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# Strengthening the Academic Quality, Community Presence and Institutional Power of the Two-Year Community Colleges in New Jersey

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**STRENGTHENING THE ACADEMIC QUALITY, COMMUNITY PRESENCE AND  
INSTITUTIONAL POWER OF THE TWO-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN  
NEW JERSEY**

**BY**

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Master of Corporate and Public Communications  
Seton Hall University**

**2002**

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This work is dedicated to my grandma - my friend, my angel and my inspiration.

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

Over the past 10 years, community colleges in the state of New Jersey have expanded their curriculum, advanced in academic and technical standards and improved integration of community needs into their missions and goals. These institutions have been recognized by all levels of government for providing a wide range of services, and are truly affordable and assessable, forms of high quality education. These are standards that must be maintained and developed to secure community colleges expansion, development and growth.

According to the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, enrollment in all 19 community colleges in the state of New Jersey increased 4.5 percent for part-time students and 7.1 percent for full-time student enrollment in the year 2001. This is the largest enrollment increase in New Jersey since 1991. The largest community college student enrollment increase in the state was accomplished by Warren County Community College, located in Washington, New Jersey with a 23 percent increase, the largest enrollment increase in the college's 20-year history.

Warren County and Warren County Community College will be the focus of the author's survey study. Warren County Community College is intimately tied to the community of Warren County. Providing affordable education and life-long learning opportunities, academic programs and services that are designed to meet the needs of the community since 1981. This commitment is reflected in their continuing efforts to broaden and enrich the programs and services- evident by the steadily increasing enrollment. As a reflection of community, Warren County Community College created a mission that best represents the needs of students, faculty and community: Education that lasts a lifetime must reflect the goals, vision and values of Warren County.

Today, community colleges provide much more than affordable and accessible education. Eleven of the state's 19 county colleges have frozen tuition for Fall 2000, according to the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges (NJCCC). One college, Sussex County Community College reduced tuition by 7 percent. Jacob Farbman, attributes the tuition freeze to "continuing affordability of community colleges for students."

In fact, community colleges reflect the growing needs of surrounding communities and respond to a changing environment and diverse student population. Curriculum is designed to encourage student growth and development and to provide alternative pathways for students and professionals. Community Colleges' strives toward these goals by providing:

- Strengthened community commitment of the College;
- Enhanced academic quality and integrity;
- Respond to changing environment and a diversified student population;
- Implement technology advanced learning for students and faculty;
- Prepare students to be leaders in their continuing education, profession and community;
- and
- Enhance the College's image and identity.

The primary goal of community colleges is to demonstrate and encourage their communities to strengthen the commitment to provide affordable and assessable education. This commitment will ensure life-long opportunities for not only the community but also for students and faculty. It is critical that community colleges gain the support and commitment of the surrounding communities to thrive in today's competitive academic market.

Enhancing academic quality and fostering academic integrity by implementing new programs and services that respond to the changing environment and diverse student population prepare students to be leaders in their continuing education, professions and community will

enhance the college's image and identity. Community colleges must provide services in support of development, and promote relationship-building resources. Community colleges must reflect the educational needs, student development and the general community needs in all academic endeavors.

Developed over 100 years ago, community colleges were designed with a mission to provide affordable and accessible education to the surrounding community. Over the years, community colleges have undergone a number of transformations, however, still keeping true to the original mission. "Specially in terms of identity and purpose. These transformations have been thought of as generations, and with new generation, the colleges have added new functions." (Bailey & Averianova 2001).

#### Research Question

Has the emergence of the "Escalating college-bound population," strengthened the academic quality, community presence and institutional power of the two-year community colleges of New Jersey? This examination will focus on recent trends that have contributed to the success and growth of community colleges in New Jersey, specifically focusing on Warren County Community College. In addition, this study will focus on the roles and responsibilities, challenges and future goals of the two-year community college.

#### Subsidiary Questions

In addition, this study will seek to answer the following questions that are critically important to understanding the growth and development of community colleges:

1. Do community colleges reflect the growing needs of surrounding community?

2. Does the curriculum encourage student growth and development?
3. Have community colleges met the social needs of their students?
4. How are state and federal funding shaping the mission of community colleges?
5. Which roles do community colleges seek to expand, reduce or drop?
6. What has the two-year community college done to enhance their image and identity?
7. Will cooperative arrangements between high schools and four-year colleges/universities be mutual beneficial in respect to enrollment and academic quality?
8. Will the alarming retiring rate of community college leaders (presidents, administrators, faculty leaders) affect the successful development and growth over the next 10 years?

#### Purpose of Study

Community colleges have trained and educated students for a number of disciplines since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and were originally developed out of the need to provide high school students with an additional option to attend college without leaving home for a distant college. Development of community colleges was sparked when national and local government came to the realization that a more skilled workforce was critical to country's growth and economic strength (<http://www.aacc.nche.edu>). Since that need was established, a total of 1,600 community colleges nationwide have trained and educated students in a number of various disciplines. Since 1901, at least 100 million people have attended community colleges.

This purpose of this study will focus on academic quality, community presence and institutional power of the two-year community college in the state of New Jersey. The emergence of the 18 to 21 year old escalating college-bound population entering community colleges has forced them to be more competitive in their curriculum. The curriculum must

prepare students to be leaders in their continuing education, profession and community. Community colleges must respond to a changing environment that includes developing an inclusive atmosphere that reflects an increasingly diverse student population. Programs and services must represent a multicultural, multiethnic, and pluralistic society ( AACC Survey Leadership).

More and more high school students and professionals wishing to expand their careers are entering community colleges as freshmen. This influx in freshmen enrollment is due to several contributing factors a slowing economy, greater competition and overcrowded conditions in four-year colleges. The author seeks to confirm that the enrollment increase is due to accessible, affordable education, specialized curriculum and technical training and services.

### Objectives

The intention of this study will be to observe and determine if community colleges have strengthened the academic quality, community presence and insinuation power. The author will focus on Warren County Community College (WCCC), using three objectives. The first will be to access and determine WCCC's strengths and weaknesses, of the past, present and future. This is essential to determine the college's academic, institutional and community power. The second objective of this study will explore the opportunities that community colleges have in today's society. Has the recent increase in enrollment in New Jersey community colleges enhanced the college's image and identity? Lastly, the author will establish the threats and opposition facing community colleges. Will community colleges survive and thrive in today's competitive environment?

### Definition of Terms

1. Community Colleges or County Colleges or Post-Secondary Institutions: A two year college without residential facilities often funded by state and local governments
2. American Association of Community Colleges (AACC): National community college presidents organization that provides information through a bi-weekly newsletter. Also, serving as an umbrella organization for community college interests.
3. Community Development: Assists and guides students in assuming responsibility for improving the overall life on campus and surrounding community.
4. Continuing Education: Non-credit courses usually designed for part-time students who want to upgrade their occupational skills.
5. Distance Learning: Learning that takes place via electronic media linking.
6. GED: Graduate Educational Development
7. GI Bill of Rights: In 1944 Congress passed act that provided financial assistance for veterans who wish to pursue higher education.
8. Mission Statement: A specific task, reflecting the goals of an organization in which a group is charged to follow.
9. New Jerseyans: Residents of the state of New Jersey.
10. New Jersey Commission on Higher Education: Consists of 12 public members and serves as the statewide coordinating for Higher Education in the state.
11. Non-profit organizations: Universities/colleges that do not seek or produce revenue.
12. Presidents Council: Consists of the presidents of the state's public and independent institutions of higher education that receive state aid.
13. Transfer Program: A credit program that provides first two years of a four year degree.

### Limitations

A limitation of this study is that the information is directed towards community colleges in the state of New Jersey, which focus's on the academic quality, community presence and institution power. This study is inhibited by the exclusive focus on the state of New Jersey, however the author believes that the state of New Jersey represents the best-case scenario on the overview public perception, academic and social roles, future goals and challenges that the community college experience.



## Chapter II

### History of Community Colleges

In the 20th century, community colleges have not only survived, they have thrived by demonstrating remarkable resiliency and becoming centers of educational opportunity open to all. They pride themselves on providing educational marketplaces where students' choices and community needs influence course offerings. Accordingly, we now mark a century in which community colleges have helped million of people to learn and advance toward personal goals, while providing a forum to address challenges facing entire communities.

