

# The Peoples College — Community Colleges in Kansas City



Western Historical Manuscript Collection  
Kansas City

## Charles N. Kimball Lecture

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**Charles J. Carlsen**

President, Johnson County Community College

**Wayne E. Giles**

Chancellor, Metropolitan Community Colleges

April 30, 2002

## The Charles N. Kimball Lecture Series

is a tribute to our late friend and civic leader, Dr. Charles N. Kimball, President Emeritus of the Midwest Research Institute, to acknowledge his support of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City and his enduring interest in the exchange of ideas.

Charlie Kimball was a consummate networker bringing together people and ideas because he knew that ideas move people to action. His credo, “Chance favors a prepared mind,” reflects the belief that the truest form of creativity requires that we look two directions at once—to the past for guidance and inspiration, and to the future with hope and purpose. The study of experiences, both individual and communal—that is to say history—prepares us to understand and articulate the present, and to create our future—to face challenges and to seize opportunities.

Sponsored by the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City, the Series is not intended to be a continuation of Charlie’s popular *Midcontinent Perspectives*, but does share his primary goal: to encourage reflection and discourse on issues vitally important to our region. The topic of the lectures may vary, but our particular focus is on understanding how historical developments affect and inform our region’s present and future. The Lectures will be presented by persons from the Kansas City region semi-annually in April, near the anniversary of Charlie’s birth, and in October. Additionally, presentations may occur at other times of the year, if opportunities present themselves.

WHMC-KC appreciates the substantial financial underwriting and support for this Series provided by the **Charles N. Kimball Fund** of the Midwest Research Institute and by other friends of Charlie Kimball.



**1911-1994**

# INTRODUCTION

to the April 30, 2002  
Charles N. Kimball Lecture

## David Boutros

Associate Director, WHMC-KC

Good afternoon. My name is David Boutros and I am associate director of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City, the host of the Charles N. Kimball Lecture series.

As many of you know, my role in standing before you is to remind you that we are gathered to honor Charlie Kimball by engaging in useful discussions of issues vital to the development of our community. We do this by providing a forum for speakers to share views with a live audience, and by distributing the text of their presentations both in hard copy—real paper and ink—and WHMC-KC WebPages on the internet [www.umkc.edu/WHMCKC/](http://www.umkc.edu/WHMCKC/) where you can find all the Kimball lectures along with the 20 years of Mid-Continent Perspective lectures that Charlie hosted at Midwest Research Institute.

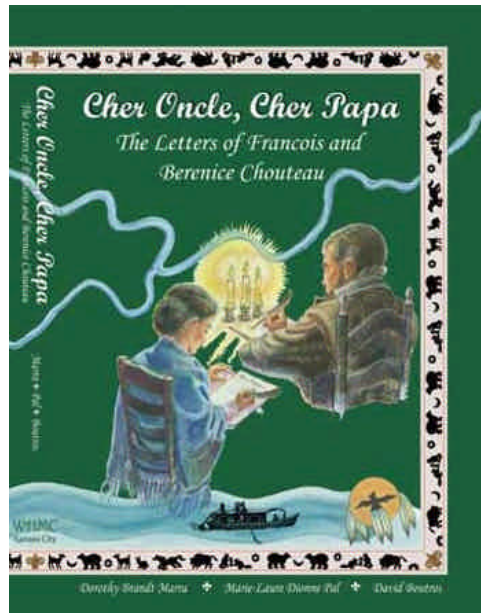
I also try to keep you advised of some of the activities of the WHMC-KC. In particular, I would like you to know that we are well into our oral history project, *The History Speaks Project: Visions and Voices of Kansas City's Past*. This is a community-wide project in which we plan to interview on video some 150 individuals for their experiences and stories about Kansas City. Some of you may already have been interviewed. Some of you may receive a call asking you to participate in the next month or so. I hope that you can find the time to be interviewed. We also welcome your advice about who we might interview. This is an ambitious project, and we appreciate all the help and support we have received. In fact, our next Kimball Lecture on October 22, 2002, will be given by Dr. Carol Mickett, who will report to you some of the insights that may be mined from these tapes. I am sure you will find it a fascinating and enlightening presentation. (Again, you can find more information on the WHMC-KC WebPages.)

Lastly, I cannot help but brag a bit. Our new book, *Cher Oncle, Cher Papa: the Letters of Francois and Berenice Chouteau* is now in the bookstores (or available directly from the WHMC-KC office) and has been getting rave reviews from readers. This is a history book about Kansas City's first CEO, the "first" families, and the region's first business—the trade with Native Americans for furs and goods. This is truly an important work about a very important and formative time in our history.

Again, thank you for joining us today. Now to introduce our speakers today, UMKC's Chancellor, Dr. Martha Gilliland . . . .

