unbelievable effort on the part of TCC’s entire college community. We have truly become an institution that uses data to inform our decision making and one that uses broad engagement to gain support for making lasting changes. Becoming a Leader College acknowledges the extensive changes TCC has made and the resulting increases in the success of its students. Continuing these efforts requires a commitment to ongoing program development and process improvement. This fall, a new “Model for Student Success” will be available on the TCC website. Prospective students will be able to access this model to find out more about the academic, technical and continuing education pathways available at TCC. They will also be able to learn about the wide array of programs and services in place to support student success and completion.

Reaccreditation and the QEP

This year, we will pursue reaffirmation of accreditation by SACS, and the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) represents a major component of that process. TCC’s QEP is focused on “improving the critical thinking abilities of our students and effectively measuring that improvement.” Although the QEP focus is primarily on instruction, the entire College is focused on critical thinking across the institution. In the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014, TCC’s Project SSSTRONG, Title III grant will support the training of advisors and counselors in critical thinking and the development of supplemental instructional leaders. The grant also will support the awarding of mini-grants that focus on critical thinking.

Student Success

Everything that happens at the College impacts student success and completion, which means that every employee has a role to play. In 2010, TCC began developing its “student success and completion agenda” and has introduced new policies (professional development), modified existing policies (work study eligibility) and implemented new programs and services to support this commitment. These programs and services include mandatory remediation; case management; appreciative,
intentional advising; math emporiums and a student success course. Along with existing programs and services, these new offerings are helping students move through their courses and reach their goals in a timely manner.

In this Student Success Report, you’ll learn about some of the newer programs and services designed to support students including Veterans Education Benefit workshops, a new mentoring pilot at South Campus and the development of CARE Teams throughout the District. You also will learn about the new Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment, and get updates on Achieving the Dream, the College’s graduation outreach efforts, the Men of Color Mentoring Program, the Student Development and Success Institute, and the College’s plan to outsource several financial aid functions. Everything and everyone at Tarrant County College is focused on helping students to prepare for college, move through their studies and complete their educational goals. As we begin the 2013-2014 academic year, I hope that you will examine your role at TCC and join us in “critically thinking about success and completion.”

Tarrant County College is celebrating its fourth year since joining Achieving the Dream (ATD)! As we enter Fall 2013, several changes are underway which further support our commitment to success.

First, the Student Success Division welcomes two new ATD Coordinators: Julie Gale at the Northeast Campus and Irene Thrower at the Trinity River Campus. Julie has been with TCC for four years, most recently serving as Outreach Coordinator and Instructor of Drama. Irene has been working with TCC for twelve years and currently serves the Department Chair of Communication and Fine Arts. Both Julie and Irene bring years of experience working with students and promoting student success. Together with our other ATD coordinators, Jacquelyn Warmsley (SE), Charlene Ghaedi (SO) and Joan Shriver (NW), we are eager to begin the fall semester and continue the student success momentum generated this past academic year.

During the 2012-2013, we implemented several
Achieving the Dream interventions, which serve as tools for our students to build their own paths to success.

In Spring 2013, TCC offered New Student Orientation (NSO) to all First Time in College Students who were new to the College. During these interactive and engaging half-day sessions, students learned about the College District, their campus and the support resources available to them. Energetic student Peer Leaders conducted the sessions, with faculty and staff members on hand to answer questions and welcome students to the TCC experience.

TCC also introduced Math Emporiums (ME) on each campus in 2012-2013. Mastery-based and adaptive learning are two key elements of the ME. This method of instruction allows students to take computer-assisted math courses to complete their developmental math requirements. In the ME classes, instructors and assistants are available to answer questions and provide mini-lessons for students. Working at their own pace, students have the opportunity to complete more than one class during the semester or complete their classes early. This academic year, Math Emporium successfully moved 2,367 students through Math 0302, 0304 or 0350.

In addition to the ATD interventions, TCC offers students additional resources to help them achieve success including tutoring services and the AEP Bootcamp. With so many programs and services accessible and available to students, they are sure to have the tools necessary to build a sturdy and strong student success foundation—and that supports the mission at the very heart of TCC: to provide affordable and open access to quality teaching and learning.

CARE stands for:

- **Consultation**: to provide consultation and address concerns regarding well-being and safety of students and ultimately the campus at large; to be a collaborative team drawing upon the expertise and professional skills from all areas of campus.
- **Assessment**: to provide needs assessment of student and campus community; to assess situations and determine appropriate courses of action regarding referrals.
- **Resources & Referrals**: to promote campus resources to students, faculty, and staff; to identify resources available in the community and foster positive community relationships; to make appropriate referrals to best serve students in distress.
- **Education**: to provide professional development and training for staff and faculty addressing the needs of distressed students; to promote proactive and preventative psycho-educational seminars on wellness related topics; to promote suicide response training.

