

# ELEVEN UPDATE



## Wanted - Student Development Champions

- What are champions and why do we need them anyway? Read on for your colleagues' definitions, prognoses, and suggestions about the role of champions. Who knows? Maybe you are one already.
- This issue of *Eleven Update* focuses the Commission XI spotlight on the need for, the potential for, and the search for champions. Inside you will find:
  - An interview with Jack and Janna Becherer, bringing together the perspectives of a Vice President (Jack) and a Counselor (Janna) on the need for champions in student development. (Page 3)
  - An account of a recruitment and retention program championed by Addie Morrow at Lansing Community College that puts the focus where it belongs — on student success. (Page 6)
  - Evelyn Clements' description of the role of champions in the development of Middlesex Community College's Freshman Seminar. (Page 7)
  - A challenge from Maggie Culp to revive the strong tradition of champions in student development. Maggie also provides us a surefire guide for spotting a real champion. (Page 10)
  - And, for those of you who want more, a list of references pointing you to further reading about champions. (Page 4)

*Eleven Update*  
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**The Newsletter of Commission XI  
Student Development in Two-Year Colleges  
American College Personnel Association**

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## Notes From the Chair. . .

☐ Maggie Culp has passed the gavel my way and I have accepted it with profound appreciation for the leadership she has provided Commission XI. Her recap of commission goals in this summer's *Eleven Update* details an agenda that will keep us all busy for the next couple of years.



☐ The major focus of last July's ACPA Leadership Conference was on the ability of the new organizational structure to hear and respond to all "voices" of the ACPA. As your new Chair, I have worked with members of the directorate body to ensure that systems are in place to accomplish our 1995-96 goals and objectives. Partnerships with members of the directorate have resulted in a renewed Commission XI focus on Communication and Professional Development activities.

☐ Look for Commission XI online. Highlights of this issue of *Eleven Update*, and other Commission information, will be

available on the ACPA world wide web site at <http://www.acpa.nche.edu>. Also, beginning with this issue, distribution of *Eleven Update* is being extended to include all two-year colleges in the country. We are confident that our perspective will be valuable to this expanded constituency.

☐ Additionally, I would like to spend time focusing on a temperature check to determine where we are in relation to the National Agenda developed in 1990 by Commission XI, NASPA, and NCSD. Please see page 9 for a copy of the National Agenda.

☐ Mark your calendars for the 1996 ACPA Convention. Susan Salvador and Nancy Bentley have been working to ensure that the convention will include programs that are relevant to student development professionals in community colleges. "Making Our Way," the theme of this year's convention, will certainly include the "community college" way.

☐ Baltimore. . . March 6-10. . . no excuses.

Jennifer Wimbish  
Chair, Commission XI

# "Making Our Way" ACPA 1996 Annual Convention Baltimore — March 6-10, 1996

Wednesday, March 6

Pre-convention/Institutes, Placement & Registration

Thursday, March 7

Pre-convention/Institutes, Placement & Registration, Opening Keynote Address and Reception

Friday, March 8

Invited Papers & Teleconference: Hearing the Voices Around Us  
General Convention, Sponsored, Co-Sponsored & State Showcase Programs

Saturday, March 9

Discussion Groups: Enacting Change On Campus  
General Convention, Sponsored, Co-Sponsored & State Showcase Programs

Sunday, March 10

General Convention, Sponsored, Co-Sponsored & State Showcase Programs  
Open Business Meeting/President's Address & Awards

# WHY DO WE NEED CHAMPIONS IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT?

□ *Eleven Update* asked Jack and Janna Becherer to share their thoughts about the role of champions in student development. Jack is Vice President for Student Development at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills, Illinois, and Janna is a counselor at South Suburban College in South Holland, Illinois. Between them, they have worked in student development at seven different community colleges. They bring a wide perspective to the following questions:

**How did you two become interested in student development champions?**

**Janna** Actually, we didn't really set out to study champions. Our original intent was to explore what works in student development programs.

**Jack** In the spring of 1994, we surveyed 200 community colleges asking them to describe their exemplary student development programs. From responses, patterns and common elements emerged. These six patterns are described more fully in the chapter we wrote for *Promoting Student Success in the Community College, New Directions for Student Services*.