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## *Cher Uncle, Cher Papa*

*The Letters of Francois and Berenice Chouteau*

Dorothy Brandt Marra ❁ Marie-Laure Dionne Pal ❁ David Boutros

Published by the

Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Kansas City

[ISBN 0-9710496-0-2 \$24.95 / Paper cover / photographs and maps]

**Order** from and make checks payable to:

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**Martha W. Gilliland, Ph.D.**

Chancellor, University of Missouri-Kansas City

Thank you David. This is one of my favorite events at UMKC—a forum sponsored for a wonderful individual who saw and had the foresight to endow the ability to talk about important social issues and important trends for our community—none of which I think is more important than what is happening in education. It's hard for me to say that what is going in the community colleges would be more important than what's going on at UMKC, so let's call it education. But certainly the people's college. I love that title. I've known a lot of people throughout my career in community colleges. The first job I had prior to finishing my Ph.D. was in a community college. I loved it. It's a wonderful culture. What the community colleges are doing in society across the country is phenomenal as a total focus on students, and a focus on students in a way that those of us in universities have a lot to learn. I very much value our relationships with the community colleges here. The two people that you will hear from, Dr. Wayne Giles, Chancellor of Metropolitan Community Colleges and Dr. Charles Carlsen, president of Johnson County Community Colleges, are two of the finest in the country. I've known a lot of presidents and chancellors of community colleges so I say that right from the heart. We are very fortunate in Kansas City to have these two individuals really focused on the metropolitan area and with a motivation that is in line with what higher education needs to be about in terms of the work force and bringing people into the democracy via education. It's a real privilege for me to introduce them and to be here to set that context.

Many of you know them very well. Let me say a few words about each individual and take note of the fact that together they are serving over 70,000 students in this area. Dr. Giles has been associated with Metropolitan Community Colleges in some form since 1983, and then he was vice chancellor, and then became chancellor in 1993. There are about 45,000 students in that community college system. In 1997 he opened the Blue River campus, the Blue River Community College in eastern Jackson County to serve that region. I think many of us from UMKC are aware of the Business and Technology Center that opened in 1995, and continues to expand. It currently is serving 20,000 students and is the largest and most comprehensive business training and services facility in the Midwest. Dr. Giles is a Missourian and earned his Ph. D. in higher education from St. Louis University.

Dr. Carlsen has been president since he got here in 1981, and I think that it goes without saying that JCCC has taken a huge quantum step forward since his arrival. They have 30,000 students and the college is still growing. JCCC is the third largest institution of higher education in the state of Kansas. He is respected as a leader in all higher education and he has a great track record for fund and friend raising.

I recently picked up a copy of a national art association's annual report. It contained a story about the different urban art centers throughout the country. There was a terrific description about art at JCCC. I congratulate you on for this deserved recognition.

We at UMKC pay close attention, some of you in this audience may know, that most of our undergraduates are transfer students, and most of those of course are from these

two community colleges. What you probably don't know is that the record of those students is outstanding—overall, the record of transfer students tends to be higher than those of other students, and that's true nationally. The community colleges do a terrific job of getting people started and getting over any fear or trepidation of professors. So, we are glad to be in partnership with these two community colleges. We want to strengthen that association. It's the right thing to do for education, it's the right thing to do for Missourians and Kansans, and primarily for Kansas City and we look forward to a long relationship. We are especially glad to have you on campus today talking about a very important issue. We are going to begin with Dr. Giles and he will then turn it to Dr. Carlsen.

## *The Peoples College — Community Colleges in Kansas City*

**Charles J. Carlsen, Ed.D.**  
President, Johnson County Community College

April 30, 2002



Long considered one of the best community colleges in the nation, JCCC's motto is "Learning Comes First."

### ***Johnson County Community College: Past, Present and Future***

The community college is America's contribution to education in the 20th century. Ironically, university sponsors saw the growth of the two-year institution, or "people's colleges," as a way to divert students from the university so that the university would then be able to focus on the "higher" tasks of research and advanced professional training (Brint and Karabel). Further, in 1892, William Rainey Harper separated instruction at the University of Chicago into two divisions: the first two years of instruction and the last two years, also known as the Junior College and the Senior College. In 1900, he convinced the faculty and trustees to grant an "associate's degree" to students who had completed the Junior College curriculum. In 1901, Joliet Junior College, in the Chicago area, opened as the first formal "independent" junior college.

The roots of the community college movement may be found in the junior colleges of the 1920s and '30s, which offered the first two years of a postsecondary education. Today, there are more than 1,200 comprehensive community colleges across the country. The community college's broad curriculum, its responsiveness to community needs, and its accessibility to all local residents distinguish it from the old junior college. Public community colleges serve forty-four percent of all U.S. undergraduates. Forty-six percent of all first-time college students are enrolled in community colleges. Across the country, 5.4 million students are enrolled in community college credit programs, and 5 million are taking community college noncredit courses. Because of the equal opportunity for education offered to its supporters, "like jazz and football, the community college movement is an American phenomenon" (Gabert, G., 1991).

