



Western Nevada College
Office of the President
2201 W College Parkway
Carson City, NV 89703

TO: The College Community
Advisory Board Members
Foundation Board Members

FROM: President Carol Lucey

RE: A Message from the President

DATE: October 9, 2013

You will recall that I shared with you in July that I would be stepping down from the Presidency once a national search had been conducted, a successor named, and a presidential transition completed. I had hoped in July that this process would be carried out on a timeline that would allow me to step down sometime between January 2014 and the end of the spring semester. As I am sure you are aware, the presidential search process has not yet begun. For many reasons, I have decided to step down immediately. Chet Burton will become executive officer in charge until an acting president is appointed. The college, the local communities, and the regents will have the opportunity to move forward in a deliberative manner with a national search.

And so this is my last "message from the president" for you. It is hard to put in a note, the feeling I have for this college, its employees, its community of supporters, and its students. Let me just say I will miss working directly with all of you. However, I am now in my fifteenth year as your president, and I certainly never intended to stay on so long. We have done much together in which I take pride and I hope you do as well. This is a very different college from the one it was when I arrived in August 1999. Even with the significant financial challenges that we have faced and met, we have been able to make changes that I believe have been good for our students and for all the communities we serve.

We have significantly diversified our student population over the last decade, to include greater enrollment of recent high school graduates, students with disabilities, low-income students, and minority students. This semester, we have increased our services to our nation's veterans, with our new Veterans' Resource Center. With such advances as the Summer Bridge Program and our new student cohort initiatives, we are well ahead of the statewide initiative to encourage more degree-completers. In almost every year of the last fourteen, we have increased the number of our students who complete degrees and certificates. Your work has helped create a college that is a beacon for students of different races, economic backgrounds and experiences. The hopefulness our unique

institution has inspired in so many lives is something I will always treasure, as I know you do as well.

Despite our limited resources, we have been able to develop some wonderful, industry-defined certification and licensing preparation programs designed to prepare students to take national, state, or industry licensing exams, and which help students who are seeking immediate employment, in everything from metalworking certifications to welding to hospitality to computer networking. In 2013 alone, in addition to the 522 official degrees and certificates awarded, WNC students successfully completed 691 of these short-term certificates. At the other end of this credential spectrum, the college is now also accredited to offer bachelor's degrees in technology areas, which can offer both our students and our communities far greater economic development opportunity. As the college's budget stabilizes, thereby bringing improved capacity to add credit-bearing degree programs, the new accreditation structure will ease future program expansions across the college. These new programs may start with short-term certificates or associate's degrees, but can extend ultimately to technology-focused bachelor's programs in all applied areas, including manufacturing technology, nursing and information technology. This new capacity should better serve our students, but also greatly enhance our area's ability to attract new industries.

We have also strengthened our science and technology-focused programs, adding in 2004 to our Carson City campus a beautiful state of the art observatory that complements the work of our excellent science faculty. In Churchill County, our Fallon campus is now the headquarters of one of the most innovative new programs in the state, the Specialty Crop Institute, which is part of a new network of agricultural education that has the potential to transform agriculture in our state.

The physical changes at the college over the last 14 years are ones we can all take pride in. These include, in addition to the Jack C. Davis Observatory, the new and expanded college art galleries, the John L. Harvey baseball field, the Joe Dini Jr. Library and Student Center, better accessibility and services for disabled students and four hallmark energy-conserving solar arrays. However, these physical changes, to my mind, pale in comparison to a college community of people who have met incredible financial challenges over the last five years, and managed to find ways not just to help the college survive, but to thrive. I know that there are still challenges ahead. I also know this college community has the ability to meet them. While I am stepping down as president, I will continue my advocacy for Western Nevada College and for education in general. I thank you for your support and friendship over the years, and my best wishes to all of you.