**Janna** One of the patterns showed that over and over again, a champion, or a small group of champions, was responsible for getting these exemplary programs going.

**Jack** We were intrigued by this particular pattern and decided to examine it further.

**What does it mean to be a champion in student development?**

**Jack** Champions implement new programs. Champions are individuals or small groups of people who relentlessly push an idea until it becomes an integral part of the programming at a college. I don't use the word "relentless" casually. Student development professionals readily share ideas of how to enhance student growth, but all too few of these ideas come to fruition. However, in a world full of obstacles, champions get things done.

**The new idea either finds a champion or dies.**

**— Edward Schon,  
Massachusetts Institute  
of Technology**

**Janna** More than anything else, it means a willingness to be a change agent and to passionately nurture an idea from concept to implementation. Over the years, student development champions have led initiatives to streamline registration procedures, to reach under-served populations, and to improve student retention. A recent article in *Fortune* talks about "champion creatives" and says that they "are self-motivated, love risk, thrive on ambiguity, and delight in novelty, twists, and reversals."

**What makes this role so critical?**

**Janna** It is critical because without champions, we become mired in the status quo and lose the promise of new possibilities both for our colleges and for our students. If our departments are serious about fostering student learning, we desperately need champions who will expend extra energy and effort on new initiatives.

**Jack** Champions are the change masters of the world. Edward Schon says "The new idea either finds a champion or dies." Harvard's Theodore Levitt used stronger words — "Creativity without action-oriented follow through is a barren form of behavior. In a sense, it is irresponsible." The importance of being a champion lies in the ability to make things happen.

Although making things happen has always been important in student development, the recent focus on defining outcomes and on facilitating student learning brings us to a point where the essence of our work will be dependent on what we help students accomplish. When you read the ACPA statement, "The Student Learning Imperative," it is clear that the future of our discipline is linked to our ability to create conditions that enhance student learning and personal development. Our failure to "champion" these ideas could result in our being viewed as "non-essential" players in the teaching/learning process.



## WHY DO WE NEED CHAMPIONS IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT?, continued

From what you are saying, it sounds like everyone would gladly be a champion. What do you think stops people from doing this?

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Converting a concept into a program is extraordinarily hard work. First, you must passionately believe in the concept. Then, you must enlist the support of others whose involvement is critical for the creation of the program. Once you expand your base of involved people, you must determine how to get commitment from the system. Of course, systems are typically resistant to change. In addition, many experienced student development professionals believe that they have been beaten down so many times by "the system" that they have no energy left to try again. It's no surprise that only the brave and bold strive to be champions.

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They get tired and frustrated. Seriously, there are times when a potential champion will give up. Sonnenberg and Goldberg have said

that "A new idea has a life cycle, just as a person does. If properly nourished, it grows and matures into a productive member of society. However, in a hostile environment, a person tends to tuck away a new thought rather than face the inevitable fight to get others in the organization to hear and accept the idea."

### Is age/experience a factor?

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I don't believe so. The enthusiasm and fresh perspective of new professionals often leads to the development of exciting new ideas and to the energy needed to convert ideas into action. On the other hand, seasoned professionals benefit from the wisdom that accompanies years of dedicated work and have often formed alliances with colleagues that will prove invaluable when they try to make things happen. Each of us possess tools useful in facilitating innovation.

Can each of you give an example of someone you consider a champion in student development?

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I was privileged to be part of an urban community college which was challenged by its president to create a summer bridge program for academically under-prepared students. We were given a window of about two months to design and implement the program.

Although this activity took place almost 10 years ago, I can vividly recall the energy created by those committed to creating the bridge program. I remember how disorganized we were throughout the planning process and how poorly prepared we were for the first day of classes. I remember arguments, frustration and burnout. More lasting, however, are feelings of camaraderie, teamwork, commitment and accomplishment. For a short time, the college had a single-minded purpose to implement a truly worthwhile initiative. This was a career altering activity.

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A former colleague of mine, Maggie Glad, stands out as a champion for students with disabilities. She was the counselor assigned to work with those students and she was tireless on their behalf. Maggie fought for elevators in all buildings, electronic doors and cut-away curbs. She added interpreters, arranged for outside testing, and educated the teaching faculty. Maggie took on "the administration" brandishing copies of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Her positions and pleas were often unpopular, annoying and expensive, but she embodied the cause of "her" students and accomplished a great deal for them.