The community college's mission, according to the American Association of Community Colleges' (AACC) *The Community College Story*, is to provide the educational programs and services that lead to stronger communities. These include transfer programs, where students complete the first two years of college and then transfer to a four-year school; occupational or technical career programs, ranging from early childhood education to nursing to information technology, that prepare students for the work world; developmental education; community services, which at Johnson County Community College (JCCC) includes personal enrichment courses on a wide variety of topics; and support services, which include learning resource centers; counseling; and information on financial aid. JCCC does all these things; it is very much the "People's College." It was created by the community for the community by county residents to serve county residents.

Johnson County Community College was founded in 1968 by a group of citizens who thought the county needed a comprehensive institution that would provide two years of "academic" and "vocational" education. The college opened its doors in 1969, housed in storefronts and church basements in downtown Merriam, Kansas. JCCC moved to the present campus on 234 acres at the corner of College and Quivira, in Overland Park, Kansas, in 1972. JCCC has expanded from six buildings then to 17 buildings in 2002. In contrast, the number of students has increased exponentially from 1,386 in 1969 to 17,647 credit students and another 17,000 noncredit students in 2002. Enrollment projections are favorable for continued growth.

Although JCCC attracts students from across the metropolitan area, three-quarters of its students come from Johnson County. The county's taxpayers through property taxes provide approximately half (58%) of our funding. It is not only our mission but also our goal to find ways to support those who support us, through programming or services. Currently, JCCC is developing two-year degree and certificate programs in biotechnology and power plant technology, the latter with the assistance of Western Resources, Kansas City Power and Light, and Utilicorp United. Both programs were created in response to community requests and economic needs. In terms of services, JCCC offers community career counseling for displaced workers, and literacy, adult basic education and GED preparation through the Project Finish program. In addition, the college offers extensive arts education programs for children across the metropolitan area, who can come to the Carlsen Center on campus to see nationally recognized performers, thus inspiring what may become a lifelong interest in the arts.

However, in the interest of time, let me focus on two especially important ways we work with the community through workforce development and community partnerships.

### ***Workforce Development***

According to the July 2001 report from the National Education Association (NEA), state legislators from across the country think that two-year institutions are better situated than others to help business and industry change with the times. “They found that two-year colleges were more adept at tailoring themselves to the needs of business and industry,” said Sandra S. Ruppert, the director of educational systems research, which conducted the research for the NEA. “Two-year colleges also adapt more quickly to changing priorities.” (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 26, 2001)

They are not alone in this perspective. “Community colleges . . . have become important providers of job skills training not just for students who may eventually move on to a four-year college or university but for individuals with jobs, particularly workers seeking to retool, retrain, or simply to broaden their skills.” So said Alan Greenspan, Federal Reserve Board chairman, in a speech delivered to the U.S. Department of Labor 21st Century Workforce Summit in June 2001.

Community colleges provide this workforce development in a number of ways. For example, JCCC’s Center for Business and Technology provides public seminars and contract training in management and supervisory skills, computer applications and information technology. Since 1983, the Center for Business and Technology has served more than 167,000 people from 2,600 businesses. JCCC’s Center for Professional Education also enrolls about 12,000 people annually in certification, recertification and relicensure workshops, seminars, contract training and independent study for more than 30 fields, ranging from health care to insurance to the technical trades.

A League for Innovation initiative that relates directly to workforce development is CAP (Certification Audit Project). This initiative partners with business to determine the skill sets most needed in the community. A survey of local area employers was enlightening in the realization that while educators continue to value transcripts and grades, “employers increasingly value performance-based certifications and community college certificates as indications of more specialized skill.” (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2000) In other words, they not only value but also expect education AND training.

In many professions, certification provides professional recognition of competence. In others, it serves as a prerequisite for obtaining a license to practice. Certainly, skill certification may facilitate employee advancement, but it also serves a broader social purpose—giving consumers confidence that workers in an occupation meet a recognized and expected standard of knowledge. Examples are the “A+ “ certification for computer professionals or the ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) designation for automotive technicians.

Employers perceive these certifications as an indication that an employee’s preparation has gone beyond general skills. Indeed, the employers themselves have initiated, outside higher education, these assessments of competencies and awarding of credentials that are recognized in a global workplace. Clifford Adelman, senior research analyst, U.S. Department of Education, refers to this phenomenon as a “parallel universe.” To that end, CAP will provide a current view of the certification programs that institutions are providing for students as well as an environmental scan of the workforce

needs of the local service area. The project's results will provide data that local businesses can use regarding certifications that are often difficult to obtain and will assist with advising credit students and those enrolled in noncredit courses about available options. It will also assist in identification of need for new programs for the college.