([http://www.aacc,nche.edu/content/navigationmenu/about community/](http://www.aacc,nche.edu/content/navigationmenu/about%20community/))

Community colleges were developed over 100 years ago, designed with a mission to provide affordable and accessible education to the surrounding community. Community colleges play a key role in expanding higher education opportunity to new nontraditional populations of students, which typically include larger proportions of minorities, women, older adults, and part-time students than is the case at a four-year college (NJ Council of County College).

Since their inception, community colleges have carried out a number of complex and competing foci as part of their open access mission (Cross, 1985; Deegan, Tillaery, & Associates, 1985), often serving the community and individuals with more than academic opportunities. The student profile plays a critical role in the success of a community college. The student population of a community college has historically been more diverse than 4-year colleges. Minority students make up 30 percent of enrollment nationally and an overwhelming 58 percent of students are women, (Philippe & Patton, 2000). According to the American

Association of Community College (ACCC), the high enrollment of women can be attributed to the location of community colleges near residential areas.

Over 1,100 community colleges, comprising over one fourth of all higher education institutions in the United States, enroll 5.3 million full-time equivalent students (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 1999a, 1999c). This level of enrollment accounts for 45% of all first-time college entrants and 37% of all undergraduate in American colleges and universities. (Bragg, 2001, p.95).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States faced many challenges, including global and economic competition. National and local leaders realized that the workforce needed to be skilled in order to increase the economic strength of this country. More and more high school students were reluctant to attend a 4-year school due to high cost and location. High schools began seeking for ways to serve the communities by providing accessible, affordable education. The first community college was founded in 1901; Joliet Junior College (JJC) in Illinois was a high-school based community college.

As America's oldest public community college, Joliet Junior College, established the goals and mission adopted by all community colleges nationwide: provide accessible and affordable education to the community in which it supports. Originally, JJC began as an experimental postgraduate high school program, founded by Stanley Brown, Superintendent of Joliet Township High School, and William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago. JJC's goal was to accommodate students who desired to remain within the community and still pursue college education.

Within a few years, the concept of the community college had grown to include students outside the existing high school district. The college's initial enrollment was six students, today;

JJC serves more than 10,000 students in credit classes and 21,000 students in noncredit courses. The number of community colleges has steadily grown since the community college boom of the 1960's to a total of 1600 nationwide and over 100 million people have attended community colleges for educational or professional training.

Typical of the first community colleges, Joliet Junior College was small and focused on liberal arts studies. However, due to geographical and economic changes and the growing ethnic diversity in the United States curriculum was forced to change over the years. The curriculum expanded into job-training programs, transfer and vocation oriented, and community development programs established to improve community living.

#### Overview of New Jersey's System of Higher Education

All 19 community colleges form a sector within a 56-institution system that includes 12 other public and 25 private institutions. The other public colleges and universities include three research universities: Rutgers University, New Jersey Institute of Technology and University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Nine state colleges and universities, and 25 private institutions, 14 senior colleges receive state aid, eight religious institutions, and three degree-granting proprietary institutions.

#### Overview of New Jersey's Community Colleges

Responding to the need of affordable and accessible education, the New Jersey Legislature, in 1962, created the framework for a statewide system of public community colleges. In 1966 the first four community colleges were open, followed by 10 more before 1970.

Three were established during the 1970's and the last two in 1982. The state's 21 counties operate 19 community colleges.

Community colleges in the state of New Jersey over the past 10 years have expanded their curriculum, advanced in academic and technical standards and improved integration of community needs into their missions and goals. Community colleges have been recognized by local, state and federal government for providing culturally diverse services and programs, technology advanced training program, and affordable, assessable, high quality education.

New Jersey Community Colleges experienced their largest full-time enrollment increase since the fall of 1991 in the year 2001. As a result of the 2001 *New Jerseyans' Opinions of Community Colleges* poll, conducted for New Jersey Council of County Colleges by The State University of New Jersey: Rutgers, Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling, all 19 of New Jersey Community Colleges increased of student enrollment for taking classes for credit statewide by 130,246 students enrolled, a 4.5 percent increase and a 7.1 increase for full-time students, according to the New Jersey Council of County Colleges. "We attribute this continuous enrollment growth to the affordability our community colleges offer to student throughout the state," New Jersey Community College Council President Lawrence A. Nespoli said.

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is the state association representing New Jersey's 19 community colleges. As an independent, trustee-handed organization that joins leadership of trustees and presidents, the Council is the voice of the community College sector before the state legislature and other branches of government. New Jersey Community College Fall 2001 Enrollment (Appendix C) determined community college enrollment increases for

third consecutive year, combined New Jersey's community colleges enrolled 130,246, credit students Fall 2001, a 4.5 overall increase from 124,585 in 2000. (NJCCC News Release)

New Jersey Council of County Colleges determined that statewide full time credit student enrolment jumped to 60,496, an increase of almost 4,000 students from the year 2000. This is the largest growth in full time enrollment at New Jersey's community college since the fall of 1991. The following community college descriptions and mission statement are listed according to the New Jersey's Community College's 2001 enrollment numbers:

#### Case Exemplar

Warren County Community College (WCCC), the largest community college student enrollment increase in the state of New Jersey for 2001 was accomplished by which is the smallest community college in the state enrolling close to 1000 students with a 23 percent increase. This was the largest enrollment increase in the college's 20-year history. "WCCC is an institution dedicated to providing access to an affordable education for the residents of Warren County. This commitment is reflected in continuing efforts to broaden and enrich our programs and services, efforts that the public clearly appreciates as evidenced by our steadily increasing enrollments," states Vincent De Sanctis, Ph.D., president of Warren County Community College.

Warren County Community College, located in Washington, is intimately tied to the surrounding community. Providing affordable education and life-long learning opportunities, academic programs and services designed to meet the needs of the incoming freshmen. Critical for development and success, Warren County Community College must reflect the goals, vision and values of Warren County.

The County of Warren occupies an area of 364.55 square miles, is 32 miles long with an average width of 13 miles, and ranks ninth in size among the state's twenty-one counties. Warren

County Community College (WCCC) once occupied one building, which held twenty classrooms that was awarded by the Board of Trustees in July 1981. In 1988, the college awarded its first degree and gains much distinction when the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredited WCCC in July 1993. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation.

Expanding from the one building in January 1996 to a 75-acre, 50,000 square feet campus that was funded by state, county and private funds and donations. An addition was completed in 1997, as well as a commitment to identify future programs and facilities needed for growth and development.

**Warren County Community College Mission Statement:** WCCC is committed to providing affordable and accessible post-secondary education and life-long learning opportunities. The programs and services at Warren County Community College are designed to meet the academic and occupational needs of our community and to foster academic integrity and mutual respect for individual differences.

- To provide programs and life-long learning opportunities that enable full-time and part-time students to fulfill their personally defined goal in pursuing courses, certificates, associate degrees and transfer opportunities.
- To provide appropriate services in support of academic success and student Development.
- To promote relationship building and resource sharing throughout the
- college's service area.

- To evaluate all aspects of the college on a continuous basis to insure realization of the college mission. (<http://warren.cc.nj.us>)

### Comparative Examples

Community colleges are the largest providers of higher education in the state of New Jersey, enrolling 120,000 students each year. Currently, fifty percent of college freshman are enrolled in the states 19 community colleges. (New Jersey Council of County Colleges)

**Passaic County Community College (PCCC)** strength has been and continues to be a wide range of academic programs offered and the individual attention students receive from dedicated faculty and staff. Founded twenty-five years ago, PCCC serves over 5000 students on their Paterson Campus. Offering corporate training, distance learning and honors programs, PCCC can contribute their 19.9% increase in enrollment to diverse, innovative programs, which are tailored to meet the needs of the surrounding community.

**Passaic County Community College Mission Statement:** PCCC is a learning environment that is intimate and nurturing, where small class size encourages meaningful dialogue with instructors and where friendships develop and grow. Our College is rich in diversity and every student is respected for his or her potential. .

(<http://www.pccc.cc.nj.us>)

**Hudson County Community College (HCCC)** in Jersey City, New Jersey is an urban campus with easy access to New York City. HCCC has developed a Division of Planning and Institutional Research to support the College and each division in the implementation of HCCC's

mission statement and priorities. HCCC, founded in 1974 enrolls close to 5000 undergraduate students coming from both New Jersey and New York.

