

**Illinois Community College System
Selected Programs and Services for
Underrepresented Groups**

Executive Summary

**Focus Area:
Transitions and Graduation**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Investment in education and equity is the first and most essential step to improving college access and success for all students. . . These investments are critical to securing our nation's best future. In order to sustain favorable returns, higher education must reach out to new communities rural and urban, racial and ethnic, low income and first generation.

Cooper, Michelle Asha. (2010, Fall). p. 2. <http://www.diversityweb.org/DiversityDemocracy/vol13no3>

The preceding quote is in response to the President's American Graduation Initiative Challenge for higher education which aims to make the United States number one in degree attainment by 2020. Recent data show that the United States ranks ninth in international comparisons. Meeting the goal will require the production of an estimated additional 5 million graduates. The Administration's Challenge was launched in July, 2009 and emphasized at the Whitehouse Community College Summit in October, 2010. (For additional details See Brandon, Katherine (2009, July 14). <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/investing-in-education-the-american-graduation-initiative/> and Obama, Barack H. and Biden, Jill (2010, October 5). <http://m.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/10/05/remarks-president-and-dr-jill-biden-white-house-summit-community-college>). Meeting the goal will require higher education to be more inclusive. Relying on typical participation rates among recent high school graduates will not meet the challenge. As the national and Illinois population becomes increasingly diverse, higher education will need to reach out to traditionally underserved populations including low income, minority, first generation, and older adult/nontraditional student groups. Higher education officials will need to develop and implement strategies for elevating participation, retention, moving more students successfully through gateway courses in math and English, the timely attainment of momentum points, and transfer to meet the graduation challenge.

President Obama's recent remarks at the White House Summit on Community Colleges indicates that he sees community colleges as an important part of meeting the American Graduation Initiative Challenge.

Community colleges are the unsung heroes of America's education system. . . . they provide a gateway to millions of Americans to good jobs and a better life. These are places where: young people can continue their education without taking on a lot of debt . . . workers can gain new skills to move up in their careers . . . anyone with a desire to learn and to grow can take a chance on a brighter future for themselves and their families – whether that's a single mom, or a returning soldier, or an aspiring entrepreneur. Community colleges aren't just the key to the future of their students. They're also one of the keys to the future of our country. We are in a global competition to lead in the growth industries of the 21st century. And that leadership depends on a well-educated, highly skilled workforce. We know, for example, that in the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate's degree are going to grow twice as fast as jobs that don't require college. We will not fill those jobs – or keep those jobs on our shores – without community colleges. Obama, Barack H. and Biden, Jill (2010, October 5). p. 1. <http://m.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/10/05/remarks-president-and-dr-jill-biden-white-house-summit-community-college>

Partners from all levels and sectors of P-20 education in collaboration with workforce leaders will need to collaboratively address alignment and transition issues for higher education to rise to the graduation challenge and produce additional graduates with skills for the workplace of today and the future.

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Through the Underrepresented Groups Report community colleges have an opportunity to report on initiatives and strategies aimed at increasing participation and achievement among Individuals with Disabilities, Women and Minorities. Underrepresented Groups Report production is an important annual statutory responsibility (Public Act 85-283) for community colleges and universities. Each community college provides a report detailing current activities and programs aimed at strengthening participation and progress among traditionally underrepresented student populations. Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) staff summarize the information provided by the individual colleges and forward it to officials from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) who combine it with responses from the public universities and forward it to the Governor and General Assembly.

This year's report begins with an overview of the demographic characteristics of community college students, completers, and faculty. The latest available external comparative information is referenced. The next portion of the report explores the current year's Focus Topic: Transitions and Graduation of Persons with Disabilities, Women, and Minorities using a variety of data sources and materials from the colleges. Summaries of high impact Underrepresented Group promising practices, programs, services, and initiatives related to Transitions and Graduation at selected community colleges are also featured.

Demographic data illustrate that Illinois community colleges serve a broad cross section of the general population.

Demographics Illinois Community College System demographic data on credit students are gathered through the Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) submission. These data illustrate that Illinois community colleges serve a broad cross section of the general population. The latest available Census data are provided for

comparative purposes.

During fiscal year 2009, Illinois community colleges served approximately 10,676 Students with Disabilities (1.5 percent of all credit students). According to the latest census estimates, 10.0 percent of all Illinoisans between the ages of 16 and 64 years of age have a disability.