### *Community Partnerships*

Another important way JCCC remains responsive to community needs is through partnerships with local businesses, arts institutions, agencies, governments and educational systems. JCCC has more than 200 active partnerships, ranging from the Friends of Chamber Music to Ford Motors. A prime example is JCCC's partnership with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF).

JCCC and BNSF have formed one of the nation's most innovative partnerships, which began in 1985. The result was the construction of the Industrial Technical Center (ITC), which opened in 1988 on the college campus. The city of Overland Park issued \$2.9 million in industrial revenue bonds to BNSF to finance construction of the facility. The railroad funded two-thirds of the cost of the building and the college one-third. When the bonds were paid off in September 2001, the railroad ceded full ownership of the structure to JCCC and retained the option to renew its occupancy of the building.

The college and the railroad share use of the ITC. Half of the building houses the railroad-training center, which in 1994 became the National Academy of Railroad Science. The other half accommodates JCCC's electronic technology programs. Because so many students pass through its halls, the building was doubled in size in 1993. In 1994, in cooperation with BNSF, the college introduced a new railroad degree program, the first of its kind in the nation.

Since 1988, Burlington Northern Santa Fe has trained more than 20,000 students in locomotive, maintenance of way, and telecommunication skills. Those students come from all over the nation and are housed in Overland Park hotels, eat in Overland Park restaurants, and in general contribute an additional \$12 million to the area's economy. The partnership with BNSF has helped JCCC solidify its presence in the community as a catalyst for business and has been acclaimed as a national model for innovative programs between two-year institutions and business.

In addition, this relationship with Burlington Northern has earned national awards as the best example of an educational institution working with a large corporation with a focus on educational training and economic development for a community.

An example of the partnerships with local school systems is a program called Keeping Options Open, a collaborative partnership between area high schools in five districts and JCCC. At the high school level, the program offers career development guidance to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors and their parents. The goal of the program is to enhance career development by linking it with academic readiness, followed by educational preparation and/or experiential learning opportunities. The assessments are used as a "litmus test", if you will, to explore potential career goals. Assessment of academics and interests are key components for helping students make the best decisions about high school enrollment, postsecondary education, and career plans.

The program is now offered in 17 Johnson County high schools. Approximately 9,000 students have completed assessments in the high school, and approximately 4,000 have attended program workshops. In a workshop for high school juniors, facilitators

focus on job skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the importance of skills in the workplace. Panelists, including area business leaders, college alumni, and current college students, provide insight into local, regional, and national job trends; survey the vast array of career options available; and recommend ways to acquire marketable skill sets for the 21<sup>st</sup> century global workplace. (Lindahl, S., 2002)

### ***Challenges for Community Colleges***

Future challenges that face community colleges include growth, funding, interface with a global community, quality control and governance. Ironically, state funding is currently decreasing and more responsibility has shifted to local support funding while conversely (following Senate Bill 345), local control is shifting toward state control. With perhaps the exception of the interface with a global community, these issues were similar in 1969 at the inception of JCCC. However, in 2002 and beyond there is more of an emphasis on and expectation of global learning, not only how it is defined but also how it is assessed. Faculty exchanges with China, Russia, and other countries bring the global perspective into our classroom delivery. General education classes now involve a global perspective to broaden a student's vision beyond the local, state and national perspective. Today's student may be from Overland Park, Kansas; Kansas City, Missouri; or Oslo, Norway. As colleges expand to globalize, there is an international reach and interchange of learning. The overarching concept is quality, which is the cornerstone at JCCC. Each and every program is examined to insure quality as the college expands and adapts to meet community needs with a focus on student learning.

### ***Focus on Lifelong Learning***

Ultimately, like any educational institution, a community college is there to serve students and promote lifelong learning. In their book, *The American Community College*, Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer describe community college students this way:

*. . . those who could not afford the tuition; who could not take the time to attend a college on a full-time basis; whose ethnic background had constrained them from participating; who had inadequate preparation in the lower schools; whose educational progress had been interrupted by some temporary condition; who had become obsolete in their jobs or who had never been trained to work at any job. . . .*

Community college students are older and more racially and ethnically diverse than students at four-year schools. At JCCC, the average age of the student is 27, and many report that they work 40 hours a week or more. Concomitantly, many students have families and face the challenges of schoolwork in addition to the demands of jobs and children. Surprisingly, many of our students already have the equivalent of an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree or beyond.

