

Seminole State College
CAMPUS MEMO

From Dr. Jim Utterback – President

November 18, 2008

Campaigns are over! Hurray! What a great time to be an American. I just returned from a meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Association of Community Colleges in Washington, D.C. Our nation's capital is definitely buzzing with the excitement of change. As we approach the Thanksgiving Holiday, I want to take a few moments to share some thoughts and to tell each of you how proud I am of Seminole State College.

Campus Construction

Our campus renaissance is continuing with several current building and renovation projects. It is great to see the plans and ideas gathered with campus and community input come to fruition.

STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING – It is exciting to see the metal framing going up on our newest building, the Student Services Center. This “One Stop Shop” will house all of the student services area, testing, and the business office. It should allow us to dramatically improve our services to students.

TENNIS COURTS – With the old tennis court site being used for the new Student Services Center, we are building six new courts just south of the new softball complex. Four of those courts are complete and the final two are scheduled to be finished in January, weather permitting. In addition to improved courts, we now have a nice pavilion area for players and spectators to watch matches.

BOOSTER ROOM – Athletic Director, **Dr. Tom Mills**, has been overseeing several renovations and efforts to spruce up the Raymond Harber Field House. One of these projects is the updating of the Booster Club Room in the gym. In addition to having good ideas and persistence in getting projects done, Dr. Mills has provided a lot of personal labor to improve the looks of this facility. We appreciate his leadership, as well as his work.

Funding Outlook

My colleagues on the Board of AACC had some very grim news to report from other states. It seems that only a few energy producing states such as Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming are at least temporarily avoiding cuts from the downturn in the economy. Some presidents reported having to cut budgets as much as 15%. The state funding in Oklahoma looks good for the current fiscal year. Logic would dictate that we should be fiscally conservative as we look to the future.

Higher Learning Commission

The efforts to compile our Self-Study report for the Higher Learning Commission are drawing to a close. Regular updates on the progress of this effort have been presented to the SSC Board of Regents. I again want to thank everyone for their work on this campus-wide project.

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Personnel News

Our new Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions grant program officially began last month. Director **Shelly Howell Watson** has been working with Vice President for Academic Affairs **Dr. Paul Gasparro** and a campus search committee to fill positions for the new program. I am pleased to announce that SSC Business and Information Systems Division instructor **Michael Schnell** has been named as the Technology Specialist for the program. Media Relations Coordinator **Yashanda Scruggs** will serve as the grant's Retention Specialist. Testing Center Advisor **Tina Jones** will serve as secretary for the program. We are excited about this team and optimistic about the plans and projects they will be undertaking to aid with improved instruction and retention techniques.

Seminole area native **Heather Kreeger** has been hired as Testing Center Advisor and Recruiter for the College. In other personnel news, SSC Director of Business Services **Jim Coleman** will retire at the end of next month. Jim has worked at the College since 1990. We thank him for his dedicated service and wish him the best in his retirement. Former SSC financial aid counselor **Braden Brown** has returned to campus to fill this position.

Our Student Government Association President **Amanda Cedar Shirey** was recently honored as the recipient of the 2008 National Indian Education Association John C. Rouillard and Alice Tonemah Memorial Scholarship. Cedar traveled to Seattle, Washington last month to attend the annual NIEA Conference to accept this award. Congratulations to Cedar!

The OSRHE Communicator's Council recently honored **Lana Reynolds** with recognition of the Natalea Watkins Communicator of the Year Award. Lana does an outstanding job year after year for Seminole State College. It is nice to see her receive state-wide acknowledgement of her efforts.

Coming Events

The final weeks of the semester will be exciting and busy. I would like to invite faculty and staff to drop by my office on the morning of **Wednesday, December 3rd** between 7:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. for an informal visit and "Coffee with the President." On **Thursday, December 11th**, Chancellor Glenn Johnson will be on campus to speak at the Chamber of Commerce Forum at noon in Foundation Hall of the Haney Center. Prior to his presentation, he will be our guest for a campus reception in the Mirror Room of the E.T. Dunlap Student Union at 11 a.m. Finally, the SSC Educational Foundation will host their annual holiday reception and fundraiser just prior to the last day of final exams. The come-and-go event will be held at the new Shawnee Country Club on **Monday, December 15th** from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. I would encourage you to support the Foundation at this fun end-of-year event.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful and safe holiday season. I appreciate your efforts as a valuable part of this institution.

