

2014

ANNUAL REPORT

AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

DESTINATION ...



EYES ON THE FUTURE



AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ITSELF IS A DESTINATION FOR
AN AMAZING VARIETY OF
STUDENTS WHO HAVE THEIR
EYES ON THE FUTURE.

DR. MARSY LIDDELL
AIMS PRESIDENT



Included in this year's annual report to you, our stakeholders, are the highlights and accomplishments of the past year. I think you will agree that it has been impressive.

Our Board of Trustees froze tuition for a fourth year in a row, making Aims Community College the most affordable higher education option in the state for students in our taxing district. Many new academic programs were launched, bringing vitality to the economic development in our region, along with enhanced community partnerships. To meet state required benchmarks, the College has developed several innovative programs to improve student success and completion rates. Additionally, in alignment with our quest for continuous improvement, all of our campus locations are being updated, from the physical structures to campus beautification to the latest in information technologies.

But this year, in addition to these tangible improvements, Aims is asking a probing question. Is there something else, something more that Aims could do to ensure its place as a destination institution? With eyes on the future, we are envisioning the next steps for the College through a robust strategic planning process. We are imagining what we can become and taking strategic steps to accomplish these goals.

When you find the definition of imagination, it reads, "the power or function of the mind by which mental images are formed or the exercise of that power." It also lists creativity, inspiration and invention as synonyms.

Aims is poised to harness that power not merely to meet our community needs, but to serve as a leader in defining what we can become.

Please enjoy this glance backwards at the achievements for the 2013-14 year ... and then join us with eyes forward as we IMAGINE ...

Dr. Marilynn "Marsi" Liddell



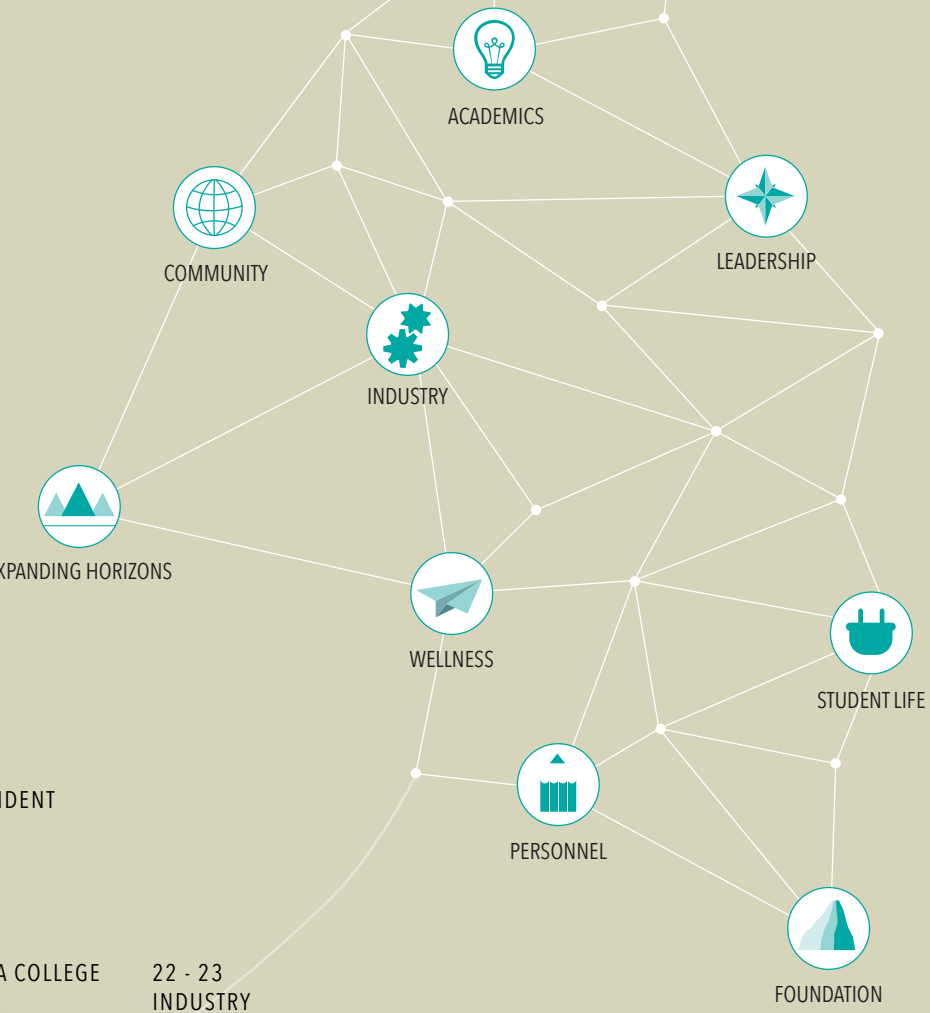
ALL HUMAN ACCOMPLISHMENT HAS THE SAME ORIGIN, IDENTICALLY. IMAGINATION IS A FORCE OF NATURE. IMAGINATION, IMAGINATION, IMAGINATION. IT CONVERTS TO ACTUAL. IT SUSTAINS, IT ALTERS, IT REDEEMS!

SAUL BELLOW, AUTHOR

IMAGINE

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		EYES ON THE FUTURE





building, as well as the expansion and renovation of the Physical Education building are well underway.

The importance of physical space in learning is often overlooked but is a crucial component to the educational environment for students. In partnership with the Aims Community College Board of Trustees, Dr. Liddell and the leadership team have led the transformation of the College to a state-of-the-art learning environment. Aims has meticulously refreshed all of its

The Fort Lupton campus has doubled in size with the construction of the new Platte building which houses innovative technology and academic learning spaces. The expanded campus was celebrated at a ribbon cutting ceremony held in August 2013 to dedicate the new building to the Precision Agriculture, Welding and Oil & Gas programs. At the Windsor Center, plans have just been launched to utilize the 10 acres purchased in 2014

for a new Public Safety Institute that will include a fire simulation

learning and work spaces and has systematically added several new ones.

Capital improvements totaling approximately \$51.1 million have already been completed, or are scheduled to be completed in the next two years at all of our campus locations. At the main campus in Greeley, improvements such as a medical simulation lab and an outdoor classroom are being put to good use. Currently, the remodel of our General Services

tower. At the Loveland campus, the remodeling of all areas is refreshing the campus and making it a friendlier space for students and staff.