Studies suggest that community college students who transfer to four-year colleges and complete their bachelor's degrees are just about as competitive in the labor market as students who started and finished at four-year schools. In addition, community colleges appear to have similar cognitive and developmental effects on their students as four-year schools have on theirs. (Pascarella, E., 1999)

To again quote Cohen and Brawer,

*Perhaps community colleges should merely be described as untraditional. They do not follow the tradition of higher education as it developed from the colonial colleges through the universities. They do not typically provide the students with new value structures, as residential liberal arts colleges aspire to do. Nor do they further the frontiers of knowledge through scholarship and research training, as in the finest traditions of the universities. Community colleges do not even follow their own traditions. They change frequently, seeking new programs and new clients. Community colleges are indeed untraditional, but they are truly American because, at their best, they represent the United States at its best. Never satisfied with resting on what has been done before, they try new approaches to old problems. They maintain open channels for individuals, enhancing the social mobility that has characterized America; and they accept the idea that society can be better, just as individuals can better their lot within it.*

With a focus on accessible and affordable education, community colleges strive to assist each student in meeting their individual goals—whether it is to improve their computer skills, earn a certificate of completion, or earn the requisite skills to go to medical school. Perhaps Governor Graves said it best:

*We all recognize the positive impact our community colleges have on the state of Kansas. Our ability to effectively address the pressing training needs of business and industry is a result of their programs and services, generating a steady stream of highly skilled workers.*

My challenge to each of you is to strive to make a positive impact in connecting education to individual needs and goals so that learning does indeed come first. That is why, for those students in the community, JCCC is the community's college.

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## *The Peoples College — Community Colleges in Kansas City*

**Wayne E. Giles, Ph.D.**  
Chancellor, Metropolitan Community Colleges

April 30, 2002



Longview Community College was the first community college chosen as the “College of the Year” by Princeton Review/Time Magazine.

Thank you and Good Afternoon. I appreciate the opportunity to be part of the Charles Kimball Lecture Series, and to talk with you about “The Peoples’ College—Community Colleges in Kansas City.”

In the last 20 years publications from both the academic and the popular press have addressed issues of concern in higher education. Concerns include:

1. under-prepared students;
2. the relevance of the traditional curriculum;
3. the effectiveness of the traditional lecture and discussion format in the classroom;
4. the time-bound, place-bound, role-bound structures of higher education;
5. rising costs; and
6. the increasing demand from legislative bodies and the public for increased productivity and accountability.

For some time now, a variety of voices have called for major changes in the structure and delivery of higher education. These calls for change are particularly interesting for community colleges, because we were founded as part of the response to a major shift in higher education in America. This shift was away from a model that provided higher education primarily for children of well-to-do families, to a model that would provide

access for any student who was capable of attending college. This shift began with the establishment of the land grant colleges in the 19th century. It intensified in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when junior colleges were established to meet community needs that included: academic transfer preparation; technical education; continuing education; and community service.

In 1947, President Truman's Commission on Higher Education expanded the concept of access and affordability, not only for veterans returning from World War II, but also for the population at large, by calling for accessible, affordable education for citizens 18 years and older. The Commission also suggested that two-year institutions change their name from "junior" to "community college" because of the expansion of their mission and the broad range of their functions.

How well did community colleges respond to the call to expand opportunities for accessible and affordable education for America? The first public community college was founded in 1901 in Joliet, Illinois. By the early 1950's, there were approximately 590 junior and technical colleges nationwide. Today there are over 1,250 community colleges in America. We serve more than ten million students each year, a figure that represents nearly 50% of all undergraduates in this country. From the late 1950's to the present, community colleges have experienced a rate of growth unparalleled not only in higher education, but in most national or international businesses or industry.

Community colleges are sometimes described as the most innovative and successful venture in American higher education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Why and how have we been so successful? To answer that question, I'd like to paint a picture of the Metropolitan Community Colleges District, one of the largest and most successful of the urban-suburban community college districts in the country.

MCC's history, like that of all community colleges, is closely connected to the history of its community. We began in 1915 as the Kansas City Polytechnic Institute, an extension of the Kansas City School District, at Eleventh and Locust Street in downtown Kansas City. We joined with the Northeast Junior College in 1937, and in 1942 moved to 3645 McGee in Midtown. In 1954 we joined forces with Lincoln Junior College. In 1964 the voters of seven suburban school districts (Belton, Center, Grandview, Hickman Mills, Lee's Summit, North Kansas City, and Raytown) joined with the citizens of the Kansas City School District to approve what was eventually to become the Metropolitan Community College District. In 1984 the Blue Springs School District, and in 1985 the Park Hill School District, approved annexation to MCC. Most recently Independence and Fort Osage School Districts voted to join the district by annexation in 1993.

When we started in 1915 we enrolled 234 students—92 men and 142 women. Today MCC is the largest institution of higher education in Kansas City, serving approximately 43,000 students each year. We are comprised of parts of four counties: Jackson, Clay, Cass and Platt, an area that includes over 550 square miles. We include eleven school districts, and according to our recent redistricting process, which was based on the 2000 Census, population in the district is approximately 830,000. Our assessed valuation is approximately \$9.8 billion dollars, and our annual budget for 2001-02 is \$116,374,956. We now serve Kansas City with four colleges and a Business and Technology Center, which this year will become our fifth college. These colleges make education both accessible and affordable for people throughout the Kansas City area.