## References and Additional Sources on the Role of Champions

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**WHY DO WE NEED CHAMPIONS IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT?, continued**

**When have you personally taken on the champion mantle?**

**Janna** For a number of years, I was a champion for scheduling and planning an annual retreat for the counseling faculty. I really saw this as a way to keep us—individually and as a group—energized, learning, and headed for growth. Although I was always part of a planning committee, I would do whatever it took to make the retreat happen. This included everything from selecting a breakfast menu, to setting up chairs, to negotiating prices with off-campus sites, to pleading with speakers to lower their rates so we could stay within our budget.

Over the years, we used these retreats to develop a departmental purpose statement, to explore our creative sides while taking nature walks, to brainstorm goals for the coming year at a cabin in the woods, and — my personal favorite — to enhance team building through outdoor physical challenges. I will never forget passing my boss through a rope web four feet off the ground! It took all of us working together to get her, and eventually each other, safely across to the other side. Isn't that an apt metaphor for our work with students and colleagues?

**Jack** I've been fortunate to be involved in various innovations throughout my career. In the late 1970's, I was one of three counselors who teamed with developmental education faculty to create a student success course. Recently, I've been a part of departmental reorganization specifically designed to enhance student growth or to provide services to simplify the student's collegiate experiences.

What strikes me is the changing nature of my role as champion during this time period. Tom Peters and Robert Waterman describe champions as creative fanatics, pragmatic idea thieves, and as patient

coaches in their book In Search of Excellence.

As a counselor, I was impulsive and perhaps fanatical about establishing the student success course. As a mid-level manager, I was enraptured by the collective spirit of participating in the dream of a visionary president. As a chief student affairs officer, I try to remain patient as processes are nurtured that establish a climate from which faculty and staff can be innovative.

**Self-motivated, love-risk, thrive on ambiguity, and delight in novelty, twists and reversals.**

**— A. Farnham**

What have these experiences taught me about the role of the champion of innovation? First, never to ignore the importance of the educational system that employs you. Innovation occurs in systems that not only encourage ideas but demand change. Although a system which demands change will not necessarily nourish the champions they possess, they will likely be less stifling than those which rigidly maintain the status quo. Secondly, each of us has roles to play in creating innovation. Those who fail to see their role may be viewing their positions too narrowly, and will miss both the excitement and the fulfillment of leading the way to improved services for students.

**Jack, what do you expect from counselors, and Janna, what do you expect from administrators, to lead the way as champions in your areas?**

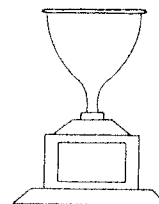
**Jack** Simply put, not to wait for supervisors to identify areas needing change. Student development faculty have more contact with

students than anyone serving in an administrative role. Either by forming action teams or through single-minded determination, counselors working in today's colleges must initiate the movement to reform operations within student development, and by doing so, maximize our contribution to student learning.

The greatest challenge of a student development administrator is not how to lead but how to instill in others the drive to do so. Working together, with mutual respect and appreciation of the other's position, we can create a climate that nurtures champions and fosters leadership throughout student development.

**Janna** My fantasy administrator, or FA, has a vision for student development in general and understands how counseling is a critical component of this vision. He or she involves all of the professional and support staff in this vision, incorporating our ideas. FA invites and encourages us to develop our own individual visions that support the larger department and college missions. With any new initiative, we are included in the early planning stages and have active roles in its implementation. I really appreciate FA's ability to cut through "red tape" and to achieve that delicate balance between giving me autonomy and being available when I seek help.

I expect my FA to win the respect of top administration for this vision and to be a champion for student development across the campus. I agree with Warren Bennis who says that successful executives should give a sense of direction, inspire trust, and convey optimism and hope.



## Champion Creates Campus, Community Networks To Foster Student Success In Recruitment & Retention Program

☐ At Lansing Community College, and in the lives of dozens of its students, Addie Morrow is a champion. The College's sister-college agreement with the Atlanta University Center (AUC), managed by Morrow, leads local efforts in the recruitment and retention of minority students.

☐ "The purpose of the AUC program is to help motivate African-American students to persist in school," said Morrow. "Efforts begin at the middle school level, focusing on retention efforts prior to students attending LCC."