Aims continues to expand its horizons in Northern Colorado as it not only imagines, but implements innovation and excellence at all of its campus locations. Aims has worked hard to become an exceptional destination for lifelong learning.

EXPANDING OUR HORIZONS

GENERAL SERVICES BUILDING



Aims is excited to have convenient and accessible locations across Northern Colorado. Our Greeley campus remains the heart of our college and is continually improving and growing. Our Loveland campus is located at the center of a thriving art community which provides opportunity for students to engage their imaginative eye and artistic skills. Our Windsor Center, which will soon be expanding, has already garnered national attention for its top-notch automotive training programs. At our Fort Lupton campus, industry leaders have stepped up to help us put together an amazing hands-on labs that are housed in a LEED certified building. At all of our campus locations, Aims is truly a destination where students can arrive and thrive.



WELLNESS CENTER



FORT LUPTON PLATTE BUILDING



AIMS IS INVESTING IN THE FUTURE. WE BUILT NEW CLASSROOMS AND LAB FACILITIES ON OUR FORT LUPTON CAMPUS TO ADDRESS AGRICULTURE AND THE OIL & GAS INDUSTRY. A FEW YEARS AGO, AIMS DEDICATED A NEW AUTOMOTIVE CENTER IN WINDSOR AND WILL SOON BE ADDING A PUBLIC SAFETY INSTITUTE THERE.

DR. MARS LIDDELL, AIMS PRESIDENT



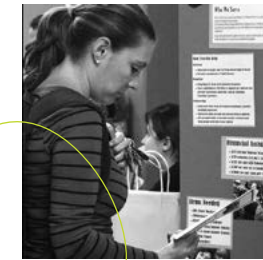
COMMUNITY

NOT JUST A COLLEGE



AT AIMS, WE ARE EQUALLY SERIOUS ABOUT BUILDING CAREERS AND COMMUNITIES.

DR. MARSI LIDDELL, AIMS PRESIDENT



SEPT 2013

brought floodwaters to our community and as the waters rose and rushed through, they left chaos in their wake. Aims Community College found was undamaged. So, we opened our campus and mobilized our resources to serve internal and external community members in need. Our hearts went out to our community, our hands and heads came together, and we got to work.

Photos clockwise from top left: Community member at Resource Fair, Dan Erbert demonstrating welding for CC Day, classes at Hungenberg Produce, student at Resource Fair.

Members of both the Aims Student United Way Club and the Student Resource Committee repurposed their annual student resource fair to create a convenient, single-location event that made the resources of the United Way and several other community relief organizations available to attendees.

Aims Staff Association and the Aims Foundation developed a plan to replace lost books, offered gas and food cards, and opened Aims' shower facilities to the community. Student Services personnel surveyed students to find out how extensive their needs were and then worked with aide organizations to facilitate both short-term and long-term relief. Together the Aims family helped students and others get back to a normal life.

Day by holding Community College Day at all of its campus locations with free classes for community members. It was a great experience for all involved to work with subject matter experts to explore and learn something new with no expense.

Over 300 volunteers worked tirelessly at all of our campus locations to make the day a success for the more than 1,300 community members who participated in classes. There were over 190 classes that ranged from *Growth Mindset* to *The Life of an Oil Well*, from *How to Buy a Car* to *3-D Printing*, and from *Weight-Training* to *Firefighting 101* and so many other exciting topics.

Participants reported having memorable experiences at the event, like falling in love with flying after a successful landing of the Beechcraft 1900 in the flight simulator or discovering a desire to write a personal narrative after taking *Scripting Your Future*. In order to take advantage of as many 90 minute classes as possible at this triennial event, some community members stayed for the entire duration of offerings, which began at 1:00 p.m. and ended at 8:30 p.m. As night fell on April 11, the consensus was that Aims was an exciting place to be. It was an honor to give back to the community that supports us!

APRIL 2014

Each year, Aims hosts a variety of community events such as College for Kids, Tax Help Colorado, Learn to Fly Day and the Windsor Auto Show. This year we opened our doors to a broader audience when we celebrated Community College Day on April 11, 2014. Selecting this date allowed Aims to celebrate both National Community College Month and College in Colorado



FOUNDATION NUMBERS

\$48,539

INVESTMENT EARNINGS

24%

INCREASE

CONTRIBUTIONS ROSE

6%

ENDOWMENT FUNDS CLOSE TO

\$7M

NET ASSETS

6%

INCREASE

THE AIMS FOUNDATION

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

The College Promise is a unique community initiative that was started in June of 2007 with a leadership gift from local businessman Scott Ehrlich. The promise is intended to promote affordable and accessible higher education opportunities for local school district students.

Many of these students are the first in their families to go to college, and without the incentive they did not believe college was possible. The College Promise pledges to assist students in Greeley-Evans who want to go to college in achieving that goal. The first College Promise scholarships were awarded in fall of 2008 to 82 new students from Greeley-Evans District 6 schools. Since then, at least 476 students have enrolled at Aims. College Promise students have earned 68 associate degrees and 150 certificates. Almost

\$500,000 has been raised in cash and pledged commitments to keep the promise to local students that if they work hard and get accepted to college, the community will help them fund their education.



As of this year, students who qualify for college admittance and in-state tuition under the ASSET bill will now be included in the promise

and eligible for "last dollar in" funds. The "last dollar in" private support for the College Promise is only available when a student completes a scholarship application form. So far, only 201 of the 476 students who have qualified for College Promise have required funding under this model because many of them qualified for other scholarships and/or aid.

In May 2014, a group of community leaders from Greeley, who traveled to Kalamazoo, Michigan determined that the College Promise is their top choice for collective promotion. As such, the Foundation is pleased to announce that College Promise is expanding. We are excited to encourage community participation in this now nationally recognized program that demonstrates how communities can create opportunities and nurture success in their own back yards.

LEED FABRICATION This year Leed Fabrication made a generous donation to Aims Community College through the Aims Foundation. Leed Fabrication is a premier manufacturer of well head production and ancillary equipment. Vice President of Operations Virgil Simoons relayed the good news that Leed Fabrication had made a donation of \$100,000 as a naming opportunity at Aims Community College.