The Male/Female distribution of all students in the Illinois Community College System typically fluctuates little from year to year. Females comprised 54.9 percent of the student population in fiscal year 2009. Census data show little change in the proportion of Females in Illinois with 50.8 percent in 2008 versus 51.0 percent in 2000.

In fiscal year 2009, the average age of Illinois community college credit students was 30.7 while the median age was 25.5. According to 2007 census data, the median age of all Illinoisans was 35.9 years.

According to 2008 census data, Minorities accounted for 28.6 percent of Illinois' total population. Within the Illinois Community College System, student racial/ethnic representation varies across broad program levels. During fiscal year 2009, Minorities comprised 30.0 percent of Baccalaureate/Transfer enrollees whose ethnicity was known. An examination of each Minority racial/ethnic group's representation across the Baccalaureate/Transfer program area indicates that African-American (14.4 percent) students accounted for the largest Minority group, followed by Latino (9.6 percent), Asian (4.7 percent), Nonresident Alien (1.1 percent), and Native American (0.3 percent) students.

Minority students accounted for 29.3 percent of the Career and Technical Education enrollments. African-American students had the highest representation among Minorities in Career/Technical programs and accounted for 15.0 percent of the population. Latino students had the second largest Career/Technical program enrollment (9.4 percent), followed by Asian students (3.9 percent), Nonresident Alien students (0.7 percent), and Native American students (0.3 percent).

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According to 2008 census data, Minorities accounted for 28.6 percent of the total Illinois population. . . . Minority students accounted for 33.8 percent of Career/Technical graduates, compared to 23.4 percent of Baccalaureate/Transfer graduates.

Minority students accounted for two-thirds (66.4 percent) of the individuals enrolled in community college Adult Education coursework whose ethnicity was known in fiscal year 2009. More than eight out of ten students were Minorities in English as a Second Language programs.

Minority students accounted for 33.8 percent of Career/Technical graduates, compared to 23.4 percent of baccalaureate/transfer graduates.

Minority faculty accounted for 21.6 percent of full-time and 21.3 percent of part-time Illinois community college faculty whose ethnicity was known.

PROMISING PRACTICES

The following section provides information about promising practices aimed at helping students successfully transition across educational levels or into the workforce and/or increase the number of graduates. These representative initiatives provide helpful information about project components and outcomes around the following topics: High School to College Transitions; Transitioning Students with Disabilities; Developmental to College Transitions; Adult Education to College Transitions; Underprepared Student Transitions to College; Degree Audits and Advising; Dual Credit; and initiatives designed to assist Minority Students.

Initiatives to Help Students Transition.

High School to College

Many community colleges reported initiatives aimed at strengthening alignment and assisting students transition from high school to college including: **Black Hawk College, College of DuPage, Elgin Community College, Frontier Community College, Wabash Valley College, Kankakee Community College, College of Lake County, Lake Land College, Lewis and Clark Community College, John A. Logan College, McHenry County College, Prairie State College, Rend Lake College, Richland Community College, Sauk Valley Community College, Shawnee Community College, South Suburban College, Southeastern Illinois College, Southwestern Illinois College, and Spoon River College.**

Lincoln Land Community College (LLCC) designed and implemented a New Look Project with Capital Area Career Center (CACC) students to raise awareness of nontraditional career opportunities among recent high school graduates. Under federal Perkins IV legislation nontraditional occupations are those where one gender has less than twenty-five percent of the workers. The project, entitled “*Grab that Job,*”, encompassed a continuum of experiences and interactive activities aimed at helping CACC students successfully transition into higher education or the workforce with an emphasis on nontraditional opportunities. Various breakout sessions included employability skills such as, dressing for success, cover letter and resume writing, interviewing tips, career cruising, and job database searching. Local employers seeking career and technical students were present to discuss what skills were needed for employment at their place of business as well as to discuss frequently available positions. A survey was distributed to all participants, with results indicating that students benefitted from the project. During the evaluation session, it was decided that the event should be repeated and enhanced to include additional short-term employers and additional LLCC departments.