(<http://www.hudson.cc.nj.us>)

**Sussex County Community College (SCCC)** in Newton, New Jersey is located in the most rural of all counties in the state. SCCC offers a wide variety of specializations, which includes a Community Outreach program. Developed by the Family Resources and Development Center, The Community Outreach program offers support services to Sussex county residents. Services include but are not limited to, job training, financial planning, GED Study Programs, and EvenStart Family Literacy Partnership. SCCC total student enrollment increased 8.5%, making it the fourth highest enrollment in the state.

**Sussex County Community College Mission Statement:** Sussex County Community College is dedicated to lifelong learning and community enrichment. As a responsive and vibrant college, SCCC is committed to providing a supportive, caring environment that promotes academic excellence, economic development, attainment of career and educational goals, and personal and cultural enrichment for its diverse constituencies.

(<http://www.sussexcc.nj.us>)

**Essex County College (ECC)** established in 1966 is dedicated to providing comprehensive education programs and services for the county's residents. ECC is the fifth most populated community college in the state, which results in a 7.6 % increasing enrollment. Located in two areas of Essex County, enrolling close 10,000 students. The 22-acre urban campus features a multi-level mega-structure covering three city blocks, is located in the



University Heights section of Newark. The Newark campus has technological advanced resources including a state-of-the-art laboratories and a Theater of the Performing Arts.

As the second most densely populated county in New Jersey, expanding over 127 square miles, ECC opened their second campus in West Caldwell. Now the institutions fastest growing site, The West Essex Campus was established to meet the education and training needs of people who live and work in the western part of the county.

**Essex County College Mission Statement:** Essex County College, established in 1966 under New Jersey law as an open-door public community college for the residents of Essex County, is committed to providing quality educational programs and life-long learning activities at an affordable cost. It takes pride in its nurturing atmosphere, which encourages people of all backgrounds to enroll in its academic and continuing education programs. (<http://www.essex.edu>)

**Atlantic Cape Community College (ACCC)** was the second community college organized in the state of New Jersey in 1964. In January 1999, originally named Atlantic Community College became a joint college with Cape May county and in February 1999 was renamed ACCC. The college offers 37 degree programs specializing in casino careers and culinary arts programs. Located in the New Jersey Pinelands, ACCC enrolls nearly 5000 students per year, increasing in the year 2001 by 6.5%.

**Atlantic Cape Community College's Mission Statement:** Comprehensive, Student-Centered, And Accessible

- Responds to the diverse needs of the community
- Provides superior academic, technical and training programs
- Encourages the pursuit of lifelong learning

- Promotes responsible citizenship (<http://www.atlantic.edu>)

**Burlington County College (BCC)** offers extensive academic programs and services since 1969. The multileveled college center and health and physical education building was completed in 1971 on the college's first campus, located in Pemberton. To accommodate BCC growing enrollment the first daytime campus facility was built in Willingboro and a second campus in Mt. Laurel. BCC incorporates academics with technology and cultural and social opportunities by establishing a theatre company, Learning Institute for Elders, and a Technology & Engineering Center.

Ranked seventh in the state for their 5.6 % enrollment increase, BCC's 6,500 students can choose from 70 degree and certificate programs, 200 non-credit community enrichment courses, professional and job training programs and special enrollments for High School students.

**Burlington County College Mission Statement:** Burlington County College, a comprehensive community college, provides all individuals access to affordable and quality education. Our goal is to provide an educational experience that encourages the individual to think critically and to examine and clarify ethical, personal and political values. To prepare individuals for transfer to four-year colleges, for employment in business and industry and for new career skills. To enable individuals to strengthen their academic skills through adaptive learning, counseling and academic support. To enrich the quality of life by sponsoring cultural, recreational and personal interest activities through an extensive program of community and continuing education. To engage in partnerships with the private and public sectors and to implement programs that address

their identified employment needs. To provide state-of-the-art technologies in the education and training of all individuals through an appropriate mix of delivery systems. (<http://www.bee.edu>)

Gloucester County College's (GCC) curriculum is developed through a combination of academic and vocational programs. Offering programs that range from traditional, distance learning, volunteer program and business/industry training, GCC continually increases their options by expanding into alternative services. The Business and Industry Training Center was developed to offer seminars and training programs designed to improve workers skills and productivity. Located in Sewell, GCC enrolls almost 5000 students and showed an 8 percent in enrollment in Fall 2001. "At GCC, every student is valued," says William F. Anderson, President of GCC. (<http://www.geenj.edu/>)

Salem County Community College was established in 1972 offering comprehensive courses, certificates and degrees in over 40 programs of study. SCCC has grown significantly in enrollment, a 4.5 % increase in 2001 making enrollment close to 1300 students. Small classes and personal attention are important parts of the SCCC's commitment to student success. SCCC prides itself in offering the only scientific glass technology associate degree program in the United States. Located in two areas of Salem County, The Carney's Point Campus and The Salem Center offers a small suburban community while being near Philadelphia and other metropolitan areas.

**Salem County Community College Mission Statement:** We at Salem Community College believe that your success is our success. Our commitment is to provide quality

and affordable education in a dynamic learning environment through personalized services to a diverse community.(<http://www.salemcc.org>)

**Ocean County College (OCC)**, as the first county college in New Jersey, dedicates itself to the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge, the development of student character, and the preparation of its students to thrive in a complex and challenging world. OCC offers degree, certificates, business education training and continuing education and online programs at their main campus in Toms River and at several off campus sites throughout the county.

“Ocean County College's academic program and administrative support services are designed to provide a healthy learning environment that increases learning in a number of dimensions, nurtures personal growth, and offers high quality education that is both affordable and accessible,” states Jon H. Larson, Ph.D., president. As the eighth largest community college in New Jersey, OCC has grown in enrollment 4.2% in the year 2001.

**Ocean County College Mission Statement:** Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members work together as partners to advance and promote the college as the leading cultural, social, and educational center of the county. Ocean County College welcomes students to this progressive, stimulating and caring environment. In fulfilling the mission, Ocean County College enhances its educational and cultural programs with community, national and international partnership current technology, distance learning, and innovative teaching methods to reach an increasingly diverse population. Valuing global awareness and recognizing technological advancements, the College explores and responds to ever-changing community needs. (<http://www.ocean.cc.nj.us>)

County College of Morris (CCM) is located on 218 areas in Randolph and was founded in 1968. Expansion and renovation continue from 1968 to 1994 and has graduated over 30,000 students since its conception. CCM offers 70 different degrees and certificate programs and holds articulation (easy transfer) agreements with 42 colleges and university. Currently 8,000 students are taking credit courses at CCM which result in 48 percent are full-time, 52 percent are part-time. CCM grants more associate degrees for registered nurses than any other public or private school in the state and has the largest music department among the 19 community colleges in New Jersey. CCM was first in the state in number of graduates and held the highest transfer rate to four-year colleges, according to a recent NJ Commission on Higher Education Research Department study of students who started at NJ community colleges in 1994.

**County College of Morris Mission Statement:** To serve the people of our community. No matter where you are in your professional career, CCM will help you open the doors to your future.

Union County College (UCC) is the oldest community college in the state of New Jersey. The college was formed in 1982, which was a consolidation of Union College established in 1933 and the Union County Technical Institute. It has grown into four campuses throughout Union County: Elizabeth, Cranford, Scotch Plains and Plainfield, which include 75 programs. "Since 1933, Union County College has been welcoming students and preparing them to face the challenges that each new decade brings," states Thomas H. Brown, Ph.D., president. Enrolling nearly 9000 students, UCCC experienced a small but significant 3.4% increase in part-time and full-time students.

**Union County College's Mission Statement:** The College seeks to provide the highest quality transfer and career education through comprehensive curricula and the use of the most current technology, allowing for transfer to four-year colleges and universities and for immediate entry into a career; innovative teaching and support services to foster students' personal and social development; continuing and community education programs and courses in varied schedules, at varied locations, and with varied modes of instruction for credit or without; developmental studies to prepare students for college-level programs and courses and to increase their literacy, and counseling, academic advising, tutoring services, and an array of extra-and co-curricular activities.

(<http://www.ucc.edu>)

**Camden County College** is a recognized leader in technology programs such as robotics, computer-integrated manufacturing and photonics. Camden County College enrolls 12,500 students on its three campus located throughout the county. The largest campus was established in 1968 at the Blackwood Campus, originally designed to assist High School students in obtaining the general education degree (GED), now has grown to 26 buildings and offers more than 90 degree programs. The second site will focus on technology-driven health, business and computer programs. The newest campus is a result of collaborated partnerships between Cherry Hill Township and the William G. Rohrer Charitable Foundation developed to offer credit and non-credit business and industry training courses.