Leed CEO Steve Olson related how excited he is about the new welding facilities that offer students state-of-the-art facilities and give them a true sense of how much potential fabrication and welding careers have. He said he is impressed with how Aims is teaching students and also how Aims is reaching out to Greeley-Evans District 6 to try and help interested high school students explore the program and potential careers in the manufacturing industry. Simeons continued, "We are impressed with the quality and training of the students who come from Aims ... we look forward to encouraging more students to train in our industry and realize that there are good jobs right here in our community ... many of our best employees come from Aims, and we look forward to working with more in the coming years."

The investment will sponsor the state-of-the-art Leed Fabrication Welding Lab located on the Aims south campus in Fort Lupton, in support of the Aims Welding program. The welding lab in Fort Lupton will also be used in conjunction with Aims new Agriculture and Oil & Gas programs.

A JOINT EFFORT



Additional support is provided by the Foundation in these areas >

ACADEMIC ADVISING > ONLINE WRITING LAB > DEVELOPMENTAL ENGLISH > EMS AND GERONTOLOGY >

OVER \$5K TO FLOOD ASSISTANCE > TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING GED GRADUATES > WILDLAND FIRE ACADEMY

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your endorsement of students who choose Aims Community College!

Just as Aims is setting their sights on the future, the Aims Foundation is excited about the opportunities that are available through your ongoing support. During the past year, two specific examples stand out.

The College Promise Scholarship Program has provided considerable benefit to students and donors alike. Since inception in 2008, almost 500 new students have enrolled at Aims. Of those, 68 have received associate degrees and an additional 150 certificates have been awarded. With an eye on the future, advisors for the fund have determined that it is important to establish a living legacy. Beginning this year, the College Promise will become an endowment fund with a larger reach. Now, students who are enrolled in elementary and middle school can be assured that the fund is actually a promise. It will be here when they are ready.



The second example includes Leed Fabrication. They recently provided \$100,000 toward sponsorship of a welding lab at the Aims Fort Lupton campus.

While these two examples are worthy of celebration, ALL gifts to the Aims Foundation are appreciated, regardless of size. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Aims Community College Foundation Team, we sincerely thank YOU for everything you do.

Andrew Romero
Chairman, Board of Directors

Julie Buderus
Executive Director



REIMAGINING SOLUTIONS TO Remediation

As a community college, Aims opens its doors to a wide variety of students, both “traditional” students who are right out of high school, and “non-traditional” students. However, even those students classified as “traditional” have a wide variety of needs. Many of these students need remedial assistance to prepare them for college-level courses. Students who test into remedial courses typically have far lower completion rates than students taking college-level courses. The Colorado State Remedial Report, released in May 2014 notes that locally, the remediation rate for students coming out of the Greeley area remains at approximately 47 percent, as compared to the statewide average of 37 percent, with Hispanic, Black and low-income students disproportionately represented.

When the district and the colleges are communicating and interacting it helps to align these goals and ultimately helps the students to be successful once they leave K-12.

The number of Colorado high school graduates who need remediation has continued to be a challenge, but according to the most recent state remedial report, the number of first-year college students needing extra academic assistance dropped 3 percentage points statewide from 2012 to 2013.

The drop reflects the impact of a variety of innovative initiatives aimed at reducing the remedial rate, and a major overhaul of developmental

education programs throughout the state. Aims Community College is among the higher education institutions working to bring positive change through its continued collaboration with local school districts. Aims Community College has partnered with local K-12 districts to support such innovation and lead efforts in creating a K-16 experience with programs like Concurrent Enrollment, Career Academy and the development of an Early College high school within Greeley-Evans District 6.

When the districts and higher education institutions communicate, interact and align their goals, it helps the students be successful in college, and ultimately, in the job market. Aims has implemented specific programs that nurture the success of in-district students and seek to eliminate remediation as a barrier to student success because we know that the job market is changing and students’ needs are increasing. According to the state remedial report:

“In order to reach this goal (reduced need for remediation) and for Colorado to have an educated workforce to fill the 74 percent of jobs that will require a college degree by 2020, it is no longer enough to get students to college. Nearly all college students must be successful and earn a certificate or degree.”

DROPPED
3%

Due to the fact that over half of the students who arrive at Aims’ unprepared for college courses, a variety of initiatives, covering a broad spectrum of student needs were designed to engage and support students at various stages of their education. Emerging Scholars, for example is a scholarship-based support program available to applicants who assess into developmental education and who show potential to succeed. The program includes the Emerging Scholars Early Alert program, academic and retention advising, academic success planning, and tutoring and student success skills workshops.

Another program that is working to encourage student engagement and retention is ACES (Academic and Co-Curricular Engagement Series). ACES is a pilot program that will function as a loyalty rewards program that offers incentive for students to get the most out of their time at Aims. It is designed to reward students for engaging in campus life, succeeding academically and continuing until a degree or certificate is earned.

Though remediation remains an issue for Colorado students, indicators are good that the partnerships between colleges like Aims and K-12

districts are working. For the first time statewide, students with remedial needs at community colleges had higher first-year retention rates than students without remedial needs. Approximately 62 percent of students completed remedial courses successfully, an increase over last year’s 59 percent.

Aims is working hard to see continuing improvement of these statistics, with a goal of fewer students needing remediation and more students succeeding. Aims is pleased to make an impact and deliver these courses cost-effectively at a rate that is approximately 24 percent below the state average cost per credit hour. The ability to deliver college preparation courses and programs economically increases Aims’ efficiency and effectiveness in impacting change and bolstering the partnerships and efforts that have been made district and statewide to reimagine solutions for remediation and arrive at college prepared for success.

24%
\$ SAVED

62%
COMPLETED



WE BEGIN WITH THE MINDSET THAT EVERY STUDENT WHO GOES TO AIMS CAN SUCCEED IN COLLEGE.

From the moment they enter the school they will see the college message. It will be the tradition, the expectation. In our high school partnership programs, we hold every student to high expectations, in every classroom and every activity. We take our mission of student success and preparing the future workforce very seriously.

DR. MARSII LIDDELL, AIMS PRESIDENT

IMAGINING LEADERSHIP



It is important to recognize individual differences in student educational needs, desires, learning styles and abilities. Aims is responding by providing supportive and flexible learning environments where student success and inclusive excellence is of primary importance.



leadership skills and become leaders who make a better world. The National Society of Leadership and Success will help students discover and achieve their goals, keeping their "eyes on the future."

Aims values student leadership opportunities and realizes the need to prepare students for later leadership positions, whether as a student in business or a member of a larger community. The society offers life-changing lectures from the nation's leading presenters who are like-minded, success-oriented individuals coming together and help one another succeed and make sure students can "imagine the possibilities of success."