MCC's students can complete all of their general education requirements and other basic courses, then transfer for the last two years for a bachelor's degree. This gives them the opportunity to enjoy small classes and affordable tuition for two years, and in light of the recent tuition increases across the state, our in-district tuition of \$60 per hour looks better every day. And our research shows that transfer students do as well or better than native students at the four-year institutions.

Preliminary data from the U.S. Education Department show that about a third of all undergraduates enroll in technical training programs. MCC is also a wonderful choice for students who want skills to land high-paying jobs quickly. We have many technical programs, leading to either a two-year degree or a certificate which include:

1. accounting;
2. computer support;
3. graphic design;
4. machine tool technology;
5. computer numerical control;
6. automated manufacturing;
7. technical and skilled trades, which include hydraulics, pneumatics, electronics, and robotics;
8. nursing; and
9. paramedic technology.

Although many of our students are recent high-school graduates, the average age of our student body is 28. Approximately 22% of our students are ethnic or racial minorities, and 60% are female. To meet the needs of all our students we have a convenient day, evening and weekend class schedule that allows them to manage job and family responsibilities along with course work. We provide advisors and counselors to guide course and career selection. State-of-the art computer labs allow students to do on-line research, and e-mail instructors and classmates. Our libraries are linked to the statewide Mobius library system, which gives students access to 15 million items worldwide. MCC, as is Johnson County Community College, is a part of KCREACHE; a consortium of area higher education institutions that can provide on-ground and support services to local distance education students. We believe this brick and click model will serve us well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as we increasingly expand our distance education offerings, which are particularly intended to serve students in Kansas City.

MCC has important support services. Academic and Learning Resource Centers work with students who need tutoring or other academic support to succeed. For students seeking scholarships, loans or other federal financial aid, we help find ways to pay for their education; MCC distributes over \$6 million in financial aid per year. When students are ready to enter the job market, our Employment Resource Centers help them find work in their career fields.

Our colleges also serve their communities with lecture and film series, theater productions, and fitness centers. And each college offers a telecommunity center that provides local residents access to some of today's most sophisticated technology, including the Internet and interactive video teleconferencing.

Although all of our colleges serve a large contingent of transfer students and share many programs and services in common, each one is also unique to the people and community it serves.

Blue River consists of two campuses—one in Blue Springs and the main campus in Independence. The college's Western Missouri Public Safety Training Institute, established through a partnership with federal, state, and local government, trains 150 new police officers and firefighters each year. Last year the Institute provided continuing education for approximately 3,600 current law enforcement officers and firefighters. In light of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Public Safety Training Institute, which opened in 2001, is an important resource for the Kansas City area. Blue River has also built special partnerships with Eastern Jackson County's fine arts organizations to support students training in the arts.

Longview serves south Kansas City. It is the only school in the region to offer manufacturer-approved automotive technology training on Ford, General Motors and Toyota vehicles. It is also the only Missouri community college to have a nationally ranked debate and forensics program. Longview's Recreation Center, which originated in partnership with Jackson County Parks and Rec., is open to both Longview and community participants. We are especially proud of the fact that in 2000 Longview was the first community college in America ever to be chosen as a College of the Year by *Time Magazine*. The college received this honor for its Writing Across the Curriculum program.

Maple Woods Community College is an integral part of Kansas City's Northland community, and offers technical programs such as sign language interpreting and veterinary technology. Each year the college sponsors citywide community events including a nationally recognized Writers' Conference, the Storytelling Celebration, and the WomenSpeak Series. In partnership with state and local government, Maple Woods has located a daycare facility and several social service agencies on campus in the Northland Human Services Center, which is a national model for consolidated educational and social services for a community. Maple Woods is also known for its excellent baseball team, which has been nationally ranked for the last five years. Since 1997, fourteen of its players have been drafted for major league teams, including Albert Puljos, who was last year's National League Rookie of the Year, playing for the St. Louis Cardinals.

Penn Valley is located between downtown Kansas City and the Midtown/Plaza area. The college has a strong reputation for its health care programs—it offers more than a dozen—and soon will be adding biotechnology and bioinformatics. It's also known for expertise in child growth and development as part of the nationally recognized Francis Child Development Institute, established in partnership with the Francis Families Foundation. Penn Valley is also known for its nationally ranked men's and women's basketball teams. Both the men's and the women's teams played for the championship in the NJCAA, Division II tournament, and both teams were second in the nation this year. And Penn Valley is particularly proud of its diversity. About half of its students come from minority groups and more than 50 foreign countries. Currently under construction on the Penn Valley campus is the new Carter Center for Visual Arts and Imaging Technology Center, partially made possible by a generous gift from the Carter and Kemper family foundations. This was one of the first lead gifts in MCC's first major gifts campaign in 57 years. The Vision Campaign is dedicated to raising \$25 million to support scholarships, technology, and to secure funding for centers of excellence like the Francis Child Development Institute.

