Commencement – May 13, 2003
Make plans to attend our Graduation Ceremony on Tuesday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Regional Sports Center. This is an exciting milestone in our student’s life and a realization of completed goals! We encourage you to give your support at the ceremony and would be much appreciated by the students. Also, please remind your students on the importance of providing their graduation information to the Admissions office by next week.

Scholarship Award Ceremony
RCTC Foundation Scholarship Award Ceremony is being held on April 24, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. in the Hill Theater. Many deserving students will be receiving scholarships for the academic year 2003-04. Please plan to attend and join the Foundation in congratulating these students on their awards. Refreshments will be served in the cafeteria North/South room immediately following the ceremony.

Retirement Reception
Mark your calendars for the annual Retirement Reception for Rochester Community and Technical College's 2002-2003 retirees.

Wednesday, May 7, 2003
2:00-4:00pm in CF206/208

The names will be announced in an upcoming edition of Crossings. Coffee and cookies will be served. A brief program will be held at 2:30pm.

Cinco de Mayo
Come and celebrate "Cinco de Mayo" on May 5th in the Atrium from 11:00am to 12:30pm. Learn the true meaning of Cinco de Mayo! Free popcorn! Free Punch! Free movie passes! Piñata Breaking for students and faculty!! Don't miss this event and celebrate with us Cinco de Mayo fiesta!!

Sponsored by International Students Club
Weekly Funny

"I'm going to give you a list of long words, and you choose the one that best fits your symptoms. Keep in mind that the longer the word, the more we'll bill you."

Spring Tours of the RCTC Horticulture Greenhouse

The greenhouse is full of plants showing great spring color!

Horticulture Club students are available for tours and answering spring gardening questions.

Stop by HH101 in the Heintz Center on Tuesday, April 22 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm or Wednesday, April 23 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm for a tour.

Gift Certificates for the Graduates

If anyone wants to donate money toward gift certificates for the graduates please give them to Rose in the Counseling Center—she will then give them to Glen Saponari, or a member of the graduation committee. What was done with the money collected last year was gift certificates in the amount of $5.00 or $10.00 toward gas coupons, grocery coupons, local business places coupons, etc. These are given out at the pre-gathering of graduates before the graduation ceremony.

Student Ambassadors Selected

Congratulations to the following students for being selected to represent RCTC as our new Student Ambassadors: Mandy Ager, Kimberly Donkers, Janet Koball, Laura Moen, Adam Mohamud, Martha Nafula, Geno Palazzari, Anna Shmidt, Janet Wessing, and Malcolm Wessing. We all look forward to working with you this summer and next school year. Welcome aboard!

The Student Ambassador committee has decided to reopen the application process for Student Ambassadors. Since the last application deadline, many students inquired about joining Student Ambassadors after the application deadline, thus, prompting the committee to reopen the application process.

If you are interested, please fill out an application (see attached). Please be sure to read the eligibility requirements, job description, and application process. Applications can be picked up outside the Student Life office (CC401) or you may fill out the attached application. Application deadline is May 14th by 3:00 PM. You will then be contacted to interview for a position on the Student Ambassadors.

If there is any faculty, staff, or administrator who knows of a student who might make a great Student Ambassador, please encourage them to fill out an application. I encourage all students who are interested, to please fill out an application.

Mark Your Calendar

You're invited to a Farewell Party for Kathy Peak. Kathy and her husband are moving to Colorado to be near their children and grandchildren. She will be leaving the Math Department at the end of the summer. The Heintz Center is hosting this "sad little party" on Thursday - May 8th from 1:30 to 3:30 in HB108. Colorado is going to be gaining one of Minnesota Math's - Finest. Please join us for cake as we wish her all the best.
Supalla’s Scribblings

After more than 20 hearings in both the House and Senate, both Higher Education Divisions passed their legislation this week. The House bill provides $50 million more than the governor recommended for higher education, and MnSCU will receive $28 million of the new money. Senators also adopted a higher education bill that provides $148 million more than the governor recommended, the MnSCU and U of M split is uncertain. There are many differences in the House and Senate bills which will have to be resolved as the bills move through the remaining legislative hurdles. Other bills MnSCU is following closely include the state employees wage freeze, transfer of the additional health care insurance costs to employees, bonding, the right to carry a concealed weapon in public places, and others. Legislators have recessed for the Easter/Passover holiday and will return to St. Paul next Tuesday. Please continue to track legislation impacting higher education via both the MnSCU and legislative web pages. Continue to dialogue with your representatives, sharing personal stories of how the biennial budget funding reductions will impact you.

Missi McLaren is President of the Minnesota State College Student Association and Executive Vice President for Leadership of the American Student Association of Community Colleges. Her message, “Studentspeak” (printed below), appeared in the April issue of the ASACC ALERT! newsletter…

Once upon a time, Minnesota was nationally known for being a leader in education. People in Minnesota had high test scores, good graduation rates, and were given more opportunities for education than people in most other states. There were many examples of people – educated in Minnesota – going into the workforce and getting jobs ahead of people that had been educated elsewhere. At the time when Minnesota was a leader in the area, more attention was paid to both K-12 and higher education. Schools were funded at the levels that they needed to be at in order to provide quality education for our younger children and accessible and affordable education for those people wanting to go further than high school.