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Transitioning Students with Disabilities

All community colleges work with individuals with disabilities to smooth the transition from services received in high school to those that are available at the college. For example, **Joliet Junior College** is expanding the Student Accommodations and Resources (StAR) initiative. The goal is to help students recognize the differences between accommodations in high school under IDEA and accommodations under ADA. Working collaboratively with area high schools, StAR provided 23 group presentations from August 2008 to June 2009 to high school students and their instructors which include: a power point presentation on StAR resources, handouts and web site information on required documentation for disabilities, explanation of available assistive technology in StAR, and an explanation of the academic expectations and rigor of high school versus college. Arrangements can be made for COMPASS testing and intake appointments scheduled with academic advisors and StAR staff. Students receive a 22 page StAR Orientation Handbook. Qualitative evidence indicates that schools and students are increasingly prepared to present adequate documentation when seeking accommodations under Americans with Disabilities Act through the StAR Program.

Beginning in Spring 2010 a special transition initiative will be launched for students with autism as these individuals have occasionally experienced a higher incidence of difficulties adjusting to the social, organizational and academic expectations of higher education. This year StAR has worked with two local area districts to plan a Pilot Transition Cohort of approximately 8-15 students with autism or other communication disabilities. A support group for these students, along with current students having a diagnosis of autism is planned.

Developmental Education to College

The Joyce Foundation's Shifting Gears initiative supported Bridge Programs in Developmental Education at the following institutions: **College of DuPage, College of Lake County and Oakton Community College**. Bridge Programs aim to more seamlessly move low skilled adults from pre-college to postsecondary coursework. Three key components of bridge programs include: Contextualized Instruction, Career Development and Transition Services. Contextualized Instruction – integrate basic reading, math & language skills with industry\occupational knowledge. Career Development – include career exploration, career planning within a career area, and understanding the world of work (depending on the level of the bridge program & whether participants are already incumbent workers in specific field). Transition Services – provide students with needed assistance to successfully navigate the process of moving from developmental coursework to credit or career and technical education programs. Services may include academic advising, tutoring, study skills, coaching, and referrals to individual support services (e.g., transportation and child care).

Bridge Programs aim to more seamlessly move low skilled adults from pre-college to postsecondary coursework. Three key components of bridge programs include: Contextualized Instruction, Career Development and Transition Services.

Oakton Community College partnered with a local skilled care facility on an incumbent worker developmental education project to help transition Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) to Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs). Part of the challenge is that the academic preparation for an LPN is significantly higher than expectations that accompany the CNA. Additionally, the CNAs involved in the project needed to continue working as many hours as possible to meet family expenses. The bridge coursework was provided around work schedules, site-based tutoring was delivered at the skilled care facility, the employer pre-paid for the courses to reduce the financial burden on participating students, and two transition coordinators\coaches assisted students. The pace of instruction was adjusted to accommodate learner needs. Nineteen students participated in the project and all of them successfully completed the Bridge Program. Ten students continued their studies at Oakton Community College after

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the Bridge concluded. One third of these continuing Bridge Program participants needed further developmental coursework to strengthen their foundational academic skills. All the Bridge Program participants were employed at Bridge entry and exit.

Officials from **Wilbur Wright College** took another approach and launched a Classroom Individualization Project for Developmental Mathematics courses. The goals of the initiative include improving student persistence, elevating pass rates, and directly transitioning more students into college level math courses. The initiative includes providing faculty and administrators with additional professional development opportunities about student learning styles, assessment strategies, the use of formative diagnostic testing, and student follow-up protocols. Program-wide tutoring sessions have been enhanced. Since the initiative has begun, the number of dropouts have been reduced and pass rates are up. The latest available program data show the highest course success rates in Pre-Credit Math levels 1 and 2.

Adult Education to College

Similarly, bridge programs are gaining popularity in Adult Education as a strategy for helping more individuals successfully transition into postsecondary education and aligning Adult Education exit criteria with college level entry criteria. The Joyce Foundation's Shifting Gears initiative supported bridge programs in Adult Education at the following colleges: **Black Hawk College, Olive Harvey College, Malcolm X College, Wilbur Wright College, John A. Logan College, Lewis & Clark Community College, and McHenry County College**. Bridge programs for Adult Education are featured in the Adult Education Strategic Plan as a key component in developing career pathways for all Adult Education students. Illinois Community College Board.)2009(. http://www.iccb.org/pdf/adulted/Adult_Education_Strategic_Plan_11-12-09_Final.pdf

Black Hawk College developed a contextualized 16 week ESL and GED student bridge curriculum in Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL) incorporating components from Georgia's Quickstart model.