When asked how he might sum up the key purpose of the Society, founder Gary Tuerack said,



BY RACHEL ANDERSON

"We are dream supporters – we build leaders, support people in achieving their dreams, and better the world in the process. We get

people to ask the all-important question, 'What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?' and then help them to achieve those goals. "

The National Society of Leadership and Success was founded with the sole purpose of creating lasting, positive change. Beginning with only a handful of chapters, the Society now reaches tens of thousands of students at hundreds of chapters around the world. The Society encourages community action, volunteerism, personal growth, and strong leadership from its chapters and members worldwide.

NLS website:
<http://www.societyleadership.org/>

IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES OF SUCCESS.

At Aims, we have a good understanding of this. As we work toward fulfilling our mission to help students achieve their learning goals, we know that this is not enough. Thus, we enhance our mission by expanding student opportunity and welcoming the National Society of Leadership and Success program to campus. Aims will be offering students the opportunity to develop their



ADDING IT UP

One of the most valuable resources we can provide is financial literacy. At Aims we are creating new tools and resources that will serve students through college and beyond. This year Aims Student Services initiated a new program called \$mart Cents. \$mart Cents is a financial wellness program that provides financial literacy through educational programming in four topic areas - budgeting, managing debt, saving and managing credit.

The goal of \$mart Cents is to help students learn how to manage money effectively and make wise financial decisions.

Committed to creating a culture of financial empowerment and lifelong learning for students, \$mart Cents provides students with personalized

services through GreenPath Debt Solutions, a local non-profit that helps students achieve their financial goals. Aims hosts GreenPath on campus periodically throughout the year when students have the opportunity to sign up for a confidential, free one-to-one session with a GreenPath advisor. The advisor will take time to understand each student's financial situation, explore debt repayment options and work to develop a customized action plan.

\$mart Cents provides students with helpful tools, resources and support every step of the way.

Green Path website:
<http://www.greenpath.com/about>.



ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE RESOURCES WE CAN PROVIDE IS FINANCIAL LITERACY.





EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION & EXCELLENCE

BY DR. GERI ANDERSON

The increasing workforce needs of Northern Colorado have created an interesting opportunity and challenge for Aims to design and implement a variety of innovative programs designed to meet the workforce need, while improving student academic achievement and the quality of education for all students.

Funding has been allocated to implement promising education programs such as the college's Academic Pathways program. Academic Pathways meets the mission, purposes and values of Aims by extending college into high schools and by enhancing the transition and access to postsecondary education for student populations who have been historically underserved and underrepresented in higher education. Last year the students participating in Academic Pathways tripled as students began to realize and take part in this exciting and forward-thinking program.

One program in Academic Pathways that really stands out is the Intensive English Language Program (IELP). Students in IELP come from all over the world to study at Aims and find support and resources that help them succeed. Many of our Aims students are here on work permits or have immigrated here to participate in the agriculture and industry boom. Aims has approached

this with creativity and common sense. As part of the IELP, Aims has partnered with businesses to help students learn to communicate professionally. Hungenberg Produce, for example, reached out to Aims to help establish a technology enhanced classroom at their farm site where workers and their families can benefit from educational programs.

Other successful programs include the Early College High School and Career and Technical Education academies that function in partnership with local school districts. The Early College initiative is a partnership between Greeley-Evans School District 6 and Aims Community College to establish the first Early College in Weld County. It will serve 500 Weld County high school students beginning in the 2016 academic year. This stand-alone public high school is a bold approach, based on the principle that academic rigor, combined with the opportunity to save time and money, is a powerful motivator for students to work hard and meet serious intellectual challenges in completing both a high school diploma and associate of arts degree concurrently.

In Career and Technical Education, many of our programs have received national recognition. For example, Aims Community College is one of only 31 colleges and universities that holds the Air Traffic Collegiate Training Initiative (AT-CTI) designation. This means the FAA recognizes Aims for offering a program that exceeds standards and affords our graduates an edge.

Other programs that have been developed recently with industry partnerships include Health Navigator,

Precision Agriculture, Oil & Gas, Welding, the Advanced Manufacturing programs and Allied Health. Aims continues its strong efforts to support the growth of the community and the productive education of its students through programs like these in Greeley and the Aims district. We know the programs are working because our students are getting hired and the prospects for certificate and degree graduates continue to increase.

According to a 2014 Forbes report, Greeley was ranked fifth best in job growth out of the 240 metropolitan statistical areas with fewer than 150,000 jobs. Forbes used data from the Bureau of Labor statistics showing that Greeley had 92,000 jobs in 2013 and a job growth rate of 5.6 percent, as well as a job growth rate of 12.2 percent from 2008-2013.

This is good news for the Aims district as the college continues its strong efforts to imagine and implement specific programs for our diverse students that nurture success in the classroom and life.

We are looking at the needs of students as they finish their high school work and begin to sharpen their focus and skills for college transfer or job readiness. We intend to match the need for high quality workers with high-quality graduates who have trained in the most industry savvy career and technical programs and/or who transfer to prestigious four-year programs after achieving relevant associate degrees. Aims is continually improving, innovating and keeping our eyes on the future.

INNOVATION

CULTIVATORS ARE THE MOST VALUABLE CITIZENS...THEY ARE TIED TO THEIR COUNTRY.
PRESIDENT THOMAS JEFFERSON

FORT LUPTON CAMPUS
Fort Lupton campus doubled in size this year and now houses a working oil and gas lab with industry standard trainers and the space and potential for a working well trainer. Fort Lupton also has a brand new welding lab with cutting-edge industry equipment and the Precision Agriculture lab, which enables students to work on Agriculture equipment and new precision digital technology.

WE KEEP MOVING FORWARD, OPENING NEW DOORS AND DOING NEW THINGS, BECAUSE WE'RE CURIOUS, AND CURIOSITY KEEPS LEADING US DOWN NEW PATHS.
WALT DISNEY, ENTREPRENEUR

GREELEY CAMPUS
The home-base of Aims Community College, Greeley is situated on a beautiful campus center with 175+ acres of paths, gardens, outdoor learning space and elegant, efficient and multi-purpose buildings for all of the student needs. Currently, its General Services building is being updated to create dynamic learning and working space for students and employees. Later this year, the renovation and expansion of the Physical Education building will provide an accessible wellness center for all of our students, staff and faculty to utilize.