Camden County College believes that education is the center of economic and social well being of its students and provides an opportunity for higher education to all who may benefit from their programs and services. "During the last three decades, we've gone from a handful of

buildings on one campus to more than two dozen on three. We've added students, courses and ways for students to take courses. Through all of these changes, however, the goal has remained the same: To meet the ever- changing educational needs of those who reside in and around Camden County," expresses Phyllis Della Vecchia, president.

**Camden County College Mission Statement:** Camden County College is a comprehensive community college dedicated to offering academic excellent and affordable public education.

- The college engages challenges as one institution composed multiple campuses with distance features but a shared mission.
- The college is committed to preparing students to be continues learners who succeed upon transfer effectively in the contemporary workplace and function as citizens and leaders in their communities. The college believes that education is central to the economic and social well-being of its students and provides an opportunity for higher education to all who may benefit from its programs and serves.
- The college values opportunity built upon open access and high standards.
- The college accepts students where they are in their learning and provides the means and support for them to achieve their educational goals and meet the college's standards for academic excellence.
- The college embraces its role as an educational leader, believes that it is a college of the community strives to shape its programs and services to respond to changing student and societal needs. (<http://www.camdencc.edu>)

Established in 1966, Mercer County Community College (MCCC) is a publicly supported comprehensive educational institution that provides opportunities for higher education through an open-door admission policy. Located in West Windsor and downtown Trenton James Kerney Campus. Serving approximately 8,000 students MCCC saw a brief increase of 2.8% in student enrollment. Offering 63 degree programs all transferable due to an agreement made between Rutgers, Rider, The College of New Jersey, NJIT and Thomas Edison University. MCCC offers several cultural and professional training options, which include the Kelsey Theatre, art gallery, distinguished lecturer series, professional training and innovative program for children and teens.

**Mercer County Community College Mission Statement:** Established in 1966 for the residents of Mercer County, are both a collegiate and a community institution. The college welcomes students of all ages from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, abilities, interests, levels of education, and economic circumstances to a challenging and supportive educational environment in which they are encouraged to excel.

- As a collegiate institution, the college is dedicated to the intellectual development of students and to instilling in them the skills, habits, and inclinations with which they will continue to educate themselves throughout their lives. Mercer recognizes that students differ in the ways they learn and that learning should be a challenging and rewarding experience, made possible only by qualified faculty and staff, effective instructional methods, comprehensive subject matter, and a nurturing environment.
- As a community institution, the college is entrusted with the responsibility of preparing a well-educated and informed citizenry able to undertake the responsibilities of good citizenship. In addition, the college is a community forum and a source of programs and services that address the current and emerging human



resource needs of area employers, meet the continuing education needs of a variety of community residents, and enrich the cultural and artistic life of the Mercer County community. (<http://www.mccc.edu>)

Middlesex County College's (MCC) primary goal is to offer quality, technologically current associate career curricula and certificate programs, which prepare students for employment and advancement on their career. In 2001 MCC's full-time enrollment increased 6.8 %, however the part-time enrollment declined almost 3%. Located in Edison, MCC enrolls close to 1, 000 students, which includes the New Brunswick and Perth Amboy Centers. The centers provides academic offerings which include a full range of English as a Second Language courses, developmental courses in reading, writing and math and college credit courses in liberal arts and business.

**Middlesex County College Mission Statement:** The mission of Middlesex County College is to provide a quality, affordable post-secondary education responsive to the needs of the community and accessible to all who can benefit from it. We emphasize academic excellence and student success through a student-centered and innovative life-long learning environment for our diverse population. (<http://www.middlesex.cc.nj.us>)

Brookdale Community College, County College of Monmouth, located in Lincroft, enrolls over 11,000 students. Offering the first *Communiversit y* in New Jersey, Brookdale developed a solution to the growing educational needs of individuals and businesses in Monmouth County. The program and services available to student have been selected to match the education and career goals of residents and employees, and to support the region's dynamic

economy. Offering the associate's degree, which transfer toward the first two years of the bachelor's degree, offered at the Communiversity, Georgian Court College, Kean University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Montclair State University, and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey offer the third and fourth year of selected bachelor's degrees and graduate degrees and certificates.

"This "millennium" year has been remarkable for Brookdale - a year of extraordinary accomplishment including the opening of our new Library, the completion of significant facilities' renovations across campus, and the revision of major strategic planning initiatives in academics and technology," expressed Dr. Peter F. Burnham, President.

**Brookdale Community College Mission Statement:** BCC is a comprehensive, public community college providing affordable, open access for all individuals to a wide variety of high-quality associate degree and certificate programs, and coursework, for both transfer and vocational entry opportunities.

- The College also provides personal and economic growth through life-long learning, personal enrichment, and business and community development activities, in both credit and noncredit formats, at a wide variety of locations.
- Through partnerships with other educational providers, Brookdale affords expanded access to post-associate degree learning at the baccalaureate and graduate levels, through joint admission and detailed course and program articulation.
- As a learning-centered environment, characterized by teaching excellence, Brookdale provides assessment of student academic capabilities and offers basic skills development with access to a wide range of appropriate student and academic support

systems, enabling the individual to have the full opportunity to succeed in postsecondary learning environments.

- Brookdale Community College is committed to opportunity with excellence opportunity with accessibility, and opportunity with appropriate support, to enable success. (<http://brookdale.cc.nj.us>)

Cumberland County College was the first community college in New Jersey to open its own campus in October 1966. Located in Vineland, the college's 100-acre campus provides academic, social and cultural opportunities. "At Cumberland, student success is our goal. A knowledgeable faculty, a helpful staff and a dedicated administration are the hallmarks of the college," says Kenneth L. Ender, Ph.D., president. Offering over 90 career, transfer and certificate programs, CCC prides itself as a catalyst for creating collaborative relationships across the country that enhance the quality of life through excellence of education, community leadership and economic growth.

The college recently implemented Connecting Vision to Practice: Cumberland County College's 2001-2005 Strategic Plan. This innovative plan was developed to address how the college can better serve students, faculty and the community. This is reflected in the more than half of CCC's graduates continue their education at four-year colleges and universities and seventy five percent of the 2000 graduates were the first in their families to receive a higher education degree. Increasing a minor 1.5 percent in 2000, CCC enrolls close to 3000 students; CCC offers services that enhance student's quality of life. Such as the recently unveiled \$1 million fitness center, a Performing Arts Center and a \$4.5 million Family Center for Public

Services and Leadership. CCC offers facilities and services that benefit the county of Cumberland.

**Cumberland County College Mission Statement:** CCC is a comprehensive community college that is accessible, learning-centered, and dedicated to serving a diverse community of learners and employers through quality innovative programs, services and the appropriate use of technology for life-long learning. (<http://www.ccnj.net>)

**Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC)** is New Jersey's first bi-county colleges, serving Somerset and Hunterdon counties. Located on a 240-acre campus in North Branch, RVCC offers over 70 associates, certificates, and professional development courses. In 2000, RVCC increased a small 1.4 percent and enrolls over 5000 full and part time students. RVCC considers themselves the "liaisons" with the community's businesses and state-of-the-art technology through the Institute for Business and Professional Development.

Receiving the prestigious United States President's "E" Award for its outstanding contributions to the increase of the U.S. Trade. The only educational institution to receive the award in 2001, RVCC was recognized for The Center for International Business and Education. "We are proud to have aggressive trade promotion partners as Raritan Valley Community College that are committed to helping export-ready firms enter and profit in international markets, thus creating jobs and stimulating our economy," said Bill Clinton, President of the United States. Other awards include community services distinctions, programming excellence and the 1995 Networked Distributed Education Award.

**Raritan Valley Community College Mission Statement:** Raritan Valley Community College is committed to providing quality education at an affordable cost through

rigorous programs and effective teaching. To meet this commitment, the College offers degree and certificate programs in an environment that reflects its values as a community of scholars and encourages intellectual achievement, lifelong learning, and personal growth. The College educates students for transfer to four-year institutions and prepares them for careers in the changing workplace. It broadens students' knowledge of global issues and assists students in becoming responsible and productive citizens. The College will continue to enhance its accessibility and to respond to the increasing diversity, evolving cultural interests and workplace requirements, and educational needs of the community. The College is open to all motivated and qualified persons without regard to race, creed, sex, age, national origin or disability. (<http://raritanva.edu>)

**Bergen Community College (BCC)** established in 1968 and currently enrolls over 12,000 on two campuses. The main campus in Paramus and the Learning Center in Hackensack provides a variety of programs, facilities and services developed to respond to the needs of the community.