Throughout the last two decades, education funding has fallen short of what it used to be. Minnesota, as a state, has been putting education on the back burner for quite some time now. Even our K-12 system, which had been held sacred by legislators, has taken a number of hits over the past few years. In the last election, school districts across the state were forced to put referendums on the ballot to make up for the lack of funding in certain areas. There are children all over the state walking over a mile to school because bus routes have been cut down so severely. Studies have shown that children learn faster and retain information better when class sizes are smaller and they get more individual attention from their teacher. While new schools are still being built across the state there are still many places where class sizes have become such a problem that some teachers don’t have enough books at the beginning of the year to give their students.

Kindergarten through twelfth grade is not the only place that class size is a problem. In colleges across the state – due to decreased funding per student – classes have grown to almost ridiculous sizes. Schools are also saving money and classroom space by offering classes on-line. On-line learning is part of a technology wave and probably an inevitable part of our future. Sometimes, however, the choices that colleges make concerning what classes to offer online have been misguided and have created bad learning experiences. Some students are forced to take entire programs on the Internet and this can be impossible. It’s difficult to become accustomed to this new environment. It takes a very disciplined person to complete online courses and still produce good, quality work. Many students, including myself, have struggled with this new way of learning.

Besides unbelievable tuition increases burdening students, colleges and universities are finding other ways to generate revenue and cut costs at the campus level. Administrative costs are being cut to the point where it affects student services such as registration, financial aid and counseling for students. Colleges are using student-generated fees, such as student life and technology fees, to pay salaries and pay for other costs that shouldn’t fall into these categories.

The people of Minnesota, legislators and taxpayers alike, need to get back to the way of thinking that puts all types of education at the top of the priority list for this state. The phrase “cradle to the grave” education has been thrown around politically for many years now. It’s a good concept that people in our state should be able to get a good quality education no matter what their age or social standing. Legislators need to see that they have a responsibility to Minnesotans trying to become educated. As college students who are struggling our way through the public higher education system, we can and should be their first source of information. Let your legislator know about the necessity of education in your life.
Did you know…

- **Don Baldus**, Mathematics, and **Chad Israelson**, History, have been selected by the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society as the Outstanding Teachers of the Year for 2002-03. Congratulations, guys!
- **Jean Musgjerd** was elected to a two-year term as the new National Junior College Athletic Association Region XIII Director. Jean begins her duties on July 1. She will direct all regional business for the 30-member colleges in the Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan region and be the voting rep for Region XIII at national meetings. Riverland’s Athletic Director Lisa Quednow-Bickler will be the assistant director. Way to go, Jean!
- Great news regarding our Math League accomplishments continues to roll in. Last week you heard that the RCTC team took home first place honors in the state competition. This week **Marilyn Treder** learned that the team placed #1 in the Central Region and four RCTC students placed in the top 12 individual standings. Nationally, RCTC ranked #13 and our student, **Pavel Batrachenko**, finished second in the national individual scoring (just 2.5 points from #1). Congratulations to our students, Marilyn Treder and the entire Math Department faculty. Nice going!
- **Steve Kereakos**, former football coach and retired Director of Student Life, was inducted this week into the Rochester Quarterback’s Sports Hall of Fame. Thanks to all the RCTC reps who joined Steve for the celebration. Congratulations, Steve…you join an elite group of 53 Hall of Famers!
- The annual Scholarship Award Ceremony is scheduled for 7 p.m., Thursday, April 24 in Hill Theatre. The academically gifted students that will be recognized very much appreciate staff attendance at the event. I’ll be keynoting the Mayo School of Health Sciences annual faculty/staff appreciation dinner that evening but will certainly have all the award presenters and recipients in my thoughts. Also mark your calendars and plan to participate in the Retirees Reception the afternoon of May 7 and Commencement the evening of May 13.
- Former RCC/RCTC President **Karen Nagle** (now Karen Rafinski) is one of 17 administrators nationally being recognized with PTK’s highest honor, the Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction.
- MnSCU’s Third Quarter Report was released at this week’s MnSCU Board of Trustees Meeting. The report highlights institutional activities that support the Chancellor’s/MnSCU Work Plan. A copy of the information is available at [http://www.mnscu.edu/System/Chancellor/quarterly-April03.html](http://www.mnscu.edu/System/Chancellor/quarterly-April03.html).
- The MnSCU Board of Trustees approved RCTC’s request to continue the pilot tuition waiver policy through 2004. This extension allows Iowa residents to attend RCTC at Minnesota tuition rates.
- RCTC has regularly enrolled at least one participant in the Chamber’s Leadership Greater Rochester program. This program is a comprehensive nine-month program designed to educate participants about the Rochester community and provide an opportunity to discuss the challenges and issues facing the Rochester area. More information and an application is available from Judy Kingsbury. Written applications are due by June 16, 2003.

**Thought for the Week…**

"Success is the result of good judgment, good judgment is a result of experience, experience is often the result of bad judgment.”

– Anthony Robbins

Happy Easter and Passover!  

Don