

# Great Leadership >

## LEADING THE NEW NORMAL IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

STRATEGIES FOR LEADING HIGH-PERFORMING COMMUNITY COLLEGES



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## Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson Electrifies the 2014 Chancellor's Scholarship Banquet

Renowned astrophysicist, Cosmos host and the Frederick P. Rose Director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson keynoted the 2014 Chancellor's Banquet on September 30th. Following his address, Dr. Tyson took the time to take questions from the audience on issues as diverse as the characteristics of intelligence, what to look for in role models and whether we should prepare students to be curious, as well as book smart.

All proceeds from the event benefited the WCCCD scholarship fund, which awards scholarships to students who otherwise would be unable to attend college.

“Today we say you're smart if you know stuff. I rather say you're smart if you can figure something out that you've never seen before.”



**Q: How does the way we define whether someone is smart affect their ability to create change?**

**A:** “I'm still figuring this out but these are just some of my early thoughts on this. ... I made a list of everyone who we would all agree were important in shaping our culture and our civilization: poets, actors, comedians, journalists, novelists, politicians and even CEOs and inventors – and in almost every case ... all those that I've been in the company with and had the conversation, hardly any of them ever got straight A's in school, yet in school getting A's is the metric that a teacher evokes for whether or not you are a good student.”

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## Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson

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“Are you a hard worker? Are you passionate? Are you a good problem solver? Are you a good leader? Are you moral, or do you have integrity? ... Then I ask myself are these factors metricized in the school system? Do we even care that they exist within a person when that’s what seems to matter later on? Look on the Internet. There is a list of the world’s ten greatest college dropouts. And in there is Jim Cameron, Bill Gates, Michael Dell, Dell Computers; the guy who invented Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg. So what does it mean we put so much value in [a grading system] ... to the exclusion of these other elements that matter so much in your adulthood?”

### **Q: Do you have role models?**

**A:** “I knew enough ... to not have a role model in the way people normally think of it. ... A black person from the Bronx who became an Astrophysicist before I did, I would never have been an Astrophysicist. That’s the flaw in the role of our concept. It requires that you become what someone else has already become. That does not allow a new relationship with the world to be established out of your own ambitions.

“So, what I did instead was, assemble my role model a la carte. It means you’re not pre-committing your life to the entire profile of another single person. So, I had

an educational role model, I had a scientific role model, I had an athletic role model, I had a moral, cultural role model; that was embedded in my parents who were active in the Civil Rights Movement, both still alive at 84 and 85, slowing down but hanging in, and so that was my package role, this assemblage of people. So, no I didn’t pivot on anyone.”

### **Q: How do we foster a passion for science learning?**

**A:** “I don’t have a silver bullet ... but the ideas I have at this moment involve some obvious things. So much of what we count as instruction in high school and college involves – look at the thickness of some textbooks. They get handed to the student and they say, ‘Learn this,’ and then, ‘Here’s the exam.’ Then you get a grade.

“I just wonder where is the joy of figuring something out? Where is the effort to empower someone to think in new ways?”

“Learning is not just pouring into an empty vessel of knowledge. Learning is perspective; it’s outlook. Today we say you’re smart if you know stuff. I rather say you’re smart if you can figure something out that you’ve never seen before.

“Look at the workplace. There are people who, you could give them an assignment – and we all know people who would say this – they’ll say ‘that’s not in my job description’ or ‘I’m not trained for that.’ But if you’re a curious person, you have the opposite response. It’s ‘I’ve never done that before. I think I’ll figure that out.’

“If you’re hungry for learning, then it’s give it to me. ... People should long to do things outside of their job description, manifesting their talent to those who then put you in a more advanced, higher paying position who has greater value to the enterprise.” ■