**Bergen Community College Mission Statement:** Learning which values the contributions of all students, staff, faculty, and administrators in providing an unparalleled education experience. We will develop the best possible educational environment, one that promotes learning, collaboration and shared responsibility. Using proven technological advances and a variety of instructional methods, we will enhance the learning process and maintain high academic standards. We pledge to evaluate and improve our services continuously and to communicate more effectively, creating an atmosphere of civility and trust. We will respect the integrity of all persons and will build an inclusive community, enriched by its diversity. We will create partnerships with public

and private institutions in fulfilling our mission. We will be vital and informed participants in the life of our county, state and country, responsibly using all public resources in the most efficient manner (<http://www.bergen.edu>).

### Summary

As the author has inferred in this previous section, most community colleges in New Jersey develop a mission statement with the exception of Hudson County College and Gloucester County College. This evaluation helps to determine the most vital elements of community colleges in New Jersey, namely, the importance of affordable and accessible education, community involvement, commitment to quality and innovative efforts that improve growth and development. The author has determined that New Jersey community colleges reflect the growing needs of surrounding communities through the determination of evaluating the commitment to quality. This commitment to quality includes the expansion into advanced academic, technical and trade courses designed to encourage student growth and community development.

The research has determined the various, yet all similar, missions of the 19 community colleges, which state commitment to accessible affordable education, academic excellence, and responsiveness to ever-changing community needs. The author strives to strengthen the public's understanding of the importance of community colleges in the state of New Jersey, which are vital to economic growth, preparing students to be leaders, and providing opportunity for growth and development to all state residents.

## Chapter III

### Review of Literature and Theoretical Overview

#### Support Systems and Advocacy Organizations

Compared to four-year private and public universities and colleges, community colleges history is very new, beginning immediately after World War II. Although the community colleges history is new the mission, vision and goal is a derivative from the four year college and university. Each state provides a statewide system of public community colleges created by state Legislature. In 1962, the New State Legislation created the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) to be the community college advocate for all 19 community colleges and is located in the states capital city of Trenton. The Council serves to advise state-level policy makers on matters affecting community colleges, as an information source, providing a trustee newsletter, membership and legislative directories, legislative analyses and alerts, and other material designed to keep trustees well informed.

In 1990, NJCCC began a trustee-headed nonprofit corporation who primary goal was to serve as the state-level advocacy organization. Trustee boards provide broad leadership and shape the policy for their institutions. Trustee responsibilities range from setting tuition and fees, establishing admissions standards and degree requirements, investing institutional funds and legal affairs.

The New Jersey Higher education Restructuring Act of 1994 abolished the State Board and Department of Higher Education, which for 30 years regulated and coordinated authority over New Jersey's colleges and universities. As a result of this act, the state reduced the extent of

state involvement creating a system that increased autonomy, reasonability and accountabilities to trustees. Also, the creation of the Commission on Higher Education was developed as a new state-level coordinating agency for New Jersey's system of Higher of Education and the Presidents Council as a new statewide advisory body.

The state of New Jersey has embraced the principle of a The Comprehensive Mission. This is a statewide mandate for all community colleges to respond fully to the educational, cultural and community needs of their respective countries. (New Jersey Council of County Colleges). This mission provides services in support of development, and promotion of relationship-building resources. Developed to prepare students to be leaders in their continuing education, professions and community. Community colleges reflect the educational needs, student development and the general community needs in all academic endeavors by providing access and affordability, diverse programming and economic development.

Community colleges have played a key role in expanding higher education opportunities to the college bound and nontraditional population of students. Community college populations include a larger proportions of minorities, women, older adults, and part-time students compared to a four year college or university. Low tuition and tuition freeze established and adopted by community colleges provide opportunity to people who otherwise would not be able to afford to attend college.

Community colleges offers a diverse range of program, close to 450 programs that lead to Associates in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) and more than 300 certificates and career development programs. Two-thirds of the degrees and certificates awarded by community colleges are in occupational and technical fields, which often lead for immediate employment or transfer to a four year college or universities for further study.



Liberal arts transfer degree account for more than one-third of graduates. Business and health professional account for about one-quarter and one fifth of all community college graduates. (NJCCC)

Customized training and continuing education are examples of the community college commitment to the community, which are developed to provide programs geared toward local and state economic growth. All 19 community colleges provide business and industry outreach program that play a major role in small business development. New Jersey community colleges are also involved in a number of statewide partnerships established toward economic development.

#### Research and Development

During its hundred-year history, the community college has undergone a number of transformations, specially identity and purpose. These transformations have been thought of as generations, and with each new generation, the college has added new functions. The result has been that today's community college curriculum covers a broad array of programs and services earning the colleges the designation of comprehensiveness (CCRC, <http://www.tc.columbia.edu>). The Community College Research Center (CCRC) was created to take a broad and comprehensive view of community colleges in order to frame the critical questions concerning the fundamental purposes, problems and performances of community colleges. Created in 1996 with support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and located at the Institute on Education and the Economy & Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York.

CCRC's mission is to carry out and promote research on major issues affecting the development, growth and changing roles of community colleges in the United States. The organizations strives to strengthen the research capacity both within the colleges an the broader

community, attract new scholars to the field, promote discussion and debate about crucial and often controversial issues and disseminate existing research.

The American Association to Community Colleges provides extensive research to the public and higher education leaders. Research topics range from critical issues, crisis management, enrollment statistics, state-by-state profiles, trends and funding. American Association of Community Colleges provides the depth and breadth of programming and services available at community colleges. It quantifies performance and sets standards nationwide for the more than half the nations undergraduates and the 1600 community college campuses. As community colleges evolve and expand, the AACC will promote, support and reflect the goals, visions and values of community colleges.

## Chapter IV

### Primary Research and Methodology

A questionnaire was developed in order to measure public opinion of the academic quality, community presence, and institutional power of the two-year community college in the state of New Jersey determined by the college bound population. The survey (see Appendix A) contains ten statements and open-ended questions that were measured on the basis of the Likert scale, a survey system utilizing a five-point scale. The five point scale was represented by ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree based on the author's goal to measure a positive or negative reactions based on public perception, academic and social roles, future goals and challenges of community college.

Through this study, the author hopes to determine what roles community colleges play in the community. The author's premise is that input from graduates, current students, supporters and teachers at a two-year community college- in essence, the stakeholders of New Jersey community colleges will provide a comprehensive understanding of the transformations community college have undergone.

The primary objective in this study is to determine community college's academic, institutional and community power. As stated, Warren County Community College is the author's case study used to determine the strength's and weaknesses of the past, present and future two-year community colleges. Included in that objective, the author included question that analyzed and invoked responses regarding:

- trends that have contributed to the success and growth of community colleges;
- roles and responsibilities;

- challenges and future goals; and
- public perception.

### Population and Survey

In one month, the author distributed and interviewed 50 individuals, focusing with residents of Warren County. Each individual either residents, graduates, currently attending, support or teach at a two-year community college. The reasoning behind the author focusing on Warren County was the diverse population, demographics, academic quality, social roles and state policy, financing and funding and enrollment increase in the year 2001. After collecting the surveys, the author measured the results assigning a two-point value to each response (see Appendix B). Therefore, this sampling is reflective of administration, faculty, students and community members possessing vast experience and knowledge of academic quality, growth and development of community colleges. The parties were ensured that all information and responses would be kept in the strictest confidence.

The survey contained an optional area for participants to insert their age range, gender, and college experience. The author provided questions that would provide a frame of reference when determining the results of each individual survey. The following is an explanation of the contents of the survey.

### Analyzing the Results of Survey

While all the elements incorporated in the survey are of equal importance to the overall evaluation of the quality, growth and development of two-year community colleges, the participants assessed what is the most vital to their community college. As community members,

faculty, administration and students their responses will serve to verify the finding of the survey since these people can be viewed as experts in the field. The author assumed that the results collected by the survey will determine public perception, academic and social roles, future goals and challenges of community colleges in New Jersey.

Statement 1: A two-year Community College education is a quality education.