☐ The Atlanta University Center is a consortium of four colleges operating under an arrangement that facilitates coordinated use of facilities, resources and activities. Through cross-registration, Spelman College students, for example, may elect to take courses at any of the other AUC undergraduate schools.

☐ "We follow a collaborative approach which we believe is a more effective way

of maximizing our program objective," Morrow said. This approach maximizes the chance for effective assistance to African-American children by targeting four domains of a child's life: church, community, education and parents.

☐ The LCC/AUC program, established in 1988, has established extensive community connections. Local support for the program includes the Michigan State University (MSU) Crop and Soil Science Department, Parent Support Network, the Black Child and Family Institute, the Greater Lansing Foundation, the Michigan Compact, and many area churches, high schools and service organizations.

☐ Working in close collaboration with the College counseling staff and her local network, Morrow has added seminars, lectures, AUC campus visitations, a local Adopt-A-Middle School program with Dwight Rich Middle School, a mentorship program and scholarship fundraisers to the college's retention effort through the LCC/

AUC plan. Currently, 75 students are in area middle and high schools that have been identified as new candidates for the LCC/AUC transfer program.

☐ The program's record of student success is impressive. Nearly two dozen of its alumni are currently attending AUC colleges. During the 1994-95 school year, an additional 14 students from the program transferred to other four-year colleges. To date, all LCC students who have transferred to AUC schools have maintained a 3.0 grade point average.

☐ "Due to the academic success of previous LCC/AUC transfer students, the program has received overwhelming support from the Atlanta University Center Schools. All of our students have received favorable admissions," Morrow said.

☐ Not coincidentally, Morrow was presented Lansing Community College's Distinguished Faculty Award for 1995. Sometimes being a champion gets noticed.

## *Promoting Student Success in the Community College*

Available from  
Jossey-Bass Publishing, 350 Sansome St.,  
San Francisco CA 94104-1342

Edited by Steven R. Helfgot and Maggie Culp, this insightful book is filled with contributions from many of your Commission XI colleagues. Order your copy today.

Its publication is a Commission XI project.

It's not the *Bridges of Madison County*, but the writing is better.

# The Development of Freshman Seminar at Middlesex Community College

❑ "The budget is very tight this year. Classroom space really is limited at prime times during the day." Probably all of us have heard these statements at various times. The reality is that most colleges nationwide are faced with budget constraints, and yet our students present increasing needs for supportive services. How can we, as student services professionals, develop innovative programs when funding is limited and staff are stretched to their maximum in providing direct service?

❑ Middlesex Community College faced this challenge several years ago. State funding for community colleges in Massachusetts had been cut severely, and the budget at Middlesex was extremely limited. In

addition, at that time we were located in temporary quarters, and classroom space was at a premium.

Whether you believe you can, or whether you believe you can't, you're absolutely right.

—Henry Ford

❑ This was not an ideal time to begin a new program such as Freshman Seminar. Nevertheless, a new Freshman Seminar did begin. Its success was due to the enthusiasm and tenacity of a small group of true champions who had a vision and who, when faced with barriers, saw only possibilities and solutions.

## The Champions Step Forward

❑ The College's Retention Committee was considering the concept of building connections with students as a way to increase retention. The Committee was convinced that a Freshman Seminar program would be an ideal means to create those connections.

❑ Two professors, Ann Miller, from the Science Department, and Elaine Linscott, from the Nursing Department, stepped forward with enthusiasm and energy to champion this idea. They, along with other members of the Retention Committee, formed a small core group to plan and design the program.

❑ These champions and their approach to problem solving helped to make the program succeed. The core planning group was small (under ten faculty and staff) and highly focused. Within three meetings, the group had decided on a philosophy for the course and had resolved the practical concepts of implementation. They worked together as a team, they inspired one another, and they had a "can do" attitude.

❑ The planning group consisted of a faculty member from each academic division, representatives from student services, and was chaired by the Chairperson of the Retention Committee, who was from student services. During those discussions, faculty from the science and

allied health divisions spoke about the importance of affective education. Faculty from social sciences and humanities addressed the importance of continued, frequent contact with

students in order to make the program succeed. Regardless of the academic discipline they represented, each shared a common philosophy that centered on creating an innovative, affective education program that would foster student success.