I have already mentioned a number of partnerships that have been crucial in enabling MCC to serve the people of Kansas City. However, one of our most important partnership efforts with state and local government and with the business community of Kansas City has resulted in the development of our Business and Technology Center. The BTC, located at I-435 and Front Street, has revenues in excess of \$7 million annually. Established in 1995, more than 20,000 business people come to the BTC each year for training and technical solutions, making it the largest training provider in the Kansas City area.

The BTC is recognized as a single source solution provider for meeting customers' multiple training and technical service needs. When the addition to the BTC is completed this spring, this state-of-the-art facility will contain over 352,000 square feet of classrooms, labs, offices, and conference rooms, and an Exhibit Hall that can be used for trade shows as well as a regional convention center.

MCC was instrumental in developing the legislation now known as the Missouri Community Colleges New Jobs Training Bill. This legislation, administered by the Missouri Department of Economic Development, authorized MCC to issue certificates to fund training needed by companies creating new jobs by expansion or relocation. These programs have included partnerships with Ford Motor Company, Harley-Davidson, Sprint PCS, The Lockton Companies, Cerner Corporation, Gateway 2000, Quintiles, Transamerica Life, and St. Joseph Foods. This has provided over \$20 million to these companies for their training needs.

Harley-Davidson partnered with the BTC to develop a three-stage assessment process to measure basic attitudes, teamwork skills, and production skills of job applicants. All applicants had to score above established minimums to qualify for an interview. Because Harley-Davidson was steadfastly committed to hiring a significant portion of their new employees from Enterprise Zones in and around Kansas City, the BTC worked with production technicians from various company facilities around the country to develop and conduct a training program for any Enterprise Zone applicant who scored just below the minimum at any of the three assessment stages. The potential employees were then able to retest. More than 90% of the Enterprise Zone applicants completed the training and 75% were hired for production jobs.

The Harley-Davidson project is an excellent example of partnerships that serve the economic development needs of our community. The Enterprise Zone applicants received training for real jobs, the needs of a growing corporation were met, and a social and economic need was addressed in a meaningful way. This is part of what being "the People's College" is all about.

In addition to certificates and degrees, students increasingly seek non-credit courses that provide vendor-endorsed and certification programs that provide credentialing needed for job-readiness. To respond to these needs the BTC is a regional and local Cisco Academy and a certified Microsoft Solutions provider. The BTC also has a National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certified machine tool technology program and a Certified MasterCam Training Center. One accomplishment the BTC is particularly proud of is being the first community college unit in the country to earn ISO 9002 certification, which places it within a select group of companies and organizations world wide that have achieved this quality standard.

I began talking with you about issues of concern for all of higher education. I want to conclude with the particular issues that face community colleges. In 2000, the League for Innovation for Community Colleges published a book entitled *Taking a Big Picture Look: Technology, Learning, and Community Colleges*. The authors described seven key issues that community colleges must address in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

1. the learning revolution;
2. technology transitions;
3. enrollment pressures;
4. record numbers of retirements by faculty and administrators;
5. partnership programs;
6. increased access for students; and
7. accountability mandates.

You may want to ask questions concerning these issues in the question/answer period, which will follow Dr. Carlsen's presentation.

Another important issue for community colleges in this decade will be the continuing preparation and education of America's workforce. This year the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected a 22% increase in jobs that will require at least some college by 2008. From these figures it is projected that the nation faces a deficit of approximately 12 million workers with at least some college education by 2020.

America must have educational centers with the ability to assess and meet our communities' needs. The ability to do this and to respond quickly is part of what separates community colleges from other higher education institutions. It is why we have "community" in our name. The challenge for community colleges nationwide is to preserve the best of what has made us so successful, at the same time that we respond to the incredibly rapid rate of change in our current environment. How well we can do that will determine our ability to remain "the People's Colleges".

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## Questions and Answers

**Question:** This is not a question, but a thank-you for the practice of the Metropolitan Community Colleges to allow students who are 65 and older to take courses. There is a young lady, sitting in the front row to my left who can testify that I *did* take her course. [Laughter]

**Dr. Carlsen:** Can I say something? I had it in my notes that I had the power of the Brown and Gold Club at Johnson County Community College. I wanted to say this Club is for Senior Citizens—but since I'm a member of that, I wouldn't say that . . . more mature individuals—and we have over 5,000 members of the Brown and Gold Club, and they are *great* supporters of Johnson County Community College, so thank you for reminding me.

**Response:** My pleasure! [laughter]

**Question:** With the current crisis relating to funding in both states, how are you going to make up the lag in the funding flow that you've had announced to you?