For this statement, twenty four percent responded strongly agree (12 individuals) believe a two-year Community College education is a quality education. Forty six percent (23 individuals) responded agree, Six felt neutral regarding quality education in a community college and twelve percent (6 individuals) answered disagreed and six percent (3 individuals) responded strongly disagreed.

The majority of subjects, forty six percent agreed with the author's statement that a two-year community college is a quality education. We can conclude that there is strong public perception in Warren County and other New Jersey counties that academic quality is provided in two-year community colleges. According to New Jersey Council of County Colleges that the increase in enrollment is contributed to the flexibility of county colleges, which include certificate programs, night and weekend schedules and the proximity to work and home. In addition, county colleges maintain academic standards but are more affordable. In support of the author's statement, an anonymous participant responded, "I attended County College of Morris and was more than satisfied with my education of an Associates Degree in Liberal Arts. Plus, on my fixed income the tuition was very reasonable."

Statement 2: Tax revenue spent on two-year Community Colleges is a wise investment.

In evaluating this statement, twenty four percent (12 individuals) responded strongly agree, which equals believe tax revenue spent on two-year community colleges is a wise investment. Fifty two percent (26 individuals) responded agree, twelve percent (6 individuals) felt neutral regarding tax revenue is a wise investment and four percent (2 individuals) answered disagreed and eight percent (4 individuals) responded strongly disagreed.

The author concluded that the majority of New Jersey residents, fifty two percent feel their tax revenue is spent wisely on the development of two-year community colleges. The New Jersey's Community Colleges Team for Tomorrow, developed by New Jersey Council of County Colleges, supports the push for increased funding for community colleges. Raymond Batmen, co-chair, "In exchange for the \$12 million increase in state funding from the next governor of New Jersey (currently Jim McGreevey), all 19 New Jersey community colleges will freeze tuition across the board for the 2002-03 academic year."

Statement 3: Generally speaking, two-year Community Colleges have a good reputation for academic quality.

In assessing statement, the author finds that 5 individuals responded strongly agree, which equals 10 percent believe two-year community colleges have a good reputation. Twenty four percent (22 individuals) responded agree, twenty two percent (11 individuals) felt

neutral regarding a good reputation and eighteen percent (9 individuals) answered disagreed and six percent (3 individuals) responded strongly disagreed.

The author's primary goal was to determine two-year community college's image and identity, the results indicate that New Jersey resident's public perception varies greatly when determining reputation for academic quality. "I think over the last couple years the viewpoint of community colleges has changed for the better and with the agreements with four years colleges the acceptance is even higher," shared a participant who indicated not attending a community college. The author has concluded that this candid response, made by a New Jersey resident who never attended a community supports the eighty three percent responded they feel that is "very important" to have community colleges in New Jersey in the February 2001 survey conducted by the New Jersey Council of County Council

Statement 4: From an overall viewpoint, social and academic needs of students are met when attending a two-year Community College.

The results found for statement 4 concluded that fourteen percent (7 individuals) strongly agree, forty four percent (22 participants) agree, twenty four percent (12 individuals) responded neutral and eighteen percent (9 individuals) answered disagree. None of the participants answered strongly disagree when asked if social and academic need of students met when attending two-year community college. "I think the attitude toward county college's has positively changed in recent years due to the high cost of four year colleges which result in serious academic students to enroll," commented a survey participant. This particular participant also indicated attending and receiving a degree from a community college.

Colleges have implemented many inventions designed to help students integrate social and academics into college life. Student's success courses, freshmen seminars, or extended orientation courses are examples of early inventions that have grown in prominence in recent years (Bragg, p 99). Nearly 70% of community colleges have begun offering these courses during the past decade, and they frequently include information about campus resources, how to establish relationships among other students and faculty and how to assess and improve academic and life management skills (Barefoot & Fidler).

Statement 5: People who receive an education from a two-year Community College often maximize their education, are professionally successful and can emerge as leaders in the community.

In assessing statement 5, the author found that eighteen percent (9 participants) strongly agree that people who receive an education from a community college maximize their education. Fifty percent (25 participants) agree, twenty percent (10 participants) feel neutral, eight percent (four participants) and four percent (2 participants) strongly disagree.

Community colleges provide educational opportunities for all and are in the forefront of preparing America's future leaders. The author's research of all nineteen community colleges in New Jersey found that preparing students to transfer to a four-year college or university was the forefront of all academic curriculum, "Two year community colleges with quality oriented courses many times lead to full four year academic achievement," shared a respondent.

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) conducts a survey of community colleges to identify "hot" programs defined as programs which students are hired



immediately upon graduation with an increase in salary by 21% (Nock & Schultz, 2001, p. 1) Community colleges provide customized training to local business, large corporations and healthcare facilities throughout the state. Customized programs such as computer technology and allied health are among the hottest field offered in community colleges.

Statement 6: In my opinion, our local Community College is a solid, high quality institution.

In examining statement 6, it was found that twenty eight percent (14 individuals) strongly agree, thirty four percent (seventeen individuals) agree, twenty-six (13 individuals) responded neutral, and twelve percent (6 individuals) disagree and zero answered strongly disagree that their local community college is a solid, high quality institution.

Residents in New Jersey perceive community colleges as important components of the state's educational infrastructure. The New Jersey Council of County Colleges, February 2001 poll of New Jerseyans' Opinions of community College found that 97 percent responded that is very important to have community colleges in the state and 57 percent have some type of personal experience with community colleges.

Statement 7: Community Colleges often provide affordable and accessible education.

In statement 7, the results show that forty six percent (23 participants) strongly agree that community colleges provide affordable accessible education. Forty four percent (22 participants) agree, four percent (2 participants) responded neutral and six percent (3 participants) disagree and no participants responded strongly agree.

The cornerstone of every community college is ability to provide affordable and accessible education to the community in which it serves. Tuition and fees at community colleges average less than half those at a four year universities and colleges. The average tuition fees at community colleges across the United States were \$1,582 compared to \$6,329 at four-year colleges. The U.S. Department of Labor statistics project that 80 percent of all the jobs in the new economy will require some postsecondary education but less than a baccalaureate degree. (Phillippe & Patten)

Statement 8: The programs and services offered at two-year Community Colleges are designed to meet the needs of the community.

In reviewing the results, statement 8 indicated that twenty two percent (11 respondents) strongly agree, fifty four percent (27 respondents) agree, sixteen percent (8 respondents) responded neutral and eight percent (4 respondents) disagree that community college provide programs and services that are designed to meet the needs of the community.

Community colleges assist local businesses through counseling, seminars on topics of interest to business owners, and referral services to banks and government agencies. Many entrepreneurs are served by the seven Small Business Development Centers, and three business incubators operated by community colleges in New Jersey. (NJCCC) Community colleges also provide training and retraining for disadvantages and displaced workers in the state, enrolling more than 27,000 individuals. (NJCCC)

Statement 9: The majority of students enrolled in a two-year Community College are serious and usually successful in their academic endeavors.

In statement 9, fourteen percent (7 respondents) indicated strongly agree, thirty six (18 respondents) agree, thirty eight percent (19 respondents) indicated neutral and twelve percent (6 respondents) indicated disagree and zero respondents indicated strongly disagree.

According to the American Associate of Community College, students who complete associate degrees and certificates are more likely to move into higher-status management and professional positions with higher earnings. An investment of a few thousand dollars now will likely pay lifelong dividends, as students who earn associate degrees average lifetime earnings of \$250,000 more than people without degrees.

([http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/AboutCommunityColleges/Trends\\_and\\_Statistics/CollegeImpact/College\\_Impact.htm](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/AboutCommunityColleges/Trends_and_Statistics/CollegeImpact/College_Impact.htm))

Statement 10: I would support additional tax revenue dedicated toward the support and development of the Community College in my county.

In examination of statement 10, the author concluded that twenty eight percent support additional tax revenue dedicated toward the support and development of their community college. Thirty four percent agreed, twenty two percent answered neutral, six percent disagreed and ten percent strongly disagree to statement 10.

The author feels that it is critical to point out that statement 10 resulted in the highest strongly disagree percentage as any survey statement. Community colleges face escalating

expectation and demands in a policy environment that increasingly fails to address the needs of communities. Myth and misperceptions about two-year college education have contributed to a lack of understanding and an undervaluing of the unique mission of the community college. ([http://www.communitycollegepolicy.org/html/state\\_files.htm](http://www.communitycollegepolicy.org/html/state_files.htm)).

