

# A Message from the President



A little over a year ago, West Kentucky Community and Technical College completed a review of the college mission and vision statements. After a lengthy process and much discussion, our vision statement said we would be “recognized as a preeminent community college nationwide.” We debated on how we would measure that lofty goal and on how we would know when we had achieved it.

What we did not know at the time was that President Barack Obama and Dr. Jill Biden would host, in October 2010, the first White House Community College Summit. The vision for the Summit was to recognize the critical role community colleges must play if the United States is to regain a leadership position in postsecondary education and economic growth. Community colleges account for most of the growth in college enrollment over the last decade; they disproportionately educate students of color and first-generation college students who most need higher education; and they are the primary source of skills training for workers in many sectors of the economy.

In response to the President’s leadership on this issue and in recognition of the education and workforce imperatives facing our country, the Aspen Institute, the Joyce and Lumina Foundations and the charitable foundations of Bank of America and JP Morgan Chase partnered to launch the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence.

On April 25, 2011, the Aspen Institute ranked from 1,200 community colleges, the top 10%, or 120 colleges. The criteria used in Round 1 selection were publicly available data on college performance in graduation, retention, and the number of degrees and certificates awarded. The 120 community colleges named then became eligible to submit an application (Round 2) containing data on student outcomes, labor market outcomes (employment and earnings), demonstrate that they deliver exceptional student results, use data to drive decisions and show dramatic transformation.

On September 13th, West Kentucky Community & Technical College was named, by the Aspen Institute, as one of the **top 10 community colleges in the nation**. Following a site visit to all 10 top colleges, the prize winner will be announced in December, 2011.

I would like nothing better than for our college to receive that #1 spot, but we are already a winner and certainly we have achieved our vision of being a preeminent college in the nation. A group of people with a shared goal and a common bond (and for WKCTC, it is our belief in quality education and our service to students) can achieve great things.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barbara Veazey', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Barbara Veazey, President

West Kentucky Community and Technical College



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and educational institution.