## The Course Gets Defined

❑ The group was clear on what it wanted in the Freshman Seminar:

1. The course should have a teaching approach which would focus on interaction and not on lecture.
2. The course should be based on affective education, including topics on students' perceptions about the purpose of higher education, values, goals, and cultural diversity.
3. The course should encourage interaction between faculty and students, and among the students themselves. Planning included weekly written journals and small

group projects that would center on community service.

4. Students who needed this course were those who were in large academic programs, such as Liberal Arts and Business, where there was the least opportunity for students to form small supportive communities
5. The course should meet twice per week for the first eight weeks of the semester, when new students most need support.

## Overcoming Barriers

❑ A second attribute of this core group of champions was its ability to see solutions when faced with potential barriers. The Curriculum Committee had stringent standards: how would this group get such a course approved for graduation credit? The solution: request a three year pilot study with measurable objectives. It worked, and approval was granted for a pilot study. The next barrier was classroom space. The group had envisioned one instructor matched with about twelve students, but the Registrar indicated that there was not enough classroom space at prime times during the day. The solution: double the size of the class, and place two instructors into one section. With this solution, the classroom space was available at the needed times.



## The Development of Freshman Seminar at Middlesex Community College, continued

□ The solution to the classroom space problem serendipitously laid a cornerstone of the program. Each class consisted of a team of two instructors — a student services staff member was usually matched with a member of the faculty. The camaraderie that this work generated among the teaching teams was one of its greatest benefits. The paired instructors “weathered” the class together and developed an understanding of one another’s teaching style and job responsibilities.

□ For the first time, student services staff and faculty taught a class together and learned from one another. Faculty and administrators were matched in teams, as were faculty from different disciplines. The Freshman Seminar course allowed group support to develop across all levels of the college community, and resulted in a new found appreciation and understanding among colleagues who otherwise might not have had the chance to work together.

□ In one team, a faculty member from the philosophy department, who also chaired the professional development workshop committee, was matched with the Director of Student Activities. After teaching Freshman Seminar together, they developed a new understanding of one another’s skills and competencies. The philosophy professor particularly was impressed with the Director of Student Activities’ ability to encourage group discussion, and he asked the Director to lead a workshop for faculty on teaching techniques which encouraged class discussion. This was but one example of the partnerships and new bonds, which were formed as a result of the team teaching solution, that was proposed in response to the problem of limited classroom space.

□ Other barriers remained. There was no funding available to compensate the instructors. The faculty in this core group were so committed to the success of this program, however, that they agreed to teach the course, above and beyond their contractual obligations in the union, for no compensation. They believed in this course, and they were deeply committed to its success.

□ The Student Services staff agreed to work with faculty to create a teaching manual, and the staff devoted countless hours over the summer to writing a two-hundred page instructor’s manual that described each topic and class session in detail. Staff and faculty came together at the end of August to offer a two day training workshop for Freshman Seminar instructors. Many faculty and staff took responsibility for leading sessions during the training, and sometimes they presented in pairs. It was truly a team effort.

