of Best Practices

An applied research report by **Anne Arundel Community College**, Arnold, Maryland, sponsored by a grant from ICCD and funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

By Joyce Ezrow, Professor, Business Management; Alan Davis, Technical Research Specialist, and Carlene Cassidy, Director, Entrepreneurial Studies Institute, Anne Arundel Community College

The results of a survey of colleges offering some form of entrepreneurship education experience provides a snapshot of the size and scope of entrepreneurial internships available today. In addition this report provides insight into how these programs are being managed and measured for success.

This study was conducted to learn from the experiences of schools offering entrepreneurial internships in an effort to identify best practices. The survey is a random sampling as participation was voluntary. The results therefore are limited to those who chose to participate.

We believe this survey provides useful information for anyone starting or managing an entrepreneurial internship program. However, this project is not intended to be a comprehensive assessment of programs across the country.

Overall the results of the survey indicate that entrepreneurial internship programs are relatively small with no colleges reporting more than 100 students participating per semester and most indicating that they have 25 or fewer student interns per term. The small size of the programs was also reflected in the number of companies that had formal relationships with the colleges. The majority of the colleges reported less than 50 companies participating. However, these numbers are likely to increase as several colleges indicated that their programs are rapidly growing with increases each semester in both the students participating and the companies forming relationships with the colleges.

Purpose of the Study

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) engaged in this study of internship programs being offered as part of entrepreneurial studies programs to discover prevalence and best practices. With this information, AACC intends to form an entrepreneurial internship program incorporating information gleaned from this assessment of existing programs at other colleges and universities. In addition, AACC intends to share this data with interested entrepreneurial studies faculty and administrators.

Two students at an entrepreneurial studies workshop at Anne Arundel Community College

This survey provides useful information for any community college starting or managing an entrepreneurial internship program.

To download the complete report, visit www.iccd.cornell.edu/iccd/researchGrants/appliedResearchGrant/2006-Project-Reports.html

Carlene Cassidy (left), one of the authors of the study, with three finalists in Anne Arundel Community College's business plan competition.

ICCD Offers Community College Leadership 360° Assessment™

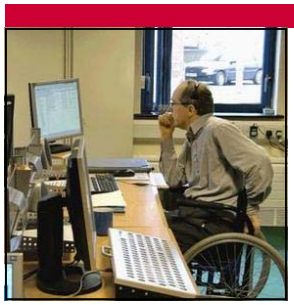
By Lee Riddell, ICCD Assistant Director

How do others see you as a leader? Are you progressing in your career? How balanced is your work and personal life? In your college, how effective is your leadership team? Are they a valuable asset to your institution? Are they achieving the goals set out for them?

The only 360º assessment tailored to community college leadership, ICCD's **Community College Leadership 360º Assessment** offers three focused approaches to strengthen leadership skills:

- personal,
- for professional associations, and
- for organizations.

(cont. page 6)



A voice activation Web accessibility tester

User testing in Web design is critical for all users of community college websites, not just users with disabilities.

Web Accessibility Tool (cont. from page 1)

learning disabilities. EDI was funded by the U.S. Department of Education to study Internet-based student services at community colleges. The Institute for Community College Development at Cornell collaborated with EDI on the study.

Accessibility and usability testing of a sample of community college Web pages found many problems. Both disabled and non-disabled users were frustrated by inaccessible pages, unclear instructions, confusing navigation, and unfamiliar terminology. Many required assistance to complete the application form, and the majority reported confusion with the entire process.

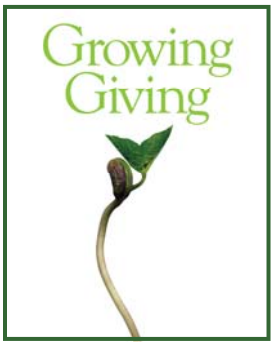
Virtually all of the websites examined performed poorly on both the accessibility evaluations and the usability testing. Barriers existed on many college websites that could prevent users from being able to complete an admissions application. Our usability testing illustrates how critical user testing is in Web design for all users, not just users with disabilities.