IMAGINATION IS THE SOURCE OF EVERY FORM OF HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT.
SIR KEN ROBINSON, EDUCATIONALIST

LOVELAND CAMPUS
In the heart of the famous art community of Loveland, Aims is situated to work with some of the most talented artists in the nation and help them learn how to be better business people in addition to wonderful artists. Our Concurrent Enrollment program has been expanded to include several schools from surrounding districts in the new Graphic and Digital Design program, offering alternative college courses for high school students with talents and aspirations beyond core learning.

THE HUMAN MIND IS A CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH THINGS-TO-BE ARE COMING INTO THE REALM OF THINGS-THAT-ARE.
HENRY FORD, INVENTOR

WINDSOR CENTER
This year our state-of-art Automotive Technology Center in Windsor not only hosted the filming of a national training video for automotive technology, starring our students, but also hosted training sessions conducted by Audi to teach Aims' students higher-end skills on some of the premiere engines in the world of automotive design. Soon the Automotive Center will have a new neighbor on the adjoining 10 acres, where the Public Safety Institute breaks ground in November 2015 to begin building a one-of-a-kind Fire Science/EMS hands on training facility complete with fire tower.





INDUSTRY INSIGHT

As Aims works to teach industry knowledge and standards in the classroom, we are also focused on getting students into the classroom of life.

Aims Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are focused on providing affordable, relevant and reliable training that will prepare our students for careers in current and emerging industries. In keeping our finger on the pulse of industry as it evolves, we want to be sure our students have the skills and experience necessary to help them successfully step into a job when they graduate.

Career and Technical Education programs such as Applied Environmental Technologies have professional advisory committees (PACs) that provide valuable

Our alumni go on to do great things, as evident in the recent announcement that Aims Community College Communication Media alumnus Lance Ing was honored by the White House Press Association as Video Editor of the Year for 2014.



insight into industry needs and innovations. PACs are comprised of industry leaders who help faculty understand current skills that students need to be successful in transitioning from the classroom to an office, field site, manufacturing facility or other professional environment.

Our main campus has simulated technologies beyond compare in the Allied Health, Advanced Manufacturing and Aviation programs. Our Fort Lupton campus has unique, industry-standard oil and gas trainers, welding bays and precision agriculture labs. Our Windsor facility is working with industry leaders like Audi to train top notch specialists, and it will soon expand into a dynamic multi-program campus with an innovative Public Safety Institute. All of our satellite campuses are working hard to keep ahead of industry standards and to value the relationships and advice of industry leaders. This

year UPSTATE Colorado Economic Development held its annual meeting at our Fort Lupton campus and put Aims Community College on its radar as a top provider of quality students who are now valuable and desired candidates for top industry positions.

We are proud to provide the technology, curriculum and facilitators to help students train in career and technical programs. However, being able to work and apprentice in the actual jobs for which they are training is invaluable. Worksource, a program launched in 2013-2014 partners with industry leaders from all over Weld and Larimer counties to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned on the job. Launched at UPSTATE Colorado Economic Development's annual meeting, Aims announced the simplified process for companies to seek out students who are ready to begin



their transition into the workforce, which is a fantastic opportunity for students. Simultaneously, the business benefits from having an experience with a trained student worker who has the potential to eventually become a full-time employee.

More and more companies are coming to Weld and Larimer counties to start and grow their businesses and Aims is preparing to meet their needs with highly trained, quality graduates with real hands-on experience in the classroom and on the job.



FOSTERING THE MINDSET OF COMPLETION

CATALYST PROGRAM

BY RYAN BARONE

WE ARE HERE IN CATALYST
TO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN,
NOT TO WAIT FOR THEM TO
HAPPEN.

CARLOS LOPEZ
AIMS CATALYST STUDENT



Helping new students apply, enroll and complete their first semester is important, yet many colleges fail to focus on success beyond the first term. This is not the case at Aims Community College. In Spring 2014, the Center for the First-Year Experience (FYE) launched a new program focused on engaging students beyond their first semester. The word catalyst is defined as “someone or something that encourages progress and change.” The Catalyst program is a selective leadership program that helps returning students foster a mindset of completion.

Students who participate in Catalyst adopt a forward-looking view of their college career through important transition points, such as semester breaks, which traditionally result in student attrition.

According to the 2013 Job Outlook Survey, employers are looking for soft skills, including communication,

teamwork, decision-making and problem solving, organization and prioritization, information processing and influencing. Catalyst learning outcomes focus on these skills needed to attract future employer partnerships.

“Every graduate’s story includes a catalyst of some sort,” says Shannon McCasland, Associate Dean for Student Services and co-founder of the program. “Catalyst is designed to fan the flames of learning while providing compelling opportunities for campus and peer engagement.”

The program achieves this by establishing a community of involved students who deepen their campus engagement and collectively develop high standards for academic performance, an essential component of retention for diverse students according to higher education scholar Laura Rendón.

The learning needs of Aims students are broad, with a significant percentage of new students requiring developmental education to reach college level proficiency. Most of



CATALYST IS DESIGNED TO FAN THE FLAMES OF LEARNING WHILE PROVIDING COMPELLING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAMPUS AND PEER ENGAGEMENT.

these students take an Advancing Academic Achievement (AAA) course to cultivate academic skills and confirm career goals. Catalyst solicits nominations from AAA instructors for participants, selecting a diverse group of students who create a rich and supportive community. Catalyst participant Shannon Lamborn shares that she wasn’t sure what to expect when she joined Catalyst, but she now knows it’s been, “... a great environment to grow, socialize and learn.”

Students indicate that their primary reason for accepting the nomination to join Catalyst was for self-enrichment and the development of leadership skills, and they have been pleased with their choice.

Thomas Baumer asserts that, “Catalyst has exceeded my expectations. It is much more than just a place to meet the new leaders



of Aims. It helps people share their strengths and develop new ones with the help of others.” Self-actualization is a goal of Catalyst, and Irene Agandar indicates that this goal has been achieved. “I love that Catalyst has helped me see myself in a new way,” she said.

Post-assessments reveal that students gained many skills and new professional habits of excellence through Catalyst, including an increase in help-seeking behaviors, and in seeing failure as a way to learn.