# Environmental Scanning of New Age Careers

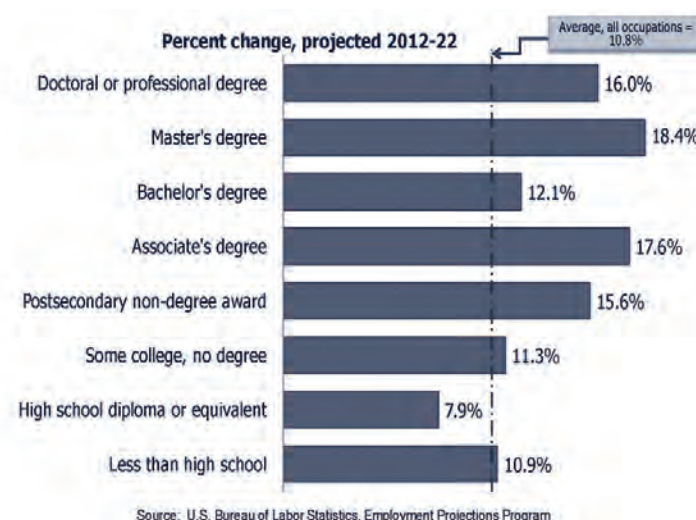
**Ms. Johnesa Hodge, B.A., M.A.,** *Vice Chancellor of Institutional Effectiveness, WCCCD*

Higher education and its delivery continues to change rapidly, requiring both 4-year universities and 2-year community colleges to evaluate how it does business in preparing the workers of today for jobs of tomorrow, referred to as new age careers. The challenges faced by most institutions are how to foresee and prepare for tomorrow in conjunction with determining how long tomorrow will last. In an effort to be responsive to the educational needs of the community and plan for the future, many institutions rely on the college environmental scanning process. Environmental scanning is the systematic surveying of relevant data and information about the external world to identify opportunities and changes that impact how colleges conduct business for students, the consumers.

Environmental scanning is critical to strategic planning and building a global context for the institution's business in an effort to remain competitive, as well as respond to changes in higher education from regional and national perspectives. Environmental scanning most often captures data and information in the present aiming to forecast change for more than five years. Consequently, barriers such as timeliness and relevance of data and information present in an ever changing workforce and unpredictable socio-economic climate forcing institutions to conduct scans more frequently. Environmental scanning is most effective in addressing new age careers when the institution commits to understanding trends and likely drivers of change that influence the future of students.

The evolution of higher education appears to have been outpaced by the digital age, where revolutions in technology widened the gap between high-skill trained professionals and the workforce. Additionally, the digital age birthed a data explosion resulting in the availability of a data and information highway

increasing the need for analysts to assist in research that informs the competitive job market. Technological advances have changed the roles and nature of many careers forcing students to obtain credentials in a shorter amount of time while maintaining a suitable quality of life. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, occupations requiring an associate's degree and postsecondary non-degree award (certificates) may grow by 17.6 percent and 15.6 percent respectively by 2022 and potentially decreasing the unemployment rate for those credential holders.



As WCCCD prepares for new age careers, high importance is placed on understanding the new student, drivers of change that influence the needs of the community it serves, and the marketability of high profile careers in the workforce. Research studies on incoming students continue to show an increasing trend of students placing high importance on attending college for job-related reasons such as “to get or prepare for a better job” or “to be able to make more money”. According to recent research of WCCCD new

## Environmental Scanning

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entering students, nearly 60 percent reported currently working, while 72.4 percent attend to prepare for a new career. Research on new student needs and employment patterns indicate a relationship with the invigoration of the economy and job growth resulting in students returning to work or working more hours while attending college. The metamorphosis of the economy and workforce as a result of the digital age and technology revolutions are the drivers of change that influence college attendance patterns and the development of new age careers.

Data and information researched as part of the environmental scanning process resulted in WCCCD

identifying new programs in high-growth and high-wage occupations in order to meet industry needs. Also, program modifications include coupling short term certificate programs with associate's degrees that allow students to obtain licensure/credentials to support employment during attendance, also known as stackable credentials. Looking forward, WCCCD offers premier programs in many of the fastest growing occupations such as registered nurses, nursing aides, computer information system technicians/analysts, dental hygienists, electrical/electronic engineer technicians, pharmacy technicians, veterinary technicians and more resulting in potential median salaries of more than \$70k annually ■

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# Community Colleges and the Onus of Graduating a Globally Competent Student

**Mr. Furquan Ahmed, B.A.**, *District Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and Accountability, WCCCD*

## Facts:

By 2015, in many countries, Millennials will represent 50 percent of the workforce.

Sixty-five percent of kindergarteners today will grow into careers that do not exist today.