Joe Rode and Adrian Rodriguez led a Districtwide team dedicated to creating a model to ensure healthy campus climates conducive to student learning. The CARE Team is committed to establishing strong...
working relationships with our community partners to enhance service to students in need of medical, emotional or psychological support. The Team strives to provide strong and open communication through which the campus can identify and assist distressed students. All of these values assist the team in being an effective group on campus.

For more information regarding the referral process at your campus, contact the Vice President for Student Development.

**LINKing Students to Success**

Beginning in the Fall 2013, the Empowering LINKS mentoring program will launch at the South Campus. The Empowering LINKS Mentoring Program evolved out of a partnership with The LINKS organization and Achieving the Dream (ATD). The purpose of the partnership is to create a structure for The LINKS volunteers to assist ATD community colleges in meeting national goals for attainment of higher education credentials. Through this partnership, The LINKS and ATD will initiate five “Equation for Excellence” pilots that will engage one LINKS chapter of volunteers with an ATD institution and other partnering organizations. As a participant in this pilot project, TCC has developed the Empowering LINKS Mentoring Program.

**Goals**

The Empowering LINKS Mentoring Program seeks to assist students in:

- Defining personal and career goals and developing a plan for achieving these goals
- Developing self-esteem and a positive self-image
- Creating connections to community and business resources
- Increasing success, retention and attainment of academic goals

**Mission**

The Empowering LINKS Mentoring Program fosters the personal and professional growth of TCC’s female students.

**Program Design**

Through a monthly discussion series, academic workshops, networking opportunities, community service and mentoring efforts, the Empowering LINKS Mentoring program seeks to assist participants in defining personal and career goals that will contribute to an increase of their success, retention and attainment of academic goals. By exposing students to positive role models from the LINKS organization and the faculty and staff at TCC who will engage in mentoring activities such as job shadowing, workshops and academic planning with students, Empowering LINKS is designed to enhance the academic success of women students, especially those who have expressed an interest in the arts, business and/or service to the community as a career goal. In Phase One of the program (2013-2014), Empowering LINKS will focus on recruiting up to 80 student participants at the South Campus. Empowering LINKS will be a year-round program.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor or if you know a student who would be a great participant for the Program, contact Sharron Crear at 817-515-4266 or Tina Jenkins at 817-515-4635.

**Getting Students Ready for the New TSI Assessment**

With the launch of the new TSI Assessment on August 26, all students taking the Assessment are now required to complete the Pre-Assessment Activity (PAA). The PAA is designed to expose students to the structure and organization of the test as well as some of the test questions. The PAA, pronounced “paw,” will include four modules:

1. **Explanation of the importance of the Assessment**
2. Preview of the testing process and sample questions
3. Outline of remediation options
4. Overview of community resources

The PAA will be launched in two phases. In Phase One, beginning on August 26, the PAA will be incorporated into the New Student Group Advisement (NSGA) session. In Phase Two (projected for Summer, 2014), the PAA will be online and completed remotely.

Special thanks to the Directors of Advising and Counseling, led by Jade Borne, Ph.D., for developing the content for the PAA.

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Financial Aid Outsourcing

Student Financial Aid Services (SFAS) is partnering with Edfinancial Services (Edfinancial) to enrich Tarrant County College (TCC) financial aid services. Starting in Fall 2013, Edfinancial will answer student financial aid phone calls and will be handling the verification review process for financial aid applicants.

SFAS and TCC officials reviewed nine different vendor proposals and conducted three in-person interviews before selecting Edfinancial as a partner. Edfinancial is the nation’s largest privately held education loan servicer. They work with 51 schools in their Higher Education Solutions division, including schools in Texas. The staff, consisting of former financial aid professionals, will work from a secure centralized facility in Knoxville, TN.

Some of the expected benefits of Edfinancial assuming SFAS student phone calls include:
• Increased access to financial aid information
• SFAS staff available for in person assistance and outreach projects
• TCC Call Center will be able to answer other calls more effectively
• Reduce a 50% abandon rate during peak times – Edfinancial expected peak time abandon rate is 6.58%

The primary benefit expected from Edfinancial assuming SFAS verification review process is that TCC’s student verification applications will be processed quicker during peak times:

• Edfinancial can provide a three-day or less turnaround time; currently SFAS has a 7-10 day turnaround time during peak time.