The Catalyst program facilitates meaningful engagement in the larger Aims campus community - a hallmark predictor of persistence according to higher education researcher Vincent Tinto. Students in Catalyst report that the program encourages them to remain at Aims, with one student writing on a post-assessment, “Catalyst has helped me focus on the right things, it has shown me how important finishing school is.” In the Catalyst program students focus on their academic and professional strengths, which increases confidence

and subsequently predicts retention. Another student shares, “I have more confidence that coming to Aims was the best thing to do.” 97 percent of the students in Catalyst indicated their intentions to return to Catalyst and to Aims in Fall 2014. Data from the first semester of Catalyst indicate notable success, with the 20 students who have completed the program in Spring 2014 earning an average 3.5 grade point average.

Catalyst is well positioned to become a model program for Aims, with plans to expand to the Fort Lupton campus in Fall 2014 and the Loveland campus in Spring 2015. FYE staff anticipates having at least 70 individual students engaged in the program during the next academic year.

Catalyst is novel among peer institutions, and it again demonstrates the visionary leadership and holistic approaches to ensuring student success at Aims Community College.

Find out more about Catalyst and the Center for the First-Year Experience at <http://www.aims.edu/fye/> or by visiting their office in Horizon Hall.



Here at Aims Community College diversity is valued, and everyone is encouraged to reach their full potential. This is my story.

I still remember the day my parents told me we were going to visit my grandparents, nothing new, as it was customary to visit them on weekends. What was not customary was the route we took. There I was, in the bus waiting for the last few people

to find their places. Luckily, I sat next to a window. I loved gazing out the window as the bus went along, especially around the town plaza. The town of Tepatlán Jalisco Mexico has always had an immaculate plaza full of people selling food, crafts, cotton candy, and all sorts of hand woven cloth. The families gravitated to the plaza every day. In particular, children were laughing, chasing each other, and just having a marvelous time after school. Even after returning to the same plaza 20 years later, I could still feel the peace and tranquility while sitting on the benches. I, however, did not feel this peace and tranquility after realizing that I was not going to my grandparents house. Ten hours later, I found myself standing on the banks of the Rio Grande. Nudged by my parents, I slowly entered the cold and murky waters, too scared to even let out a slight whimper. I can even recall the taste of mud and the feel of grit in my mouth as I labored to wade through the current. Half way across the river, I safely concluded that we were not on any beaten path to my abuelitos (grandparents) house. After what seemed an eternity spent in the abyss, I suddenly crawled ashore on the other side. And just as we all sought a moment of relief, a shout was heard: "corran, corran" ("run, run"). The anxiety in the shout created a panic among us. To this day, I cannot remember another time when I have run as fast in so short a time. There would be many more days full of anxiety during my adolescent years.

Diverse PERSPECTIVE

BY DR. MARIO GONZALEZ

One day in class after I arrived, students stood up and spoke about wanting to become writers, lawyers and doctors; I just could not stop thinking about getting through class, let alone think about becoming the next Miguel Cervantes. I was, simply,

trying to fit in and I was doing a dreadful job. I felt bad, I felt inadequate, I felt stupid, and worst of all, I never shared my feelings with anyone. Today, I realize I felt this way because I never understood what it meant to be Mexican, to be Latino or Hispanic or American or simply to be me. Since I could not relate to

what anyone said that day, I felt out of place. The reason I felt the way I did was my inability to accept myself for who I was. In Mexico, I was a Mestizo, part Indian, part Spaniard, and in the United States, I am Mexican, Chicano, Hispanic, Mexican/American or American.

I have taken a personal journey to begin to understand and accept who I am. Here at Aims, I am unique, I am also like many others who come from diverse backgrounds to pursue a common goal. I can now imagine success for myself and for the students who stand in the shoes I stood in years ago when I questioned my own potential. I am an advisor, a mentor and my diversity is my strength in a community of leaders, innovators, educators and explorers that is Aims Community College.



Mario has worked as an advisor at Aims for eight years. He strives to educate and connect with a huge population of students, primarily our Hispanic population.



IT IS TIME FOR [US] TO TEACH YOUNG PEOPLE EARLY ON THAT IN DIVERSITY THERE IS BEAUTY AND THERE IS STRENGTH.

MAYA ANGELOU, AUTHOR

Faculty Mentoring Program

In anticipation of significant new faculty hires, Aims leadership actively supported the creation and implementation of a new faculty mentoring program designed to provide one-to-one faculty mentoring by faculty peers. Mentors will be trained in learning-centered teaching philosophy and practices to help guide new faculty members. Mentees will be provided with regular faculty guidance in a cohort style class and weekly collaboration with mentors to help improve and fine-tune teaching at the college.



Bill Gates once commented, *"TECHNOLOGY IS JUST A TOOL. IN TERMS OF GETTING THE KIDS WORKING TOGETHER AND MOTIVATING THEM, THE TEACHER IS THE MOST IMPORTANT."*

Aims instructors have been and will continue to be the future of education using the best tools technology has to offer.

BILL WAGGONER, AIMS CIO



BALANCING WORKLIFE Wellness AT AIMS

BY JAN COPE

TThere have been many changes going on at Aims, one of which involves wellness. A couple of years ago many of our employees participated in the Quality of Work Life Survey and the Noel Levitz survey. The results from those surveys were several requests and suggestions for a more robust wellness program. They felt in the past we were primarily focused on only physical health/wellness. Certainly, a person's physical health contributes to one's overall level of wellbeing, but that is only one part of an individual's wellness.

The **WORK LIFE WELLNESS** program offers an array of opportunities for our employees. Our Lunch and Learn sessions throughout the year are offered by our Employee Assistance Provider, Aetna, and cover such topics as *Change Mastery, Time*

Management, Etiquette in the Workplace, Understanding Learning Styles and Stress Management at Work.

Our annual **HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR** is held in October. All staff and family members are invited to attend and take advantage of the health screenings and services offered. Some of the services offered are basic blood screen testing, blood pressure, heart rate, weight/height/body frame size, body fat and facial skin analysis, as well as flu shots.

All employees are invited to attend, eat and participate in a campus wide holiday celebration called the **HOLIDAY PROGRESSIVE POTLUCK**, which is held in December. This past year Work Life Wellness hosted chair massages at this event by The Massage Therapy School.

On this year's **BIKE TO WORK DAY** in June, Work Life Wellness at Aims hosted a 2014 snack station at the Aims entrance at 16th Street and 47th Avenue in Greeley. People were thrilled that Aims participated and had a snack station. It was a great day. We look forward to having a station again next year!