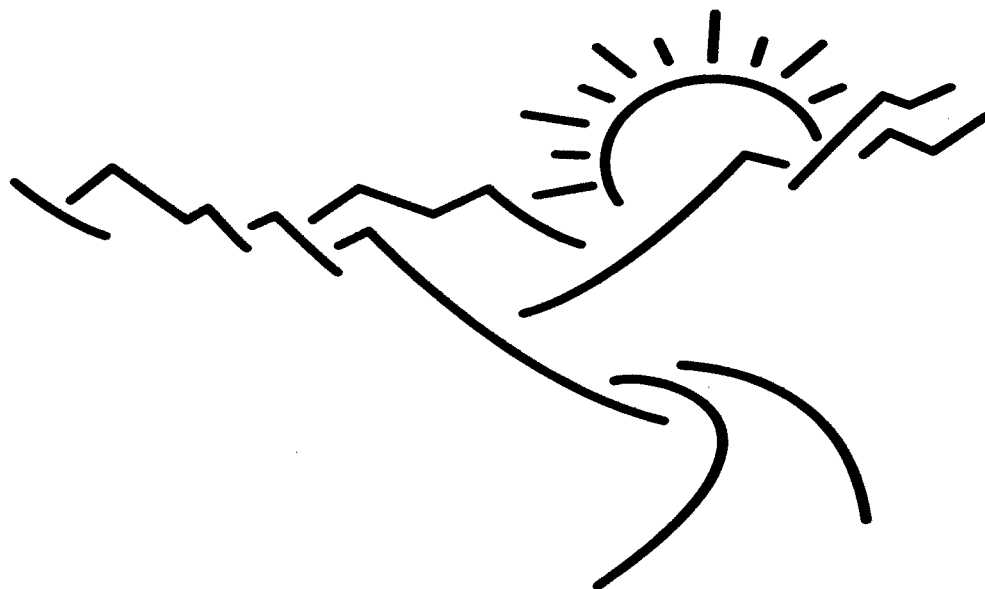
### Implementation

□ During the first year of the program, there were 169 students enrolled, with five faculty and eleven administrators and student services staff teaching in teams. By the end of that first semester, word had spread across the college about the dedication of this teaching group. The Dean of Administration and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs both were impressed with the group’s commitment and agreed to find the funds to compensate the instructors. These faculty had not asked for compensation, but their commitment made such an impact on the college that the funds were found to recognize their work. By the second year, fifteen faculty and eighteen staff and administrators had asked to teach Freshman Seminar. The enthusiasm of the core group rippled across the college. Funding was no longer an issue; the support was there.

□ In developing an innovative program, the process can begin from a grass roots effort, or from the top level of administration on down. In the case of the Freshman Seminar program at Middlesex, the program began at a grass roots level, but was quickly supported by the President. The college has a new President who was eager to encourage innovative initiatives. When he learned about the efforts of the Freshman Seminar instructors, he asked that a formal presentation about the program be given to the Board of Trustees. Over twenty eight faculty and staff attended that Board meeting, and when the trustees heard about the Freshman Seminar Program, they were extremely impressed.

□ Support for the program continued to grow. The Associate Dean for Enrollment Management created a highly controlled study that measured the retention rates and grade point averages of Freshman Seminar students, matched with a selected sample of non participants based on six variables: academic program, entering reading grade level, ethnicity, campus enrollment, gender, and part-time/full-time status.

□ From fall to spring, the attrition rate for Freshman Seminar students was 13 percent, for the matched sample it was 26 percent. The attrition rate for Freshman Seminar students remained lower for three subsequent semesters, and subsequent classes had the same significant results. Grade point averages were better for Freshman Seminar students as well.





## The Development of Freshman Seminar at Middlesex Community College, continued

☐ By the end of the third year, the core group was ready to present the program to the full faculty association for approval as graduation credit. The presentation was a group effort from the core planners and included among others, faculty from the mathematics department explaining the statistical results, and those from the social science department and student services describing the affective goals. Debate continued for over an hour, but the overwhelming support across the college was there.

**The whole difference between construction and creation is exactly this; That a thing constructed can only be loved after it is constructed; but a thing created is loved before it exists.**

**- Charles Dickens**

approved by the faculty association for graduation credit.

☐ A faculty member from the mathematics department, who was also President of the faculty/staff union, stated that he had never taught Freshman Seminar, but he knew those students in his class who had been enrolled in the course, because they were more attentive and willing to engage in class discussion. The course was

☐ Over the years since the course was approved, the content has been revised and refined. Since the enrollment has expanded, some classes now are taught by an individual Freshman Seminar instructor who has taught the course before. Any new instructor to the program is matched in a teaching team with a seasoned Seminar instructor. Some of the original core

members are still involved in the programs; others have moved on to other new initiatives.

☐ Support for the course remains strong across the college. The strong support is due to the commitment of the original core group who conceived the idea, and had the determination to follow the program through three years of a pilot study until its final approval by the full college. They had a vision, they were willing to overcome barriers, including lack of funding, to make the program succeed, and they were willing to work diligently and enthusiastically. They are true champions.

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## AGENDA FOR THE 90'S: ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

### STUDENT DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES PRIORITIES FOR THE 1990'S

The three major professional associations for student affairs practitioners in two-year colleges, the **National Council on Student Development** (an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges), **Commission XI** (a commission of the American College Personnel Association, focusing on student development in two-year colleges), and the **Community College Network** (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) jointly endorse addressing the priorities listed below.