Black Hawk College developed a contextualized 16 week ESL and GED student bridge curriculum in Transportation, Distribution and Logistics)TDL(incorporating components from Georgia's Quickstart model <http://www.georgiaquickstart.org/> Technical College System of Georgia.)2010(. The curriculum prepared participants to transition successfully into the Black Hawk's Warehouse Distribution Specialist certificate program. The

program included contextualized ESL and GED course content with "wrap around" support services)e.g., a part-time case manager, career counseling, tutoring, software based supplemental instruction in a learning community environment(. Twenty-five students enrolled in the ESL\GED\TDL bridge at Black Hawk College. Twenty-one students completed the ESL\GED\TDL bridge program and all of them moved forward to college level coursework. Twenty-eight percent enrolled in one or more developmental courses. Eighty percent of the students were retained in their current employment. See the following links for more details Kim, Su Jung and Taylor, Jason L. (2009). <http://occr.illinois.edu/Newsletter/2009/fall/4> and Bragg, Debra, Harmon, Timothy, Kirby, Catherine and Kim Su Jung. (2010, August). [http://www.iccb.org/pdf/shifting%20gears/SG PP_6_Sites_Report.pdf](http://www.iccb.org/pdf/shifting%20gears/SG_PP_6_Sites_Report.pdf)

The ESL-GED Incentive Program at **Harry S. Truman College** offers students in advanced levels of Adult Education (AE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses an opportunity to simultaneously enroll in credit courses at little or no cost and earn credits toward completion of a certificate or associate degree. During fiscal year 2009, there were 411 students taking courses which was the highest level of participation in the history of Truman College's Incentive Program. Adult Education (AE) and English

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as a Second Language (ESL) students completed 600 out of 687 courses in which they enrolled. Eighty-one percent of students received passing grades.

Harper College has offered three types of Adult Education transitional programs since fiscal year 2005. These programs teach students about college-level coursework through structured exercises on topics such as: college success strategies, time management; note taking; acclimating students to campus; introduction to the college's vital resources and services; career

Since the Adult Education Transitional Program began at **Harper College**, 105 out of the 130 students enrolled went on to enroll in a college level credit course.

and academic planning; and scheduling regular contact with advisors or counselors. Students who participate in the program receive financial assistance with their first college course. Since the Adult Education Transitional Program began at Harper College, 105 out of the 130 students enrolled went on to enroll in a college level credit course. About 43 percent of the 105 took additional credit courses.

Kaskaskia College's Adult Education Curriculum helps adult learners transition to postsecondary education and/or employment. During fiscal year 2009, Career Assessment and Computer Literacy, Soft Skills and Workplace Ethics, and College and Workplace Readiness were added to the curriculum. Learners have the option to enroll in these transitional classes beginning at the Low Intermediate ABE level. Adult Education learners enrolled in postsecondary education programs may also attend Career Fairs hosted by Kaskaskia College and its partners.

The GED Express program at **Kishwaukee College** targets students who are ready to take the GED tests but could benefit from further structure to be successful. GED preparation includes six classes designed to prepare students for each of the six content areas of the test. The GED Express program uses a combination of large group instruction, small group work, individual coaching, worksheets, quizzes, handouts, and practice tests. Transition curriculum includes a career interest inventory, a college tour, guest speakers, and information on financial aid, how to apply to college, college success, employment services, WIA services, and additional transition programs. In fiscal year 2009, 57 of 97 students who completed the GED were from the GED Express class.

Malcolm X College, Olney Central College, and Joliet Junior College also reported on recent local initiatives designed to help students in adult education transition into college level courses.

Underprepared to College

Beginning in Fall 2009, **Joliet Junior College** began placing greater emphasis on recruiting students for and providing in-person ACT COMPASS content area review sessions. The review sessions are provided free of charge and are advertised online, during events, and on students' ACT COMPASS score reports. Students participating in the review sessions indicated that they benefitted from the extra time they invested in sharpening their skills. Raw performance data without attempting to control for student characteristics follow. For mathematics, 126 students participated in review sessions, and 64 promptly tested after the review session. Students who participated in the review session in Geometry had an average score of 62 compared with 38.3 for students who did not participate in the review. For reading, 58 students participated in review sessions, and 17 tested just after the review. Students who participated in the review had an average score of 82.6 compared with 78 for students who did not participate in the review session. For writing, 48 students participated in review, and 17 tested after the review session. Students who participated in the review had an average score of 76.5 compared with 64 for students who did not participate in the review.