Edfinancial assuming the responsibility of the verification review process will allow us to relocate a new Financial Aid Campus Specialist to each campus. This Financial Aid Campus Specialist will provide additional services to our students.

These services include:

• Individualized Financial Aid Advising to students who need an Academic Success Plan
• Providing additional financial aid presentations and awareness programs
• Collaborating with other TCC offices for student success
• More one-on-one advising for students in the campus offices

SFAS looks forward to working with Edfinancial to help our students to be successful.

Veterans Education Benefits Workshops

TCC held its first Veterans Education Benefits Workshops on May 29 – June 1, 2013. The Registrars and the VetSuccess Counselors collaborated to present information for veterans and their dependents about educational benefits available to veterans and their dependents. Specifically, attendees learned about educational benefits options such as Post 9-11 GI-Bill, Montgomery GI-Bill, VRAP and Hazlewood Exemptions as well as the registration and certification processes at TCC. Further, the workshops helped veterans understand the role of the VetSuccess Counselors on campuses.

The workshops were presented at the Southeast, South and Northeast campuses. A live video streaming of the workshops was given at Northwest and Trinity River campuses. Approximately 50 students attended Districtwide.

Graduation Outreach at TCC

TCC’s new Graduation Outreach Specialist position, filled by Ami Dominguez, is designed to eliminate barriers toward completion of academic programs; identify and automatically award degrees and/or certificates to eligible students and increase academic program completion rates. In order for this to occur, Ami proactively identifies and contacts current students who have completed degree requirements and/or any certificate requirements in their currently active academic program(s) and automatically awards the earned credential. Students are notified of the award and their diploma and/or certificate is mailed. This process is often called “Automatic Graduation.”
Automatic Graduation cannot occur for all students, however. Due to system limitations, inactive programs cannot be evaluated, nor can former or undeclared students, those with incomplete substitutions/exceptions, unevaluated transfer coursework and/or unapproved credit by exam/experience.

These lists, called “Near Completer” reports, are generated and provided to the campuses based on the Official Day of Record for the term and are compared and analyzed continuously from term to term and year to year by Counselors, Advisors and Program Coordinators. The focus is on creating a path to completion for those who are close to an award.

Our Graduation Outreach Specialist position has enabled TCC to change its requirement of Applying for Graduation. Students are no longer required to complete a Graduation Application in order to be awarded their degree and/or certificate. However, if they wish to participate in the commencement ceremony, they are required to submit a Commencement Participation Form, which is available on WebAdvisor. Submitting the Commencement Participation form not only confirms their participation in the ceremony, but it also allows the student to indicate any preference for the name appearing on the diploma/certificate as well as to provide a current mailing address.

The outreach process will only identify completed degrees/certificates if the programs are active on a student’s record, however.

TCC reports significant success from graduation outreach efforts this first year of implementation. The following table compares counts from the 2011-2012 academic year to the 2012-2013 academic year.

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On Thursday, May 23, 2013, Trinity River hosted TCC’s 3rd Annual Student Development and Success Institute, “Critically Thinking About Completion.” In attendance were 233 faculty, staff, administrators and community guests. The day began with remarks of welcome from Joy Gates Black, Ed.D., Vice Chancellor of Student Success, and Tahita Fulkerson, Ph.D., President of the Trinity River Campus.

As with previous institutes, this event was designed to provide professional development opportunities through discussion and sessions related to student service activities throughout the College. Kim Beatty, Ed.D., led a plenary session, “Creating an Institutional Roadmap to Student Success,” that outlined TCC initiatives and efforts to increase students success. Chancellor Erma Johnson Hadley introduced another plenary session informing attendees about the College’s Reaffirmation of Accreditation process. Jill Pool, TCC’s Director of Quality Enhancement, was joined by Terri Day, Ph.D., and Terry Mouchayleh, Ph.D., to outline details for Accreditation. Western Governors University Texas Chancellor Mark Milliron, Ph.D., delivered a riveting keynote address that challenged the audience to integrate technology into the educational experience to prepare and engage students more effectively.

Concurrent breakout sessions were led by Peter Doolittle, Ph.D., of Virginia Tech University, representatives from Smarthinking Online Tutoring and various TCC staff and administrators. The Lean Process for improving services and the Innovation Forum were topics for the breakout sessions along with updates regarding student success and enrollment services. Participants reported the event covered vital topics and energized them to continue with their work at the College. The event was sponsored by TCC’s Department of Education Title III Grant Project SSStrong.