The top 10 in demand jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2000. What does this mean for today's college graduate and more importantly, what can community colleges do to ensure that they provide a competent and well trained workforce to corporate America for the new age demands?

New age careers by their nature not only seek job specific skills but also combine themselves with the demand for a globally competent worker. A

student preparing to join the global workforce has to have three critical components – academic proficiency, cultural awareness and technical skills that a job demands. WCCCD's mission to empower individuals aims to equip students with all three capabilities. Numerous recent tests and studies have demonstrated beyond a doubt that younger adults in the U.S. fall short in their ability to meet these demands.

An editorial in *Science* magazine stated that, "There is growing concern that the United States is not preparing a sufficient number of students, teachers, and practitioners in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). A large majority of secondary school students fail to reach proficiency in math and science, and many are taught by teachers lacking adequate subject matter knowledge."



## Globally Competent Students

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This was acknowledged by the U.S. Congressional Service report which stated that, “the United States needs a broader, more coordinated strategy for precollege education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). That strategy should include all the STEM disciplines and address the need for greater diversity in the STEM professions, for a workforce with deep technical and personal skills, and for a STEM-literate citizenry prepared to address the grand challenges of the 21st century.”

Assessment tools such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) – an exam conducted by the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - are used to identify the competency levels of students internationally. According to *The Washington Post*, “The test, administered every three years by the OECD, is designed to measure whether students can apply what they’ve learned in school to real-life problems.” Approximately 510,000 15-year-olds in public and private schools took the paper-and-pencil exam in the fall of 2012. On the math portion, 29 countries tested better than the United States. In science, 22 countries posted better results than the United States, including Vietnam, Canada and Poland. In reading, 19 countries had higher scores than U.S. students, including Estonia and Liechtenstein.

The PISA results show us that, compared to three years ago, the U.S. is down — down in math, down in science, down in reading.

Community colleges are a viable solution to this crisis. At WCCCD, we have enhanced not only our science, math and pre-engineering programs but also are continually ensuring that our students are exposed to multiple cultures. The District’s Study Abroad program and numerous annual Continuing Education events seek to build bridges between cultures and

expose students to business and social norms in other countries.

WCCCD’s students represent over 60 countries further enriching the learning environment. The District is always in the process of expanding its course offerings and new age careers such as Renewable Energy, which are woven into the curriculum.

Community colleges serve as a beacon of hope in the communities they operate and serve. They give struggling individuals a second chance to rebuild stable careers and lead meaningful lives. The onus to mitigate the crisis of the U.S. graduate and enhance their global competency lies heavily upon these powerful institutions and fulfilling this responsibility is both an imperative and a privilege ■



# The Millennial Generation: A New Cultural Cohort Changing the Workforce Landscape

Ms. CharMaine Hines, Ed.S., *District Associate Vice Chancellor, WCCCD*

By 2020, nearly 50% of the U.S. workforce will consist of workers born between 1982 and 2000 known as the Millennial Generation, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. They represent a distinct generational cohort that is the most racially and ethnically diverse generation in U. S. history, and outnumber the preceding generation. Masters of digital communication with significantly different values, beliefs and lifestyles they have benefitted the most from unprecedented technological advancements (Howe and Strauss, 2003). The imprint of Millennials' influence on cultural change is evident in everything from technology, education and workforce to public transit as they dominate in the next decade.

Millennials are the most socially conscious generation since the 1960's and are the most technologically adept benefiting from advancements by construct free entrepreneurial start-ups from the likes of Bill Gates (software giant Microsoft), Steve Jobs (computer industry landscape giant, Apple) and Mark Zuckerberg (Social Media giant, Facebook). As digital natives they have access to social networks, smart phones, tablets, and all other forms of technology used today and acquired the social and psychological traits inherent with assimilating technology. In turn, they've developed corresponding behaviors, attitudes, values, and approaches to getting work done, have a different learning and information ecosystem, and are using their creative technological savvy as a new platform for philanthropy.

Their impact is also reshaping the educational landscape requiring institutions to adapt instructional methodologies, retrofit space and expand capacity

to make available technology and access fitting the unique characteristics of this emerging generation of students. A survey of middle and high school teachers who instruct advance placement/traditional writing students found that digital technologies are helpful tools for teaching that impacting student. However, 87% noted these technologies are creating an "easily distracted generation with short attention spans" (The Pew Research Center Writing and Technology Project, 2013).