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The purpose of the Employment Skills Program at **Waubonsee Community College** is to provide meaningful job skills to homeless individuals. The aim is to empower them to transition from homelessness and poverty into work that can support a household. The program helps individuals recognize the circumstances that contributed to their homelessness and assists them in addressing barriers to entry and higher wage employment. More than 70 percent of participants in the initiative have located employment at least once. Approximately 50 percent of the Employment Skills Program participants have achieved long term employment.

Other colleges reporting initiatives to help underprepared students transition to college level work include: **Highland Community College, Illinois Valley Community College, Lewis and Clark Community College, McHenry County College, Moraine Valley Community College, Morton College, Rock Valley College, Spoon River College, Waubonsee Community College, and John Wood Community College.**

Selected Other Initiatives to Help Students Transition

Richard J. Daley College, Kennedy-King College, and Harold Washington College each reported initiatives to help students successfully transition to a 4-year college or university and **Carl Sandburg College** is working on new projects to help students more easily transition into the workforce.

Special groups of underrepresented student are also being helped to transition at many college. Veterans are a focus of expanded transition initiatives at **Danville Area Community College** and **John A. Logan College**. **Heartland Community College** officials are expanding efforts to transition more adult education students into the workforce. In response to local need, **Triton College** is placing additional emphasis on assisting dislocated workers.

Selected Initiatives to Increase the Number of Graduates

Degree Audits & Advising

Expanding the use of degree audit software is a popular method of identifying additional potential graduates in the Illinois community college system. Several colleges specifically mentioned degree audits in their Underrepresented Groups Report submissions including: **Olney Central College, Lake Land College, John A. Logan College, Rock Valley College, and Southwestern Illinois College.** Colleges use degree audit software to identify individuals who have met the requirement of a certificate or degree but have not formally applied for graduation. Some institutions award the certificate or degree automatically based on the student's successful completion of the required coursework. Other institutions inform the student of their eligibility to graduate, forward any required paperwork, and ask them to return the completed documents. Individuals who are close to completing graduation can also be identified and invited back to finish the few remaining requirements to graduate.

Expanding the use of degree audit software is a popular method of identifying additional potential graduates in the Illinois community college system.

Degree audits are often incorporated into a broader strategy for elevating the number of certificates and degree a colleges awards. For example, **Kennedy-King College's** Student Services Graduation Preparation Initiative incorporates a degree audit with increased advising and workshops to better inform students of all the necessary steps required to earn a college credential. When students complete 45 hours, they receive an email asking them to meet with an academic advisor for a graduation consultation. At the meeting, a degree audit is conducted and the student is given information about the results and a checklist on the remaining steps needed to graduate. The elevated emphasis on graduation has contributed to an increase in completions with transfer awards – Associate in Arts and Associate in

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Applied Science – more than doubling between 2008 to 2009. Total Certificate completion increased 5.7 percent during the same timeframe.

Dual credit allows prepared high school students to simultaneously earn credits that count toward a high school diploma and a college degree, helps students successfully transition from high school to college, and saves students and their parent's money.

Dual Credit

According to college SU\SR data submissions, enrollments in community college dual credit courses in fiscal year 2009 totaled 78,749 students (duplicated). Every community college in the state delivers instruction through dual credit. Dual credit allows prepared high school students to simultaneously earn credits that count toward a high school diploma and a college degree, helps students successfully transition from high school

to college, and saves students and their parent's money. Dual credit also shows some students that they do indeed have the capacity to be successful in college. After identifying that one of its district high schools had the second lowest graduation rate in the state, **Danville Area Community College (DACC)** formed the DACC Middle College in 2008 to keep high school students engaged and in school. The students in the Middle College attend dual credit courses on the DACC campus. Graduates receive a \$1,000 scholarship to DACC. In its first year, 21 of 22 students completed 55 courses in Fall 2009.

Olive Harvey College and **Southeastern Illinois College** also reported that their Dual Credit offerings contributed to increasing the number of graduates. Early outreach to students while they were still in high school allowed more students to successfully transition to college and complete certificates and degree more quickly.