This study led to the development of a tool to help college administrators who wish to address the broader issues of Web accessibility improve the accessibility and usability of their websites. The Web Access Toolkit provides resources and a process for achieving long-term Web accessibility and enhanced usability for all users, disabled and nondisabled alike.

To learn more about EDI's **Web Access Toolkit** or to download the research brief, visit **www.webaccesstoolkit.org**

For more information on this project, email Bill Erickson, Research Specialist, Employment and Disability Institute, at wae1@cornell.edu.

If you want to succeed in increasing **private support** for your community college, you have to "mind your '**P's**'."



Mind Your "P's": Fundraising Lessons from ICCD's Conference "Growing Giving"

By Barbara Viniar, ICCD Executive Director

The speakers at ICCD's "Growing Giving" program in November were corporate and private donors, development professionals, trustees, foundation board members, presidents, and authors. Their perspectives were diverse, but their messages were consistent: If you want to succeed in increasing private support for your community college, you have to "mind your **P's"**:

Pride,
Professionalism,
Personal relationships,
Partnerships,
the new **Philanthropist,**
and **Perseverance.**

Rita Bornstein, President Emeritus and Harriet W. Cornell Chair of Philanthropy and Leadership Development at Rollins College, said she was offended when a president described fundraising as begging. "We are not beggars," she said. "We are equals." **Pride** in our institutions makes us good fundraisers.

In an era when fundraising scandals are common news, it is incumbent on us to set high standards of professional conduct and ensure accountability to our donors, our boards, the campus, and the public we serve. As Doug White, author of *Charity on Trial*, reminded us, it is not about compliance, but about ethics. Our **professionalism** can never be in doubt.

(Cont. page 5)

Mind Your "P's" (Cont. from page 4)

Fundraising is a **professional** sport, said Brenda Babitz, President of the Monroe Community College Foundation and author of the book *Growing Giving*, and her role is coach. As our development programs grow, we need experienced individuals like Brenda to take them to new levels. According to Ron Thomas, author of the forthcoming book *Tilling the Field: Success Factors in Community College Fundraising*, investment in development staff is the single most important factor in community college fundraising success.

Arunas Chesonis, Chairman and CEO of PAETEC Holding Corp. and a major donor to Monroe Community College in Rochester New York, stressed the **personal** relationship he had developed with Tom Flynn, President of the college. It was a relationship based on honesty and mutual respect that started with a minimal commitment of Chesonis's time.

Chesonis is a good example of the "new **philanthropist**," or what Shauna Chabot, Associate Managing Director for Brakely Briscoe Fundraising and Management Consultants, called the "donor investor," an individual who sees his or her donation as an investment and wants to play an active role in achieving results. Community colleges, said Chabot, should take advantage of the increase in wealth among young entrepreneurs and women.

Kay Walter's foundation, Second Chance, provides scholarships that enable single parents to enroll in the nursing program at Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida. Walters was inspired by her own nursing career, a positive experience at a community college, and a speech about the college's mission by Valencia's President Sandy Shugart to create a **partnership** that improves the lives of families and addresses the shortage of nurses.

Barbara Miller, Executive Vice President of the Central Florida Auto Dealers Association, described the partnership among the dealers and between the dealers and the college that enabled them to recruit young people into the field, provide financial aid to community college students, and build a $10 million state of the art education and training facility on the campus of Seminole Community College outside of Orlando. All of our colleges can capitalize on similar economic development and educational partnerships.

It took Miller, with ongoing support from Seminole's President Ann McGee, ten years to raise the funds for the new building. It may take longer for alumni to become major givers. Finding shared values and the right proposal for a given donor takes research, time and cultivation. **Perseverance** is critical to community college development efforts.