**By 2020, nearly 50% of the U.S. workforce will consist of workers born between 1982 and 2000 known as the Millennial Generation**





At Wayne County Community College District, faculty participate in professional development offerings that incorporate technology in the classroom, learn of the many online learning resources available that support instructional learning and opportunities to share strategies to infuse new life into those critical soft skills Millennials seem to lack.

A new nature of workplace idealism is evolving around Millennials who are choosing flexible labor over pay, seeking work with a sense of purpose for change in their community and a desire for workplace fulfillment. Having entered the job market in the wake of the latest recession, they are more conditioned to expect economic disruption, are more risk adverse and require companies to do more to attract, retain and develop them. A survey found companies can average \$15,000-\$25,000 on turnaround cost noting 60% of Millennials leave their company in less than three years in search of desired core traits.

A study by Deloitte suggests organizations should build “corporate lattices” rather than corporate ladders for Millennials to accommodate workplace flexibility, purposeful labor and economic security (Forbes, 2013). Companies like Sodexo and Johnson & Johnson have created employee network groups like i-Gen and the Millennials that serve as educational resources to ‘empower and support the Millennials professional growth and success’ offering social media training, intergenerational mentoring roundtables and career management training.

As educators and employers consider ways to educate and retain Millennials, cities are exploring ways to capitalize on their preference for metropolitan hubs vs. suburban lifestyles preferring accessibility (transportation), culture density and socially conscious and creative environments. In support of Detroit’s reimagining, the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) of southeast Michigan has developed plans to expand the regional transportation system citing “very clear statistics about millennials leaving and the need for

better transportation” to support a robust metro area (Detroit Free Press, Nov. 19, 2014). The Millennials are the generation to watch as they continue to impact the workplace through its size, diverse range of talent and cultural values that impact social change ■



**Sources:**

The Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project Online Survey of Teachers, March 7 to April 23, 2012.

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Howe, Neil & Strauss, William. (2000). Millennials rising: The next great generation. New York: Vantage Books. Rikleen, L. (n.d.). Creating tomorrow’s leaders: the expanding roles of Millennials in the workplace. Boston College Center for Work & Family. Chestnut Hill: MA.

# Creating a New Age Workforce: New Programs and Courses at WCCCD

Ms. Mawine G. Diggs, B.A., M.A., *Campus President/CAO, WCCCD*



When one thinks about the terms “New Age” and “Workforce” in a combined context, initial feelings of anxiety, fear and general angst tend to rise to the surface. As we look at generational dynamics and their contributions to today’s workforce, it is only natural that thoughts of individual fit begin to ponder within our psyche.

At WCCCD, we view the concept of New Age Workforce as a new day within the larger scope of higher education where intentional focus is given to career and technical programs geared towards empowering, retraining and rejuvenating individuals of all ages and experiences. As social and economic demands change, so must the deliverables of community colleges in order to meet the needs of all. WCCCD currently offers more than 100 degreeed and certificate programs which contribute towards the nationwide effort of minimizing the gap between existing workforce skills and the ever expanding workplace demands.

With additional certifications added to the fields of Health Sciences, Advance Manufacturing, Welding, Automotive, HVAC, Computer Information Systems

and Digital Media Production, WCCCD has seen a merging of its student population to include dual enrollment students, traditional aged college students, and individuals in the current workforce seeking recertification in addition to those returning from the workforce geared up and ready to embark upon new career opportunities. Nevertheless, being ever cognizant of the evolving workforce needs within the state of Michigan, new programs such as Light Rail Engineering Technology, Global Supply Chain Management, Water and Environmental Technology, Sustainable Environmental Design and Renewable Energy have been added to course offerings.

As a matter of practice at WCCCD, environmental scans and strategic methods to curriculum modifications are conducted not only as a means of check and balance within the institution but also as a method of accountability to our mission of empowering individuals, businesses and communities to achieve their goals through excellent, accessible services; culturally diverse experiences and globally competitive higher education and career advancement programs. The success of this accountability method at WCCCD is reflected within the doubling of graduation rates since 2009; keeping in line with the nationwide push towards the Completion Agenda for community colleges.