Minority Students

The Men of Vision (MOV) program was implemented in April, 2009 at the **College of Lake County** as a dynamic organization established specifically to assist participants to excel academically, socially, culturally, professionally and in the community. It is primarily comprised of Black and Latino male students. The program provides weekly study sessions and weekly developmental seminars for students of all ages. In addition to weekly business meetings, the Men of Vision program provides students with academic and career counseling, field trips, enrichment retreats, and career information from area professionals. Early successes include: one member transferred to the University of Illinois at Chicago; another member committed to a Teacher Education curriculum; and a third member is in the process of transferring to Georgia Tech in Engineering. Ten members participated in the Make A Difference Day service learning project and a membership drive resulted in 51 new potential Men of Vision members.

Relatedly, in October, 2010 the **College of Lake County** held its first Male Student Success Conference which hosted male high school and college students to discuss the challenges facing young men as it relates to graduating from high school and completing a college degree. During day 2 the college hosted high school educators, higher education professionals and the greater community to discuss the pressing issue of male attrition in high school and college. Over 400 high school, college, and community members participated.

College of Lake County held its first Male Student Success Conference which hosted male high school and college students to discuss the challenges facing young men as it relates to graduating from high school and completing a college degree.

Families United for a Strong Education (F.U.S.E.) was established at **Sauk Valley Community College** to educate minority families, many of whom have never had a family member attend college, about the

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importance of post-secondary education, the types of programs that are available, and procedures for applying for financial assistance and applying to college. The coordinator mentors minority students and helps them appreciate elevated college expectations and adapt to college life. Sauk Valley has been successful in promoting student success for minorities as the proportion of minority enrollments and completions are larger than the proportion of minorities in the district population.

Minority Students were also the focus of initiatives highlighted in reports submitted by **Olney Central College** and **Joliet Junior College**.

Selected Other Initiatives to Increase the Number of Graduates

Early Alert Systems were specifically mentioned by **Elgin Community College**, **Kankakee Community College**, and **Kishwaukee College** as important mechanisms for identifying at risk students. Learning Communities were mentioned as important components to improving persistence and completion in submissions from **Malcolm X College** and **Harry S. Truman College**. Learning communities frequently involve linked/clustered interdisciplinary classes within an academic term that enroll a common cohort of students. Students often have a common class schedule and work closely in teams. Another program reported by many colleges as important to increasing the number of graduates are TRIO/Student Support Services programs which were highlighted by officials from **Heartland Community College**, **Illinois Central College**, **Joliet Junior College**, **Moraine Valley Community College**, **Oakton Community College**, **Carl Sandburg College**, and **Shawnee Community College**.

Helping career and technical education students graduate was a focus of the reports submitted by three colleges: **Wilbur Wright College**, **Elgin Community College**, and **Southeastern Illinois College**. Similarly, **Harold Washington College** and **Wabash Valley College** both reported initiatives to help developmental education students graduate. Helping students in nontraditional career paths to graduate is a priority at **College of DuPage** while nursing students specifically are focused on at **McHenry County College** and single parents at **Olney Central College**. **Olney Central College**, **Joliet Junior College**, and **McHenry County College** also reported initiatives aimed at helping increasing graduation among students with disabilities.

An array of other initiatives aimed at elevating the number of community college graduates were reported by **Lincoln Trail College**, **Illinois Valley Community College**, **Joliet Junior College**, **Lewis and Clark Community College**, **Lincoln Land Community College**, **McHenry County College**, **Morton College**, **Rend Lake College**, **South Suburban College**, **Triton College**, **Waubensee Community College**, and **John Wood Community College**.

Strengthening alignment across educational levels, smoothing transitions within education and into the workforce and increasing accountability and transparency will all be important components in the production of more quality graduates with the right set of skills and aptitudes to address current and emerging workplace needs. Rising to these challenges will take an inclusive approach to education and training that provides an increasingly diverse cross section of the population with access, opportunity, and support systems to promote progress and elevate outcomes.

Excellence in the twenty-first century will be determined by high expectations, high support, high hands-on practice, and a very high degree of faculty and staff collaboration to create a much more intentional and goal oriented educational experience . . . Four broad areas of learning – knowledge, skills, responsibilities and application will be involved. In each of these areas, the learning derived from our diverse communities and the understanding of the interconnectedness of our globe are defining features of what counts as excellence. Schneider, Carol Geary. (2009, February). p. 2.
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