And finally, a valuable wellness resource Aims offers is **SKILLPORT WELLBEING ESSENTIALS**, an online collection of over 1,400 books covering varied topics in Health and Wellness, Nutrition and Weight Loss. Wellbeing Essentials recognizes that work/life balance is a key factor in the overall health of employees.

Employee wellness is of the utmost importance at Aims, and we are continuing to expand our Wellness program in order to help all of our employees. We value



our employees greatly and are thoroughly excited to continue the expansion of the Wellness and Fitness program at the College to ensure we have programs, services and/or resources that support all around wellness in the workplace.

RESOURCES*

\$13,793,767
Beginning Balance

\$73,047,355

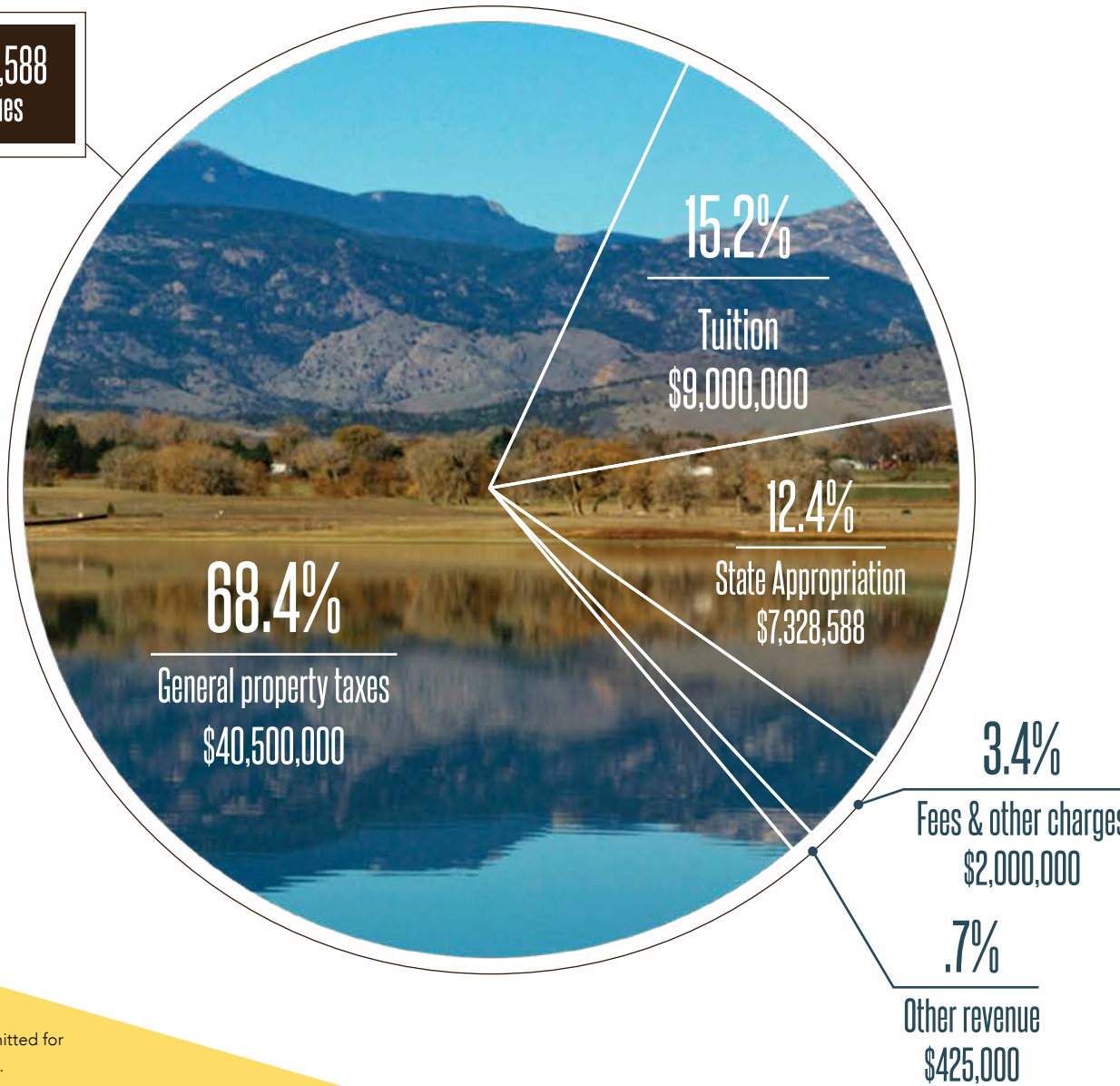
\$59,253,588
Revenues

Total Revenue:
Anticipated to increase due to higher property tax revenue from oil and gas.

General Property Taxes: Expected to increase from 2013-14 going into 2014-15.

Tuition & Fees: Remaining flat from 2013-14 going into 2014-15.

State Appropriations: Anticipated to increase from 2013-14 into 2014-15.



*These figures are from the 2013-14 Revised Budget, which will be submitted for external audit in November 2014 and are, therefore, subject to change.