So the term New Age Workforce may be viewed as something new, but the work which supports this concept has been around for a very long time. As institutions of higher learning there is no expectation to recreate the wheel, however, we must wholeheartedly commit to continuously remaining flexible to the ever changing needs of our communities, the economy and society as a whole. So we remain committed to and steadfast on this unified journey to educate, empower and support our communities’ one individual at a time ■





# New Age Careers: Community Colleges and Their Unique Ability to Fill Pipelines

Ms. Denise Williams Mallett, Ed.S., *Provost*, WCCCD

“In the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate degree are projected to grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience. We will not fill those jobs – or keep those jobs on our shores – without the training offered by community colleges.”

– President Barack Obama

Think for a minute. Ten years ago would you have imagined that a social media manager or UX designer career would exist today? Now fast forward ten years. Think about the speed at which technology is moving and the advancements soon made. Similar to technology, think about the myriad of new careers that will soon be on the horizon. Community college leaders have been and must continue to think, in an educationally creative manner. We must ask ourselves how we as educators can execute better our mission to prepare our future workforce to compete and succeed so our great country can continue to grow and prosper.

By staying flexible and listening to the needs of an ever-changing employer group as well as paying close attention to the ever changing needs of the workforce, community colleges have proved they are uniquely equipped to fill the pipelines of New Age Careers. In the face of huge global youth unemployment numbers, the country has been lately paying more attention to community colleges and the extraordinary contributions these institutions are prepared to make right now. America has an excellent network of community colleges through which great quality pre-baccalaureate and career training can be effectively delivered. Community colleges are advancing in critical areas by connecting with industry and aligning curriculums and training, with the national and global needs of the employer groups and the workforce, upper most in community college leadership minds.

Successful bridging of these relationships has not been easy. Employer groups in the past and some still today have to be convinced that community colleges are equipped to train necessary future work force applicants. However the payoffs have been and will continue to be huge. When community colleges and employer groups are aligned cost and outcome effective programs can be designed and implemented through a combination of virtual learning methods, relevant curriculum design, class room training, intense use of computer simulation tools and internships.

The truth is that over the last decade, community college enrollment has grown significantly because of its affordable tuition and career preparation programs. With more students than ever knocking at our doors seeking superior educational value, community colleges are under stress. This anticipated or unanticipated growth, has put a severe strain on community college budgets. Community college leaders will have to take notes from some of their four-year institution partners particularly in the area of fundraising. The League for Innovation in the Community College which supports this theory recently stated, “The need for fundraising will increase and community college CEO’s will be expected to meet this growing need.”

Regardless of economic strains, community colleges cannot compromise major strengths. These institutions must continue to offer fields of study relevant to careers in local industry. All of us recognize that the

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## New Age Careers

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current emphasis on fields like allied health, public safety, CIS and alternative energy is not accidental.

Information technology training is another area of special strength for community colleges. No one can argue that the IT certifications offered by many community colleges, provide unsurpassed training and give aspiring technologists a toehold in a very competitive industry. Industry-standard certifications are the goal of the best-focused community college IT programs. "There might be some community colleges that offer a generic networking curriculum, but those that offer industry certifications are really setting up their students to find jobs," says Fred Weiller, a spokesman for training programs at Cisco.

As community colleges prepare for the future they must also keep a responsible grasp on the needs of right now. "The infographic created by Leena Thampan of Wagepoint: <http://wagepoint.com/blog/jobs-in-the-future>, highlights the New Age Jobs of the past, present and future for Gen Y'ers and Gen Z'ers." The education and training needs of these groups often dubbed "the New Age Workforce," have been and will continue to be consistent with the fields of focus at community colleges. The community college is preparing students to compete and succeed by understanding the needs of ever changing employer groups and the workforces. By translating identified needs into curriculum design, classroom learning and hands on experience through a combination of internships and computer simulation activities, community colleges are in a position to help the country grow and prosper. This grassroots educational needs based assessment approach, over the decades, is undoubtedly the secret to community college success now and into the future ■

**Source:**

Rosshiem, J. (2012). Community Colleges a Strong Alternative for Career Changers. The Denver Post. January 30, 2012.