Accordingly to The Center of Community College Policy, the percentage breakdown of all general operating funds in the state of New Jersey includes: 24% state; 30% local (from local property tax); 42% student tuition and fees; and 4% other sources, that includes some federal funds. The total amount of general operating funds in 1997-98 was \$509,458,000 ([http://www.communitycollegepolicy.org/html/state\\_files.htm](http://www.communitycollegepolicy.org/html/state_files.htm)). The state of New Jersey is allocated funds based on specific performance indicators. Community colleges must be held accountable to meet state and community needs. The Council of County Colleges develops the formula in which all 19 community colleges must follow in order to receive all levels of funding.

## Chapter V

Community Colleges are dedicated to providing access to affordable education to their surrounding communities. This commitment is reflected in their continuing efforts to broaden and enrich the college programs and services—efforts that the public clearly appreciates as evidenced by the steadily increasing enrollments. The future of community colleges is dependent on enhancing academic quality by implementing new programs and services that respond to the changing environment and diverse student population.

### Affordability

Affordability is the cornerstone of all community colleges in America. Founded on the principle that all Americans have the right to a higher education, which provides the opportunity for growth and advancement. Community colleges continue to provide access to higher education at affordable cost. According to the New Jerseyans' opinion of community colleges, which was conducted for the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, citizens of New Jersey see community colleges as important components of the state's educational infrastructure. The most common reason given for their importance is affordability that also contains opportunity for low-income adults and continuing education. Providing educational opportunities to people who otherwise would not afford higher education ranked as the most important, ninety-two percent, with providing high quality education programs and instruction with eighty-five percent out of the random probability sample of 800 New Jersey residents.

Nationwide community colleges provide access to higher education at a substantially lower cost than four-year universities and colleges. New Jersey community colleges pledged a

statewide tuition freeze in Fall 2002 in exchange for Governor McGreevey's \$12 million increase in state aid to community colleges in 2003. (Heyboer, 2001, October22)

### Adaptability

Due to the increase demands on academic services and programs, academic standards of excellence, the increase in technology and competitive job market of the new millennium, community colleges must adapt a "new role" in their communities. When community colleges began in near turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they focused almost entirely on one focus: transfer. Hence, the name junior college was coined and widely used. Starting as extensions of local school districts, many of the first junior colleges emerged as advanced grades of high school (Bragg, p 94). Gradually, community colleges adapted to the changing environment and diverse student population and focused in providing quality education for transfer, occupational, continuing education, business support and community service programs.

Dedication to providing access to affordable education for community members is reflected in community colleges continuing efforts to broaden and enrich the college programs and services. Community colleges in the state of New Jersey over the past 10 years have expanded their curriculum, advanced in academic and technical standards and improved integration of community needs into their missions and goals. Community colleges have been recognized by local, state and federal government for providing culturally diverse services and programs, technology advanced training program, and affordable, assessable, high quality education. Therefore, adaptability to change must be maintained and developed in order to secure the expansion, development and growth of community colleges in the state of New Jersey.

## Commitment

In order to strengthen community commitment, enhance academic quality, respond to changing environment and diverse student population, enhance image and prepare students to be leaders in their continuing education, profession and community, it is critical that community colleges are aware of strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats that lie ahead as challenges and victories.

### Strengths:

- The state of New Jersey has 19 community colleges serving 21 counties serving over 300,000 credit and non-credit students.
- Community colleges enroll 53% of total undergraduate credit enrollment in New Jersey public colleges and universities
- Provides affordable and accessible education.
- Over \$1 billion in land, buildings, equipment and other fixed assets.
- New Jersey's community colleges were founded on the basic funding principle of one-third State funding, one-third county funding, and one-third tuition and fees.
- New Jersey community college pledge a statewide tuition freeze in Fall 2002.
- Individualized and customized attention given to students due to low student-to-teacher ratio.
- Increased support of local, state and federal government for the development and success of community colleges.
- More than 40 programs leading to Associates in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees, over 300 certificate programs to prepare

students to transfer to four-year colleges and universities with programs and career opportunities developed to help students efficiently and effectively transfer.

- Certificate programs that enable students to upgrade career skills, retrain for new careers, start a new business or trade.
- Culturally diverse curriculum, programs and services that reflect the growing needs and professional growth of the surrounding community.
- Non-credit courses available developed to encourage professional growth, enhance personal and social satisfaction.
- Student life activities created to enhance the cultural, social and physical well being of students, such as intercollegiate and intramural sports, student government, and community involvement.
- Convenient course schedules designed to accommodate our diverse student population of both full-time and part-time students (NJCCC).

#### Community College Student Profile:

○ Full-time	45%
○ Part-time	55%
○ Male	41%
○ Female	59%
○ White	57%
○ African American	14%
○ Hispanic	12%
○ Asian	5%
○ Other	12%
○ Age 17 to 24	57%
○ Age 25 to 34	21%
○ Age 35 to 49	17%
○ Age 50 and up	5%



- Satellite campuses; distance learning education programs and online curriculum available at all 19 community colleges.
- Hands on experience in the use of technology and technical specialties
- Programs and services designed for student development and growth.
- Collaborative relationships with other institutions to facilitate in academic quality and student services. Such as lectures, seminars, focus groups, community activities designed to foster community relationships.

**Weaknesses:**

- Promotion and advertising opportunities to raise awareness of community colleges.
- Community colleges are stereotyped to offer less than quality academics.
- Challenge of creating a good reputation for academic quality.
- Meet the social and emotional needs of our students.
- Allocate additional tax dollars dedicated toward the support and development of community colleges.
- Low retention of full-time faculty, administration and staff due to low salary and funding.
- Recruitment and promotion of getting the right message to High School students.
- Grant and state funding is limited
- The rise of new competitors including other community colleges, technical and trade schools.

**Opportunities:**

- Provide New Jersey County's with services and programs to increase local revenue, create jobs and opportunity and to increase student development within the community.

- Increase in accountability and integrity due to the current enrollment pattern, which suggest an increase in students transfer from a 4-year college of university to community colleges.
- Provide customized training to local business, large corporations and healthcare facilities throughout the state.
- Opportunity to integrate academic and vocational education designed to increase the ability to prepare student to adjust to and succeed in the modern workplace characterized by increased diversity, globalization and technological advancements. (Bragg p.105).
- Partner with four-year colleges and universities as satellite campuses.
- Expand High School enrollment by creating improved recruitment methods.
- Concurrent enrollment for High School students.

**Threats:**

- Decrease in local, state and federal funding
- Decrease in community support
- Distance education will be preferred over traditional education (on campus learning)
- Competition between community colleges within same county.
- Decentralization of vocational or technical schools from local community colleges

### Summary

In order for community colleges to design a strategic plan that will improve the growth and success of their institution, key constituencies of the organization must implement a SWOT analysis. The identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats is the first step in developing a strategic plan. The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to identify internal and external

issues of community colleges, which then leads to the creation of goals and objectives that will promote, support and improve the academic quality, response to a changing environment, and the enhancement of image among community colleges.

## Chapter VI

### Summary Conclusion and Recommendation

#### Competitive Edge

A distinctive feature of the community college is their accessibility to affordable education, attributable to the leading role the college play in higher education as well as the incredibly steadily enrollment. Specifically focusing on the state of New Jersey, the author determines that community colleges play a sufficient role in education within the state. The combination of academic, vocational and community development program community college offer a diverse and unique option for the country's rapidly growing college bound population.

Community colleges also reflect the growing needs of the surrounding community, which is determined by the depth and breadth of their programming options. Attainment of a higher education degree is the hallmark of the community college. Acknowledging that success is acquired by the responsiveness to a changing environment and the development of programs and curriculum that meet the social needs of a diverse population of students ensures that community colleges will not only survive, but also thrive in a very competitive market. The multitude of professional and academic options provides options to students as well as growth in the community. This commitment ensures life-long opportunity within the community, as well as strengthens community commitment to the community college.

Critical to the success of community colleges is keeping the mission student and community focused. The goals must be consistent and provide benefits for all involved. Communication of the goals and objectives must be made clear and understandably relevant to the survival and development of New Jersey community colleges and the surrounding communities.

Due to the increase in enrollment, community colleges are receiving an increase in positive perception and public acceptance. Community colleges are now promoting the steadily increasing enrollment numbers as a stepping stone to highlight the unique programs and services offered by a community oriented organization. As community colleges serve the community through educational opportunity and professional training, the public's perceptions begins to embrace and support the mission, vision and goals of an affordable and accessible education.