ICCD will be collaborating with the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, and the California Foundation for Community Colleges, to offer another program on fundraising,

"Navigating the Rising Tide of Community College Advancement,"

October 15-17, 2008, in San Diego, California.

Below: Dr. Pamela Cox-Otto, President, Interact Communications, a public relations and marketing firm specializing in the needs of community colleges, will co-host ICCD's **Live Online Web Seminar Series** on the **Core Skills** of **Communication, Collaboration, Ethics, and Mentoring.**

Visit **www.ICCD.cornell.edu** for more information.

ICCD Offers Web Seminars on Core Skills

Your professional success depends on communicating with your constituencies, setting the standards in ethics, partnering to make resources go farther, and preparing those who will help you now and replace you later.

Join Dr. Pamela Cox Otto, President, Interact Communications, a public relations and marketing firm specializing in community colleges, and four national leaders in communi-

(cont. page 6)

Institute for Community College Development
A SUNY and Cornell University Partnership

Institute for Community College Development, Cornell University
621 Ives Hall
Ithaca, New York 14853

Phone: 607-255-7758
Fax: 607-254-1520
E-mail: iccd@cornell.edu

www.iccd.cornell.edu

The Institute for Community College Development provides leadership programming and research support for community college CEOs, administrators, faculty and trustees nation-wide. Founded as a partnership between the State University of New York and Cornell University to address the critical issue of leadership succession, ICCD offers a comprehensive program assessing leadership ability at the personal and organizational level, and targeted educational opportunities that develop those skills.

Web Seminars

(cont. from page 5)

cation, ethics, collaboration and mentorship in a series of web seminars designed to give practical, timely solutions to leadership challenges.

Wednesdays,
1:00-2:30 EST
February 20, 2008
March 19, 2008
April 16, 2008
May 7, 2008

Visit **www.ICCD.cornell.edu** for webinar descriptions and present-

ICCD Staff:
Dr. Barbara Viniar, Executive Director
Lee Riddell, Assistant Director
Patrick Feely, Program Coordinator
Michelle Cole, Administrative Assistant

Newsletter editor:
Martha Stettinius
mcs73@cornell.edu

Community College Leadership 360° Assessment™

(Cont. from page 3)

ICCD's online **Community College Leadership 360° Assessment** incorporates the competencies for community college leaders developed by the American Association for Community Colleges.

Areas of assessment include:

- organizational integrity
- resource development
- community college advocacy
- communication
- collaboration
- project management
- professionalism, and
- ethics.

To gauge your individual readiness to lead in your community college, the **Personal Assessment** will examine and reveal the relationships between your behaviors and how they are perceived by your peers, your supervisors, and those you supervise. You and 15 to 20 respondents of your choice complete an online instrument that assesses key leadership competencies.

Once your profile is established, your *Assessment Report* and a *Personal Development Model* will help you to create individual action steps to build on your identified strengths and to develop new leadership competencies.

If you are a member of a **professional association** you can assess your readiness to lead within your chosen profession. Ten custom questions, designed by your specific association, will help you decide which programs best fit your needs. Once your profile is established, your *Assessment Report* and a *Personal Development Model* will help you to create individual action steps to build on your identified strengths and to develop new leadership competencies.

Do you want to build organizational capacity? The **Organizational Assessment** is helpful for: single institutions, districts, systems, professional associations, and organizations. This option can assist you in identifying the areas of strength and challenge in your current staff. Implementing change or furthering initiatives is dependent on giving responsibility and accountability to the right people in your organization.

Your *Organizational Assessment and Report* will help you to understand the abilities and growth trajectories of your team quickly and constructively. Then you can focus on organizational action steps to build on your team's strengths and to develop its leadership capacity.

For more information about ICCD's

Community College Leadership 360° Assessment

visit our website,
www.ICCD.cornell.edu

or contact Lee Riddell, Assistant Director, at (607) 254-8260 or by email at Lee.Riddell@cornell.edu.