

Clark State Community College
Board Strategic Conversation
September 20, 2011

Participants

Board members: Andy Bell, Jim Doyle, Bill Mercurio, Peggy Noonan, Élise Spriggs, Heather Tiefenthaler

Clark State Faculty and Staff: Chris Bays, Kris Culp, Joe Jackson, Mellanie Toles, Martha Crawmer, Jane Cape, Marilyn Carlson, Kathy Wilcox, Jennifer Dietsch, Marvin Nephew, Cynthia Applin, Stu Sector, Jim Franks, Karen Rafinski

Foundation Board: Dennis Roark, Steve Sidlo, Mark Elliott, Hans Wagner

Foundation Needs Assessment

Steve Sidlo provided an overview of the needs assessment process and report. (See the Needs Assessment Report for details). He emphasized the following:

- The Foundation never had a plan in the past; rather they responded to requests from the college.
- The college has completed the campaign supporting the CACC and the Foundation had no priorities in the pipeline. This led to the needs assessment to help the Foundation develop a cohesive approach to fundraising in order to ensure an effective approach to donors. Kris noted that the leading reason donors stop giving is over solicitation. This plan will ensure we do not approach donors multiple times.
- The plan resulting from the needs assessment is intended for one year. It will be updated annually to reflect new opportunities and new college priorities.

Discussion from board members included:

- The process to develop the assessment was based on data and a thorough evaluation of the situation today.
- The criteria the committee defined really helped them determine the right priorities.
- The criteria appear to be appropriate; it is easier to raise money for scholarships and champion city scholars. Project Jericho is a bit different, but it still is appropriate to solicit for Champion city Scholars and Project Jericho.
- If the Foundation is aware of someone's passion, they will approach that person for support of those interest areas.
- I'd like to understand the impact we achieve compared to the cost – the number served vs. cost of programs like Champion City Scholars and Project Jericho and what happens to these participants.
- There are challenges to expanding fundraising in Greene County including:
 - Wright State University is very well established in Greene County and has significant financial support in the county.
 - Clark State is not well known in the county. We must get county residents to know us before they will support us.
 - Do residents distinguish between 2 and 4 year colleges? Will we be at a disadvantage because we are a 2 year college?
 - We need to get the right people in Greene County for the Foundation board. We will need help identifying them because current Foundation board members are not at all connected with people in Greene County.
 - Is our name a detriment in Greene County?
 - Nott really, it is just that Sinclair and Wright State are so much better known.
 - We might get some interest because of our articulation agreement with Wright State. We should emphasize this in our messages.
 - There is still the challenge of getting someone to change current giving habits in order to start giving to Clark State.
 - We can start small – ask for \$250 for a Greene County scholarship.

- We should take advantage of the strong relationship Karen has with the president of Wright State. Work together to tell the story of Clark State.
- The Dayton media market does not recognize us as part of the market which makes getting our message out very difficult.
- Champaign also has a challenge with media markets – they are split between Dayton and Columbus, neither of which makes Champaign County a priority.
- Should Jennifer make it a priority to meet with the media in the different counties? We could highlight our successful graduates in the counties.
- Is the lack of a physical presence in Champaign a hindrance to attracting students?
 - Yes, but Urbana University also challenges us. They are the lowest cost private university in Ohio.
 - The other challenge is a low value placed on college from Champaign county families. They do not encourage children to think about college.

What is the role of each board in fundraising?

- The Ohio Board of Regents expects college boards to be active in raising funds to make up for diminishing state funding.
- There are different responsibilities for boards when in a capital campaign than when we are just raising funds for operations.
- The college board is appointed by the Governor which changes dynamics some.
- Kris noted that the answer to this question also depends on how you define fundraising. Fundraising is more than just asking for money, it also includes making connections and cultivating prospective donors. The college board could be very helpful in the cultivation part of fundraising.
 - Several board members are not comfortable with asking for money, but are OK with cultivating prospective donors and making connections.
- What help does the Foundation need from the board?
 - Help figuring out Greene County and Champaign County.
 - What part of Greene County should we focus on? Can we identify where the majority of our students are?
 - Can we reconnect with the individuals who pushed for the building in Greene County?
 - Help the Foundation understand the intrinsic value of the programs they are raising funds for. Help them understand the value of Champion City Scholars and Project Jericho so they can tell the story to donors better.
 - We must do an analysis of the students in Greene County:
 - Why did they choose Clark State?
 - For those who did not, why didn't they choose us?
 - We need to understand this before approaching donors in Greene County.
 - Marilyn noted that we also have 500 students from Montgomery County attending the Greene campus. We might also survey these students to understand why they chose us rather than Sinclair.

Overview of our Four Counties

Kris Culp gave an overview of each of the counties (see the monitoring report). The demographic information on page 13 in the monitoring report was especially interesting.

