January Best Bee!

Congratulations to Jay Lee for being selected as the Best Bee for January 2007.

I am just so proud to nominate Jay Lee for Best Bee of the Month for January 2007. What would we do without him! When this college needs someone, Jay is there – Jay is everywhere!! He's the main administrator for the Heintz Center, he's a major booster for the Yellowjacket teams, he stepped up to the plate when RCTC needed an Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, he supports several college/community collaboration efforts such as CARE, and he serves on many committees and workgroups contributing to the college's broader needs. Jay also contributes to the Teaching and Learning Division's broader needs for data, classroom scheduling, faculty office assignments, etc.

He also organized the highly rated faculty networking meetings in the afternoon for the 20 faculty members for the Office of Civil Rights Review. As evident from the Judy Kingsbury "Family News" e-mails, Jay has personally supported several faculty and staff members going through difficult times. Whew, what a list of accomplishments! Ultimately, Jay cares about our students and our staff in everything he does!

Jay embodies everything that the Best Bee of the Month is meant to be! Please recognize Jay with a long overdue "Best Bee of the Month" Award. If the college created a Best Bee of the Year Award, Jay should be the first recipient for all he's done for the college and the greater Rochester community!!!
Marketing Fact

In an examination of entering cohorts of RCTC students over six years, the Fall-to-Spring retention rate for non-white credit students was on average five percentage points lower than for white students. However, the Fall-to-Fall retention rate for non-white students was on average only two percentage points lower than for white students.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday ~ January 16, 2007

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday into law. Since then, on the third Monday in January, we celebrate Dr. King’s birthday, his life, and his work. He was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. King, a Baptist minister, was instrumental in leading the civil rights movement during the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. He believed in creating change through peaceful protest, and was a powerful, persuasive speaker. Most of us are familiar with his “I Have a Dream” speech, which was delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, on August 28, 1963 (Hear Dr. King give this speech and see video of the civil rights movement at: http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm ).

This speech is notable for impacting the nation deeply and influencing the implementation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In 1965, Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In April 1968, Dr. King went to Memphis to aid sanitation workers who were on strike. He made what was his last speech on April 3rd, and on April 4, Dr. King was shot and killed as he left his motel room. His wife, Coretta Scott King (who died in 2006 at the age of 78), and their children have continued his work.

Dr. King dreamed of a world in which all people lived together in equality, where mankind had triumphed over poverty, racism, war and violence. He called us all to service. His dream is as apt today as it was forty four years ago.

You can find more information at: http://www.thekingcenter.org/holiday/ (information about the King Center), http://www.mlkday.org/about/overview/index.asp (information on commemorating the MLK Jr. Holiday with a day of service), http://www.splcenter.org/crm/memorial.jsp (information about a civil rights memorial).

Ricki Walters
Regional Diversity Trainer/Investigator

Mayo Clinic Blood drive

Tuesday, January 16
8:30 - 3:30
AT302

Walk-ins are welcome. If you prefer an appointment, please call 284-4475.

For more information on blood donation, visit http://www.mayoclinic.org/donateblood

Please encourage students to donate!

It’s a Boy!

Congratulations to Brad LaPlante (head football coach and physical education instructor) and his wife Christine who added a new edition to their family on Tuesday, January 2, 2007. Cashton David was born at 4:48 p.m. and weighed in at 8 lbs. 2 oz, and was 21” long.
Supalla Scribblings

THEY’RE OFF! The 2007 Legislative Session kicked off at noon on January 3 and the tone from both sides of the aisle on the first day was conciliatory. This year, Democrats will be in control of both the House and the Senate for the first time in eight years, with Republican Tim Pawlenty retaining his governorship. Legislators have until midnight, May 21 to complete this session’s work. I urge you to log into weekly updates on the MnSCU Web site to stay abreast of higher education developments. Other discussions this session are likely to focus on property tax relief, health care reform, K-12 education, energy and transportation. House Republicans have already proposed a one-year tuition freeze at Minnesota’s colleges and universities and they’ve indicated they’ll bring forward several other higher education proposals including providing incentives for colleges to adopt more on-line coursework and degrees, legislation to protect the “College in the Schools” (concurrent enrollment) Program, consolidate job training programs and allow student loans to be paid with pre-tax dollars. Rochester and RCTC is fortunate that we’ll have significant local legislative involvement in the higher education discussion. The House Higher Education and Workforce Development Policy and Finance Division Committee, chaired by Representative Tom Rukavina (Virginia) includes Andy Welti and Kim Norton. The Senate Higher Education Budget and Policy Division, chaired by Senator Sandy Pappas (St. Paul), includes Senate Minority Leader Davie Senjem and Ann Lynch.

I urge you to become more proactive this year in supporting the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities biennial budget and emergency capital bonding requests. A simple way to do this is by becoming a MnSCU “FAN.” FAN is a non-partisan grassroots network of faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members committed to building public support for the system’s legislative requests. FAN is not affiliated with any party but is designed to educate state leaders on issues affecting the system. For more information or to become a FAN, visit the Web site at http://www.fan.mnscu.edu.

After thorough discussion and analysis, the Name Change Task Force recommends that the current name Rochester Community and Technical College be retained. Such was the recommendation after the task force completed an exercise to examine a name change through the viewpoints of economics, brand, strategic and stakeholder perspectives; analyzed survey responses from internal and external stakeholders; and utilized the services of the consulting firm of Nametag International. The leadership team, after hearing a report from Task Force Chair Weber and a representative from Nametag International, concurs with the recommendation. We remain Rochester Community and Technical College!

Leadership of the Rochester Public Schools and RCTC are moving a proposal forward that will develop a pre-design for construction of a secondary vocational center expansion to Heintz Center. The addition would be modeled after a very successful STEP (Secondary Technical Education Programs) school that was build on the Anoka Technical College campus several years ago. Once completed, the pre-design document will be submitted to MnSCU for consideration in the 2010 capital bonding request.

Troy Tynsky, who will be leaving RCTC for a similar role at Mayo School of Health Sciences, is predicting that we’ll start spring semester classes with enrollment numbers approximately three percent less than last year. Coupled with a similar decrease in enrollment fall semester, Troy’s best guess is that RCTC will end the 2006-07 year with an annual enrollment decline of approximately three percent. Marilyn Hansmann has calculated that, based on current tuition rates, each percentage enrollment decline represents almost $150,000 in lost revenue. Thus, it appears the RCTC’s FY07 enrollment decline will result in a revenue loss approaching $500,000.

In February and March over 3,000 Minnesota National Guard troops will be returning home from Iraq. This reintegration is thought to be the largest single contingent of soldiers ever to return home to Minnesota at one time. The National Guard is working to assist these soldiers as they reintegrate back into Minnesota communities through a series of Family Reintegration Academies across the state. RCTC will serve as host to 300-350 families of returning soldiers on Saturday, February 24. There will be a counseling room, daycare facility, as well as breakout sessions on combat stress, making marriage work, reconnecting with children, single soldier, returning to work, Veterans Administration and many more. RCTC will use this opportunity to provide program information to families.

“Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January, every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past.”

-- Henry Ward Beecher

Happy 2007!

Don