

The CSN Chronicle

Greetings, and welcome to *The CSN Chronicle*. Rather than the Academic Newsletter or Monthly Memo, which you may have received from me in the past, I am pleased to now communicate with you electronically in my new position about issues, opportunities, and events, which affect our College community. This new electronic *Chronicle* also lets me share some of the important questions raised by our wonderful faculty and staff members from time-to-time.

CSN is One College

Each year CSN is challenged to internally strengthen ties with one another as a community and to communicate across geographic and departmental lines. We are on multiple campuses and sites throughout the region, connected by e-mail, networks and telephone lines; but we're also connected by the power of ideas, our service to students and our common dedication to CSN. Our business is ideas and training, not cars or widgets, which is why we are a "hot" college and community partner. We're transmitting knowledge and skills that will affect the influence we have on one another, our community, and indeed the world.

Everyone is part of the academic fabric here. We are all teachers, and we are all learners whether in a formal classroom or counseling session, maintaining our grounds or preparing our payroll. You hold not just a job, you are teaching those around you. You represent CSN. You make this a better place!

Through convocation and our holiday party, we have at least two major occasions each year to socialize and learn about CSN. We'll keep these programs going—enthusiastically. And I hope in your offices, shops or divisions there are occasional get-togethers to build relationships. Many of you commit your careers to CSN, and I think your time here should be pleasant and constructive. Please know that you are appreciated and part of "our" college.

Members of the CSN Foundation Board of Trustees demonstrate their commitment to CSN and its students with annual giving campaigns, scholarships and endowments, and our annual gala celebration. Check out the Foundation web site for more information, and extend a heart-felt "Thank You" to these dedicated volunteer trustees.

Commuter College

The diversity of our students is not just ethnic and socio-economic, they're diverse in age and circumstances. Their stories and struggles are often inspiring. Many of our students are juggling jobs and families with their CSN classes. Our goal is to have a safe, interactive environment where students maximize their learning experiences on our campuses or at our centers. To accommodate varied schedules we operate about 15 hours a day, seven days a week during the academic year. From 6-10 at night we're as busy as we are from 9-3 on weekdays. And our distance technology program offers 24-hour learning.

For our "traditional" students, it is important that activities outside of the classroom are also productive. There are clubs and organizations where students can challenge and serve each other

and our community. We've strengthened student government and student services. Our students are loyal to CSN, because they started here.

CSN and OTS are rolling out more visible services this academic year. Our Digital Message Boards are powered with new software from Cisco that leads the nation in this kind of technology. We're planning a systematic rotation of workstations for students, faculty and staff. And my personal goal is no network downtime through system failures or without reasonable notice.

Question From a Recent Meeting

“What is CSN's biggest challenge?”

The answer to this question is a simple one. Right now, discouragement is our biggest challenge! We're going through a transition in leadership, and it's easy to become disheartened or passive about our future. I see this change as an opportunity, and I'm optimistic. We are a wonderful college that accomplishes really good things. We have construction underway; we have new students entering CSN for the first time; and we have projects and people moving forward. There is progress all around us. Yes, there is a price for progress. There is a mess, and there is less parking, and there are issues in the way, but these are necessary for us to grow. We have to ask how we can be better. Stand taller, be kinder. This is our opportunity, as well as our greatest challenge.

One Goal...Making a Difference

Our staff members are the front door to CSN, and it is vital that you are aware of what is happening here. We may have different titles: we might be classified or professional staff or faculty, but we all have one goal — making a difference for our students and our community. How do we make a difference? We have to have passion for what we do each day. This is an exciting time for CSN, and I am glad that we are sharing it together!

Attitude and Realism

I'm optimistic, but I'm also a realist. We have lots of challenges. Variety is not a problem in this new, interim position of mine. In addition to getting the academic year started, we have significant issues and projects requiring our attention. We can prevail, but it will take unity of effort as never before. Here are some of the things we're addressing:

- CSN's technology partnership and readiness
- The Northwest campus project
- Capital projects on the three main campuses
- Preparation for the next budget and legislative session
- Enhancing diversity and inclusion
- Strengthening and creating value in international education and partnerships
- Planning and preparedness
- Completion of current building projects and planning for moves

I wish you the very best for a successful semester. –Mike Richards