Martha Crawmer discussed our educational presence in each of the counties (see tab 4 of the monitoring report). We have multiple presences in all four counties including:

- Degree and certificate programs
- Non-degree continuing education
- Non-degree corporate education

- Various forms of early enrollment for high school students. These are especially strong in Logan County because there is someone who is pushing for these in the county.
- Challenges as we spread into these counties include:
 - Getting adjuncts to teach in the counties
 - Lack of support services such as tutoring in the remote counties
 - Competition from Findlay
 - Challenge of matching teachers with students. We may be able to recruit a teacher for a subject, but then have insufficient students.
 - Drive time to get to the remote locations
- The two biggest challenges we face in Greene, Logan, and Champaign are competition and culture.
 - Greene has many colleges in the county, both public and private.
 - Logan and Champaign have a culture that does not value or promote college education. Students begin thinking about college around the time of the 8th grade. We need to reach them at this time to influence their thinking.
 - We have started offering Clark State classes at the high schools after school (traditional college classes in addition to the dual enrollment options already available)
- Greene County has a weekend college with 122 students attending. This is a pilot and they will monitor it for effectiveness. If it works, they hope to expand it in the future, including offering degree programs just through the weekend college.
- In Clark County we are working with ABLE to help get students prepared for college level classes before they come to Clark State.
- Also working with Able in Logan County.
- Have we investigated having two different marketing plans tailored to the needs of different counties? Yes.
- Champaign County has the fewest students because it is close to the main campus – easy for students to get her; there is no physical presence at all in the county; and there is no community advocate such as in Logan.

Stu Sector reported on cultural activities in the four counties:

- Project Jericho is the most notable outreach program. It does support our mission by providing much greater awareness about the college.
- We are leaders in the Cultural Consortium.
- We lead the Kennedy Center partnership which includes Springfield City Schools and Wittenberg. This includes professional development for school teachers.
- We lack partners to help us present in other counties.
- Xenia high school as an auditorium, but we have no partner to work with.
- Beavercreek does not need our assistance.
- We have a pilot Project Jericho program in the Greene Juvenile Detention Center.
- The Champaign County Arts Council is interested in working with us, but there is no facility in Champaign.
- Logan County has the Holland Theater in Bellefontaine
 - We have done two shows there that were well received and generated surpluses
- The biggest challenge is lack of time because it takes significant time to organize and put on performances.

Support for Community Organizations

- Kris highlighted the information in the monitoring report on pp. 19-22 which lists all of the organizations that 38 employees (those who responded to a survey) of Clark State support in some way.

Group Discussion

What is missing?

- Relationships with businesses in Greene, Champaign, and Logan.
- Relationships with faith based organizations in all counties
 - Currently Clark State has an on campus interfaith campus minister; we sponsor programs such as the Martin L King luncheon and Bridges Out of Poverty.
 - Current efforts are focused on Clark County.
- We need college for kids in all counties to get young people on campus and thinking about college.
- We need to support after school enrichment programs that will get more young people in other counties interested in college. We appear to be doing well in Clark with Project Jericho and Champion City Scholars.
- We need to do more to raise interest in going to college in Champaign and Logan.
- We should find something that ties all four counties together in order to make marketing easier.
- Our financial story is compelling – we are cheaper.
- If we had buildings in the other counties would that attract more students? Can we offer degrees in other counties?
 - Currently only the Clark and Greene campuses are authorized for degrees.

How do we define community leadership? What does community leadership mean in a 4 county service area? How should we fulfill this role? How well are we fulfilling this role today? What are the appropriate priority areas going forward and how important is each? Are our priorities what our communities want from us?

- We must identify the unique needs of each county then determine the best way for us to meet those needs consistent with our mission and our capacity.
 - We should think long term about this.
 - We should leverage existing county presences such as corporate training clients to reach more broadly into each county.
- We need to think more about priorities – what are the most important/impactful things we can do in each county. With limited resources and we cannot do everything.
 - We need to identify the best way to reach each community, and each community may have different approaches and programs.
- We conducted a market study before reaching into Greene County. We should do this in the other two counties as well.
- It may not be possible to have a physical presence in all counties.
- We should determine if our contacts in Logan and Champaign are the right individuals to make connections with families who do not support college educations.
- We need to do more in Logan and Champaign. We should build on what we already have in order to get more young people thinking about college and explore career possibilities
- We should think about the broad range of employees we have and divide responsibilities as appropriate among greater numbers of folks.
- We need to focus on our strengths: education, arts & culture, vibrancy
- We need to find an advocate in Champaign who can help us as Debbie Ellis does in Logan. We are under serving Champaign today.
 - Karen noted there are additional reasons for the low numbers in Champaign, including the presence of Urbana U which offers Associate degrees.
 - Dual enrollment programs represent a challenge because there are no standards, with each college setting own tuition. This ends up with a sometimes price war. Findlay is the primary provider of dual enrollment programs in Champaign.
- It may be easier to penetrate Logan and Champaign counties because they come together as a county better. Greene is very fragmented.

- Should we offer anything like Champion City Scholars in other counties? Can we sell this to donors?
- We need to evaluate not only why students choose us as has been mentioned earlier, but also why they do not choose us. There are many students in the counties we serve who are attending colleges other than Clark State. Why?

What does it mean to “elevate the communities’ educational level”? How do we measure it?

- Review the demographic data to see if things are trending up: college attainment, income.
- Are employers hiring our graduates? Are our graduates desirable employees for business?
- Good question!
- We must focus – we can’t pay attention to kindergarten preparation

To what extent are we responsible to deliver our arts and cultural programming and services in all communities we serve?

- Arts programming represents an opportunity to connect with a community, it gives us leverage to access a community for both donors and students.
- Project Jericho is very important.
- Because we receive public dollars, we are obligated to serve our entire service area
- We want to drive people here as well to our PAC.
- Are our cultural attendees growing their educational level through our art & culture programs
- We are not responsible for arts & cultural programming in all parts of our service area, but we do what we can.

What are logical criteria to identify local, regional and national organizations that merit college resources (funding, staff and faculty time)?

- Connection with our mission
- Will it help generate enrollment
- Will it enhance the job related skill, the job performance of the person active in the organization?