USES*

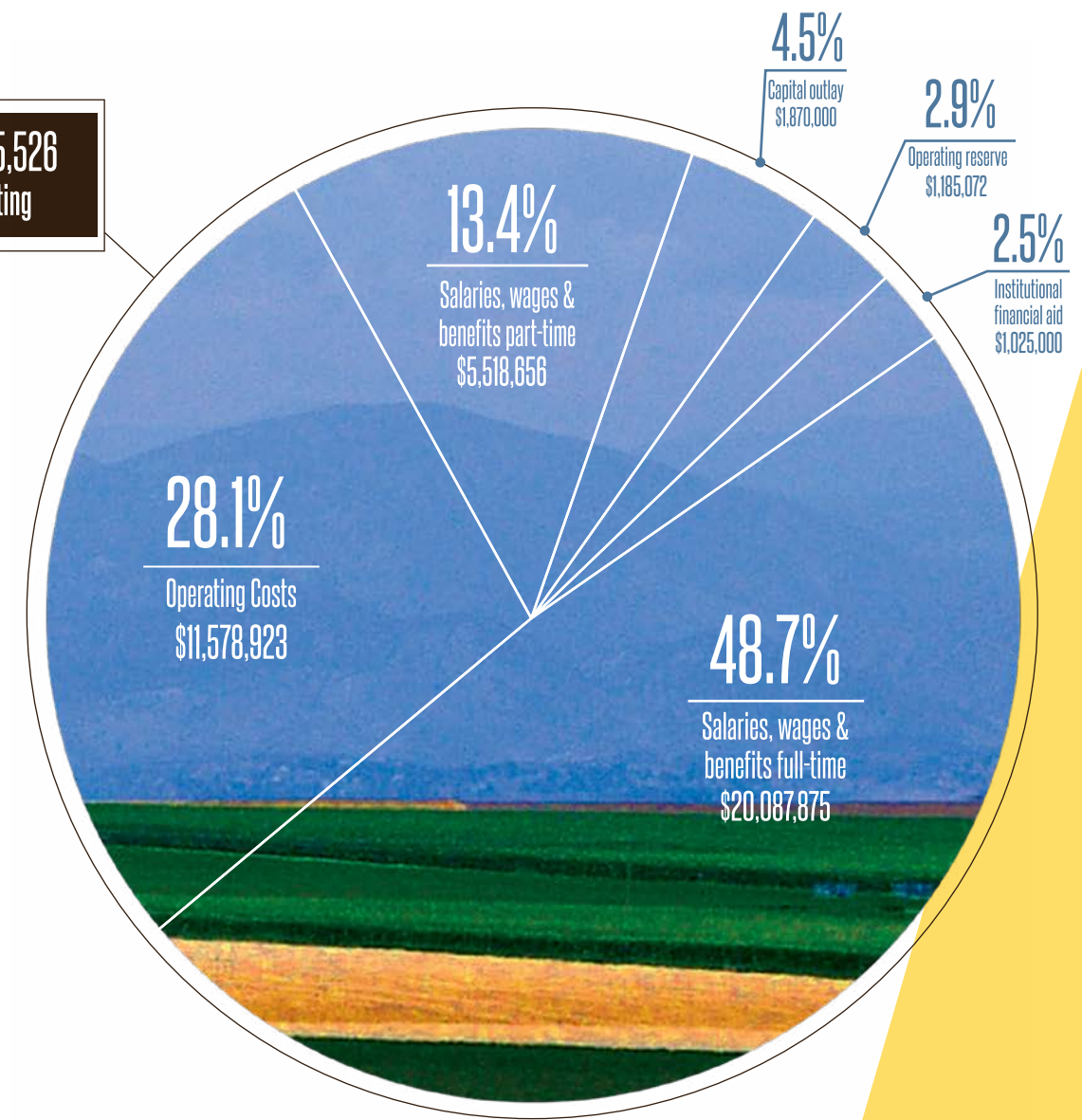
\$26,473,957
Construction/Reserves

\$67,739,483

\$41,265,526
Operating

As a publicly funded institution, good stewardship is always first and foremost in minds as we move through the budgeting process here at Aims. For their stewardship and financial acumen, we thank our Board of Trustees: Walt Richter, Mike Geile, Carol Ruckel, Larry Wood and Ray Peterson.

The information on these pages shows the unaudited revised budget for the 2013-2014 General Fund. The complete budget and financial statements are always available online or by contacting the Office of the Chief Business Officer. As always, thank you for your support. Bob Cox, Chief Business Officer, bob.cox@aims.edu or (970) 339-6509.



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Vision *"Aims Community College is a destination institution ... the institution of choice for a better you."*

Mission *To help students achieve their learning goals and objectives through effective and efficient program options and services and to develop partnerships that support economic development and global understanding.*

Values *Commitment to Colleagues and College through Communication, Safety, Respect & Professionalism and Trust.*

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

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Dr. Ray Peterson



any of our recent accomplishments and planned changes will position Aims to take advantage of great opportunities in the future. Throughout this publication, we have highlighted some of the positive action at Aims Community College over the course of the past year, but here we can focus in on just a few.



We have seen an investment in people including efforts to try and get people the needed resources and training to do their jobs more effectively. I see these efforts paying off with interesting and effective learning environments that certainly include classes but also involve a host of other resources and services that are provided to students. I also see the willingness to invest in people paying off in terms of innovation, energy and a willingness to be open to ideas and to try new things. In the past year, Aims has asked

employees to take on a variety of complex projects. Once again, they have proven their worth by jumping in with a positive attitude and accomplishing the tasks assigned to them. A few examples include:

- ▶ The complete reorganization of the developmental education program to align with state mandates
- ▶ The revision of all automotive service degrees and certificates in one term, to support changes instituted at the state level
- ▶ The introduction of two new degrees in our Criminal Justice department: Forensics and Victim Studies
- ▶ Continued growth in the Honors program, proving that students are willing to go above and beyond to experience in-depth learning experiences
- ▶ Significant expansion of dual-credit enrollment programs, including Early College initiatives and new offerings in Weld and Larimer counties
- ▶ Further development of the assessment project, better enabling the college to track student learning and success
- ▶ The submission of applications for multiple grants, plus on-going grant management and reporting for existing grants
- ▶ The establishment of a part-time faculty task force to address the needs of those vital members of the Aims family
- ▶ Action projects are underway that focus on shared resources and expertise between academic programs and student services
- ▶ Student Support Services have initiated several programs and technological projects designed to increase student engagement and retention

Moving forward, there are many other projects that are currently in progress, which will also take a substantial amount of work, investment and sharing of ideas and resources. A new and more comprehensive faculty orientation is being developed and will be implemented in the fall. A mentor program for new faculty is being advanced. New degrees, programs and buildings are being considered in an effort to be responsive to the needs of the community, students, faculty and staff. We are in a process of continuous improvement.

Working on these and many other projects requires making adjustments that are sometimes difficult. It would be easy to say "no" and not try. It would be easy to adopt an approach of "We do a good job already; we do not need to change things." But we are not taking the easy path. Instead we are embracing a "can-do approach," a willingness to put in the time and effort, a readiness to push through the discomfort in the here and now to try new things and work toward making things better in the future. We applaud the efforts of our Aims faculty, staff and students to get to in-depth understanding by sharing

EYES ON THE FUTURE

BY DR. RICHARD HANKS

ideas and resources. There is great value in looking at what we do with a critical eye and then, perhaps more importantly, an enthusiasm to make adjustments to improve.

Our eyes are on the future and imagining all of the ways that we can truly prosper at Aims Community College.

MY BBS

ON THE



AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

970.330.8008

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GREELEY FORT LUPTON LOVELAND WINDSOR ONLINE