## Building Trust Through Communication in a Multi-Cultural Environment: A Six-Point Strategy

**Ms. Melani Bender Ivery, B.A., MBA,**

*District Comptroller and Associate Vice Chancellor of Banner Security, WCCCD*

Trust, an invaluable corporate asset, has become a major issue for the American business community in today's multicultural environment. It's positive impact on a company can be measured indirectly through such metrics as employee morale, rates of employee turnover, and relationships with its external stakeholders. Conversely, the loss of trust can have a devastating, readily visible and measurable impact on a company. The task gains even more challenge in a multi-cultural environment where the perceived differences between people create additional hurdles.

Any business seeking to survive in today's economic environment must identify and commit to tools that build trust with their internal and external stakeholders - a group of diverse audiences. For those companies who would seek to establish a culture of excellence in a multi-cultural environment and create public trust, I offer the following six-step communication plan.

### **1. Build Enterprise 2.0 Communication Tools to Facilitate Communication For Internal And External Stakeholders**

Harness the power of technology to break cultural barriers. Employees should be encouraged to utilize the technology to access resources, collaborate and connect with others within the company. Leaders must become technologically savvy in order to



establish two-way connections with employees across multiple venues.

Utilize on-line blogs, communities, and forums to stay in touch with customers, media and general public. Create two-way information exchange to assess the effectiveness of the communication strategy and identify areas for improvement.

## **2. Provide the Best Leadership Available At All Levels of the Company**

Employee morale suffers when incompetence is tolerated at the management level. Honestly assess leadership capability – essentially judging their capacity to unify diverse teams - and release or reassign individuals who are not properly deployed. Ensure that the top management has the emotional quotient to deal with cultural differences. Enterprise-wide employee development and career assessment programs that are implemented consistently, fairly, and compassionately earn employee trust and generate pride in the organization.

## **3. Communicate the Bad News As Faithfully – And Effectively - As The Good News**

Companies rush to inform the stakeholders when it accomplishes something noteworthy. Yet when things are bad or challenges come, companies tend to go into “quiet mode” and hope to solve the problem before anyone else has to know. People are generally

aware that things are bad. To pretend otherwise rapidly, and sometimes irretrievably, undermines trust. Instead, communicate clearly and honestly about the challenges ahead while outlining the plans to address them. Outline the plan and what needs to occur in order to emerge stronger. Clearly define each action planned as well as its purpose and expected outcomes.

## **4. People Count: Demonstrate Genuine Caring and Compassion In Decision Making**

When customers and employees feel that you care about their personal well-being regardless of their ethnicity, race or gender they are more likely to trust your decisions. Making fair-but-tough decisions without communicating an understanding and concern for its impact on individuals (internal or external) will undermine any corporate motto.

## **5. Take The Corporate Values Statement Off The Wall And Install Them In Your Heart.**

Internalize your corporate values, live by them and use them as a guide for making and communicating all decisions. When communicating any corporate decision explain how it supports the company values, embraces diversity and creates a common purpose for all.

## **6. Don't Just Talk, Listen.**

In The One Minute Manager, the authors coined a phrase that became a standard in corporate lexicon; “management by walking around.” The value of “walking around” will be severely diminished if that “walk” doesn't include conversation. Today's corporate leaders can “walk around” physically, electronically and virtually through on-line media access. Make each encounter an opportunity to learn more about what your stakeholders think, value, want, and know. Each person's attitude, behavior and opinions are impacted extensively by their culture. Put that learning to work in building a communication strategy that can allow your company to lead the way back to public trust ■

## Great Leadership Invites Guest Authors

Do you have an article you've written, the description of a successful work process, or the details of a leadership program that you want read by a broad audience of colleagues? The Great Leadership newsletter seeks to publish well-written, informative, forward-thinking articles and ideas. The topics we publish deal with leadership and leadership development. We also consider book reviews, reviews of videos and any other relevant leadership content. **Articles submitted should be 200-500 words in length.**

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## Mission Statement

WCCCD's mission is to empower individuals, businesses and communities to achieve their goals through excellent and accessible services, culturally diverse experiences, and globally competitive higher education and career advancement programs.

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