- I. Identifying and responding to the challenge of Student Diversity
- II. Defining and contributing to Institutional Effectiveness, particularly in regard to outcomes for students
- III. Conducting Research Focusing on Student Success and Contributing to the Body of Higher Education Literature
- IV. Providing effective institutional Leadership for student affairs
- V. Assuring staff competency and vitality through Staff Development

# STUDENT DEVELOPMENT CHAMPIONS: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES?

## Introduction

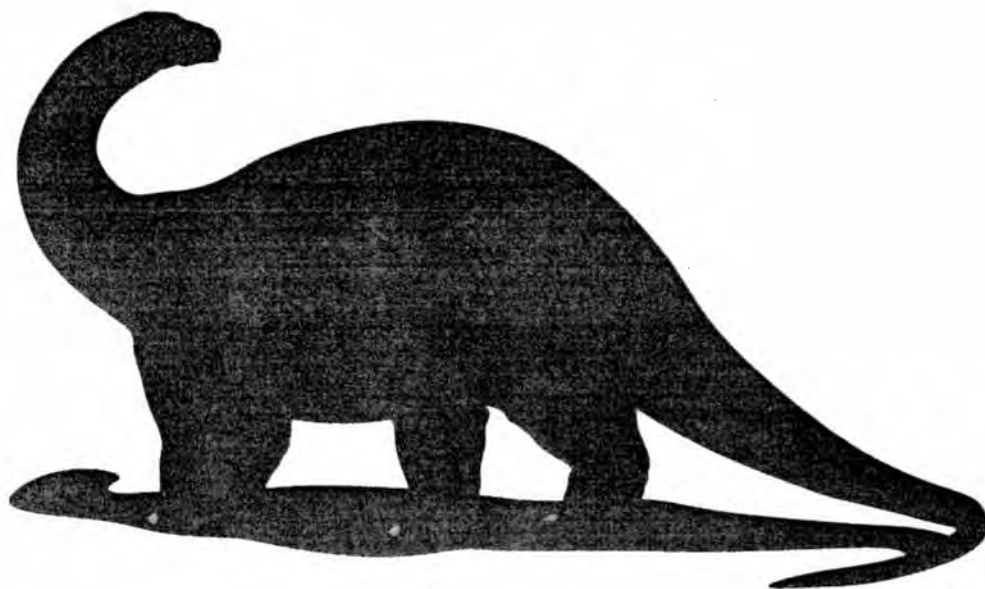
□ Student affairs champions in the two-year college may be an endangered species. Their numbers decline daily. The leaders of the 60's have retired, and the leaders of the 70's and 80's are either switching to the academic side of the house or leaving the community college for careers in business, graduate school, or the community. If no new champions emerge, will the student affairs profession survive in the two-year college?

## Putting the Challenge In Perspective

□ Student development champions were everywhere in the community colleges of the 60's and 70's. Major two-year colleges boasted of at least one genuine community "giant" in the student development field: a scholar who practiced his/her craft in a community college, then wrote and talked about what s/he did, why s/he did it, and how it worked (or failed). National conventions such as ACPA and NASPA attracted these giants plus their presidents, vice presidents, deans, staff, and faculty—all of whom argued passionately about how to help students develop, how to teach and how to learn and, most importantly, how to create learning communities.

□ In the 60's and 70's, students were the focal point of the two-year college, and faculty members assumed that student development "types," by virtue of their training, possessed unique insights into teaching at-risk and nontraditional students. Presidents often came from a student development background and empowered their faculty and staff to do good things while creating campus cultures that valued student development.

□ Student development practitioners were passionate idealists who believed they could make a difference. Most were trained in an academic discipline before earning advanced degrees in a student development program heavy on philosophy, adult development theory, and research techniques. Many brought a unique perspective to student development because they came out of the classroom.



□ In the mid-1980's, the number of student development champions at the state and national levels began to decline. Legislators began to question the usefulness of community colleges. Society began to devalue the human services profession. Consequently, fewer practitioners viewed either student development or the two-year college as good places to start their careers, and a reduction in entry-level practitioners translated into fewer future champions.

□ At the same time, national associations turned their attention to four-year institutions, became entangled in power struggles among special interest groups, and/or started to focus on who practitioners were, rather than what they did. Graduate schools defined successful graduates as those with status, titles, high salaries, corner offices, and upward mobility. Community colleges hired presidents who raised money and tamed technology, presidents who rarely came from, understood, or valued the student development side of the house.