**Dr. Giles:** To quickly summarize the question, with the cuts in both Kansas and Missouri to higher education, how are we going to respond to that? In varying ways, one of which is to make budget reductions that are necessary. In my district, we cut back on our expenditures on technology and some of the physical facilities. My campus presidents are having to deal with reductions in areas that they think are the best ways to reduce at their level. It isn't coming from on high. We don't have a freeze on employment. We haven't eliminated positions, but we are being very deliberate in filling positions and maybe taking longer, and therefore generating lapsed salary dollars and benefit dollars. We, as opposed to other institutions (I referred to this in my remarks) had planned a \$2.00 per hour tuition increase. We are following through with just that \$2.00 per hour increase effective Summer Semester, and if you read the paper, you know that other institutions in Missouri are increasing their tuition dramatically to respond to the problem. I just drove back from Jefferson City to be here. It is gloom and doom there. We have our fingers crossed that the cuts will not be any more than the 10% that we've experienced. That's 10% to our core funding. That isn't a reduction or elimination of any increase—it's a 10% reduction in core.

**Dr. Carlsen:** Basically the same thing. We've cut about \$1.5 million out of our budget. I had to take to the board recommendations I didn't want to take because one of the important things of the community college is accessibility. We had to increase our tuition 18%. That's a chunk. We went from \$50.00 to \$58.00, tuition and fees. I have all sorts of defense mechanisms. When people attack, I can still say, "well, it's still a good deal" and all that, but the sad part about it is that 25% of our students are on financial aid. So, our executive board of the foundation is going to raise more money this year to try to take care of those students who can't afford the increase. We, in Kansas, will probably have a mil increase which is not always popular to do. It's a tough time for all of us. There are three major sources of revenue: state aid, tuition and mil tax receipts. We're working on the state funding, in fact, I leave right after this to drive to Manhattan, Kansas. Do you know a shortcut to Manhattan? [laughter] I have to go to Manhattan because I'm meeting with the Chancellors and Presidents to strategize about what's going

to happen tomorrow when the Kansas legislature reconvenes. We'll know more when we approve the budget—our budget won't be approved until August—and hopefully the legislature will be finished by then.

**Dr. Giles:** While we wait a moment to see if there are any further questions, I'd just add that two days ago there was an excellent column in the *Kansas City Star* by David Broder about the reductions in state funding for education nation-wide—not only in K-12 but in higher education—sort of asking the question, “why are some going around saying ‘leave no child behind’?” There are millions of children and adults being left behind in these reductions in the state funding of public institutions of higher education. There's a structural change going on, in my opinion, in the funding of higher education in this country. If you look back to what we went through in the early 90's in the state of Missouri, when state revenue was way down and we received less money than we had previous years, by percentages the state budget that higher education received then, and now, you will see that we never recovered from that loss. And we'll never recover from a 10% cut in the core this time because of all the other demands for state revenue from other very legitimate needs: social services, mental health, transportation, etc. So to use an overused word, higher education has to look at a new paradigm for funding, whether it would be public or private institutions.

Sort of a downer, let's not end on that. [laughter]

**Question:** Since smaller class size has always been the hallmark of the community colleges, and your campuses are now getting larger than universities, how do you sustain the small class size, especially with the budget cuts?

**Dr. Giles:** Excellent question, with our enrollment increases how do we maintain our small class size? Number one, we work very hard at it, but number two we've got a dedicated teaching faculty. I don't know about at Johnson County, but at MCC . . . [laughter], No! what I was going to say was, I don't know what the work load is at Johnson County, but at MCC it is five classes. Full-time faculty are teaching 5 classes, 15 hours. In some cases they're teaching an overload, for which they are paid. If you compare that to four-year institutions whose faculty have research responsibilities, etc., community colleges or teaching institutions, have a much higher teaching load than the four-year institutions. We have maintained our class size, we have monitored that class size, and within my system, we tie funding to that class size, to encourage maintaining what that is.

**Dr. Carlsen:** Before I leave, I'm going to get Wayne's phone numbers for our faculty association so they can call him and talk to him. [laughter] One of the things we're proud of, but that I'm concerned about, is that some of our classes, English for example, have many, many sections, and are taught by adjuncts. Adjunct faculty, as you know do not have fringe benefits and what have you. So long as you are in an area where you have qualified people, adjuncts are a terrific asset to any institution. I would venture a guess—I don't know, and I'm not bragging, and I'm not even advocating it—but you will probably find more adjunct, or part-time faculty members in the community college teaching than you would at the university. We're not even thinking about increasing class size. Hopefully I'm never forced to do that because that is something that we can offer to our students—small class size and individual attention with our faculty.

It's getting late, and I've got to go to Manhattan, so thank you very much!

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- April 24, 2000 - Mr. Gerald W. Gorman, *Ilus Davis: Exemplar of "The Greatest Generation"*
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# WHMC-KC

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**Cover photo:** The Longview Community College Biology program, 2001.  
*Doug Hamer, photographer.*

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