□ With fewer champions to lead the way at the national and state levels, with universities encouraging graduate students to work in four-year institutions, and with presidents either reducing or deprofessionalizing their student development staff, fewer student development champions emerged at the local level.

And without these champions, student development programming declined across the nation.

## Examining the Need for Champions

□ Is the need for student development champions more critical than the need for instruction, business office or data center champions? The answer is "yes" for many reasons, the most compelling of which are listed here.

1. Community colleges come in all shapes and sizes and have a variety of missions. As a result, student development programs vary from one institution to another, forcing each institution to develop its own model. Champions help institutions acknowledge the connection between student development and student success and identify models that work.
2. Student development programs are rarely state mandated, making them inviting targets during fiscally challenging times. Champions teach institutions to value student development and help practitioners compete for a fair share of the institution's resources.



## STUDENT DEVELOPMENT CHAMPIONS: AN ENDANGERED SPECIES?, continued

3. Student development practitioners have always been "doers," but that label fits even more today as colleges replace degreed professionals with paraprofessionals. Without champions, "doers" become trapped in day-to-day activities and become too tired when that day ends to look at the big picture, explore the relationship of what they did to existing theory, develop new theory, engage in research, or write and speak about their programs.

☐ In the past, nationally recognized student development programs at the two-year college level were led by champions capable of demonstrating to the president, the administration, and the faculty why and how student development programs increased the institution's effectiveness. Most of the innovative programs described in previous issues of *Eleven Update* exist because of the vision and drive of a campus champion. Champions were important to the profession's past; they are essential to its future.

### Recognizing and Creating Champions

☐ What does a student development champion look like? Champions come in many different packages, but they all seem to share the following characteristics:

1. a **passion** for students that translates into the creation of programs to help students succeed;
2. a **knowledge of student development theory and research** that guides their day-to-day activities;
3. an **ability to energize** themselves and others toward a common goal;
4. an ability to **demonstrate** via the written and spoken word the **connection between student development and student success** in the classroom and in life;

5. a willingness to **participate in the intellectual life** of their institutions and their profession, to speak about what they do in academic terms, and to connect with the faculty in meaningful ways;
6. an ability to **see and adapt to the future** without sacrificing their core values;
7. an ability to **compete for resources** by creating a clear picture of the value of student development programs;

vice president, or provost who allowed the program to live.

☐ Where are the professionals with these qualities: tomorrow's champions? The hopeful response is that they are enrolled in graduate programs or pursuing their chosen profession in two-year colleges across the nation or writing articles for *Eleven Update*. But the truth is that too many of tomorrow's champions are going into "other" graduate programs, accepting positions in the university setting, or leaving the two-year college. Should Commission XI members be concerned about this trend? Definitely! Can they do something about it? Possibly! But that's another article.

Maggie Culp  
Dean of Students  
Seminole Community  
College



8. an ability to **attract bright, new practitioners** to the profession and quality staff to their institutions;
9. an ability to **assess a president** to determine if s/he believes in, or is amenable to learning about student development; for when all is said and done, if the president does not support it, student development cannot survive; and
10. an ability to **recognize, reward, and cultivate their supporters**, because behind every successful student development program is a president,



# Should Bill Gates Be The Only One To Profit From The Explosion In Technology?

Maybe Our Students Deserve To Profit Too.

## Call For Articles

*Eleven Update* — Winter Issue  
“Technology and Student Development”

Deadline: January 5, 1996

Submit articles to:

Ray Turner  
Lansing Community College  
P.O. Box 40010  
Lansing MI 48901

Mike Rooney  
Maricopa Community College  
2411 W. 14th Street  
Tempe AZ 85281-6941

Each issue of *Eleven Update* this year will focus attention on a general theme. Guest editors will work with General Editor Ray Turner to deliver perspectives and information that will enrich our work. The issue in your hands features “Champions Lead the Way,” with Jack and Janna Becherer and Maggie Culp as guest editors. Guest editors for the winter issue, “Technology and Student Services” are Mel Gay, Mike Rooney, and Karen Treiber. Ralph Ford will guest edit the spring issue, “The Role of Partnerships in Student Services.”



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