This positive perception is evident in the author's survey results. Overall, the author found academic quality is perceived as high quality, providing students the opportunity to pursue many avenues. Also, community presence is strong and well known, which is founded on community college's strong commitment to community development. Generally, community colleges have a good reputation for both academic quality and meeting the needs of the community.

#### Personal Experience

The author would like to share her experience as a community college student. It was expected in my high school that all students enroll into four-year college. Following the direction of my guidance counselor and teachers, I began to apply to four-year colleges and universities being very unsure of my future. After many applications and visits to universities and colleges, the decision was made to explore the option of attending a community college. The author was extremely unaware and certainly unclear that an option to receive a high quality affordable education that would provide educational and career opportunities was attainable and accessible in my community.

Exploring the programs and services available, the author found community colleges were developed to meet the needs of a diverse population of students. All of which, brings a

unique perspective to the classroom. Community colleges take pride in offering students a stepping-stone into their future. The author began to realize that students enrolling in community colleges needed to gain solid ground under their feet before making the leap to independence or a professional career. Feeling the need to explore different options, before declaring a major that would determine a career path, the author felt overwhelmed of the immense responsibility of performing at a four-year university or college. Community colleges were founded on the principle to provide families with an affordable option but more importantly an option for students to develop future goals and objectives.

Attending a community college provided me with the opportunity to explore my options as a young freshman that was unsure and undecided of the future. The education I received at a community college prepared me to continue my education, grow as a professional and assisted in the development of my social and emotional needs as a student. As we have discussed and I have experienced first hand, these services allowed me to form relationships that resulted in professional development and opportunity. The author attended County College of Morris for two years receiving an Associate in Arts degree graduating with honors. I then transferred to West Chester University and received a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Communication, which led me in obtaining a Master of Arts in Corporate and Public Communications from Seton Hall University.

#### Future Study

The author feels the contribution to the an overview evaluation of the quality, growth, and development of two-year community colleges in the state of New Jersey is comprehensive, and detailed, but only begins to cover the immense subject matter available to research. For

example, cooperative arrangements between high schools and four-year colleges/universities be mutual beneficial in respect to enrollment and academic quality. Many community colleges currently have partnerships with four-year universities and colleges. These partnerships present additional opportunities to maximize academics, professional and social growth.

The alarming retiring rate of community college leaders (presidents, administrators, and faculty leaders), which affect the successful development and growth over the next 10 years in the state of New Jersey. Community colleges are facing a leadership crisis, presidents, senior administrators, and faculty leaders have been retiring at an alarming rate. Retirees are leaders who helped establish the community college in the 1960's and over the years have transformed the community college into a premier education and training institution. As a consequence, higher numbers of administrators must be trained to fill community college leadership role (Shultz, 2001, p 2).

The survey conducted, accompanied by the data collected, proves to be a good overview of the academic quality, community presence and institutional power of the community college. Further research is needed to identify what elements contribute to educational costs and benefits and the distribution of local, state and federal funding as well as budgetary restrictions and regulations. The authors survey results provided evidence that New Jersey residents are supportive and dedicated to additional tax revenue spent toward the development and enhancement of the community college. The Center for Community College Policy and Education Commission of the States, located in Denver Colorado, conducted a survey measuring "State Funding for Community Colleges: A 50-State Survey." This center serves as a focal point for a range of policy services for state policymakers as well as organizes workshops and policy forums, conducts research and analysis between policymakers and community leaders. The

redesign of state funding now includes performance based funding initiatives. Clearly, funding is based on accountability and commitment of the community college.

In spite of challenges and pitfalls, community colleges in New Jersey embrace the principle of comprehensive educational that responds to educational, cultural and community needs. As it stands today, community colleges serve almost half of undergraduates students enrolled statewide. Over the past three years, enrollment trends show that full-time enrollment is up at every one of the state's 19 community college.



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## Appendix A: Thesis Survey

**Procedural Guidelines:** Interview 50 to 75 individuals who have graduated, currently attend, support or teach at a two-year Community College – in essence, the stakeholders of New Jersey community colleges.

**Please rate the following statements based on your personal experience and perception:**  
**SA - Strongly Agree   A –Agree   N – Neutral   D – Disagree   SD - Strongly Disagree**

- |  |    |   |   |   |    |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. A two-year Community College education is a quality education.  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. Tax revenue spent on two-year Community Colleges is a wise investment.  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. Generally speaking, two-year Community Colleges have a good reputation for academic quality.  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. From an overall viewpoint, social and academic needs of students are met when attending a two-year Community College.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5. People who receive an education from a two-year Community College often maximize their education, are professionally successful and can emerge as leaders in the community. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6. In my opinion, our local Community College is a solid, high quality institution.  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7. Community Colleges often provide affordable and accessible education.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8. The programs and services offered at two-year Community Colleges are designed to meet the needs of the community.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 9. The majority of students enrolled in a two-year Community College are serious and usually successful in their academic endeavors.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 10. I would support additional tax revenue dedicated toward the support and development of the Community College in my county.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |

**Appendix A: Thesis Survey (continued)**

**Additional comments or insights:**

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**Please answer any, all or none of the following questions below:**

1. Age Range:

Under21    21-25    26-30    31-35    36-40    41-45    45andover

2. Gender:

Male                  Female

3. Two-year Community College graduate:    Yes    No

Community College Attended \_\_\_\_\_

4. Four-year College/University graduate:    Yes    No

College/University Attended \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please choose one of the following:

I currently \_\_\_\_\_ attend or \_\_\_\_\_ teach at a two-year Community College

6. The local Community College in my community is \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Analysis of Survey

	<u>Answer SA</u>	<u>Answer A</u>	<u>AnswerN</u>	<u>AnswerD</u>	<u>Answer SD</u>	<u>Results</u>
Question# 1	12 12x2=24 24%	23 23x2=46 46%	6 6x2=12 12%	6 6x2=12 12%	3 3x2=6 6%	12+23+6+6+3 = 50  100%
Question# 2	12 12x2=24 24%	26 26x2=52 52%	6 6x2=12 12%	2 2x2=4 4%	4 4x2=8 8%	12+26+6+2+4=50  100%
Question #3	5 5x2=10 10%	22 22x2=44 44%	11 11x2=22 22%	9 9x2=18 18%	3 3x2=6 6%	5+22+11+9+3=50  100%
Question #4	7 7x2=14 14%	22 22x2=44 44%	12 12x2=24 24%	9 9x2=18 18%	0 0 0%	7+22+12+9+0=50  100%
Question #5	9 9x2=18 18%	25 25x2=50 50%	10 10x2=20 20%	4 4x2=8 8%	2 2x2=4 4%	14+44+24+18+0=50  100%
Question #6	14 14x2=28 28%	17 17x2=34 34%	13 13x2=26 26%	6 6x2=12 12%	0 0 0	14+17+13+6+0=50  100%
Question# 7	23 23x2=46 46%	22 22x2=44 44%	2 2x2=4 4%	3 3x2=6 6%	0 0 0	23+22+2+3+0=50  100%
Question #8	11 11x2=22 22%	27 27x2=54 54%	8 8x2=16 16%	4 4x2=8 8%	0 0 0	11+27+8+4+0=50  100%
Question #9	7 7x2=14 14%	18 18x2=36 36%	19 19x2=38 38%	6 6x2=12 12%	0 0 0	7+18+19+6+0=50  100%
Question# 10	14 14x2=28 28%	17 17x2=34 34%	11 11x2=22 22%	3 3x2=6 6%	5 5x2=10 10%	14+17+11+3+5=50  100%

SA- Strongly Agree

A- Agree

N- Neutral

D-Disagree

SD- Strongly Disagree

**Appendix C: New Jersey Community College 2001 Enrollment**

**New Jersey Community College Fall Headcount Enrollments**

*Full-Time and Part-Time: Final Fall 2000 and Preliminary Fall 2001 Enrollments*

Source: New Jersey Council of County Colleges 02/11/02

<u>Community College</u>	<u>Fall 2000</u>	<u>Fall 2001</u>	<u>%Change</u>
Atlantic Cape	5,162	5,495	6.50%
Bergen	11,993	12,145	1.30%
Brookdale	11,552	11,817	2.30%
Burlington	6,122	6,467	5.60%
Camden	12,131	12,510	3.10%
Cumberland	2,735	2,775	1.50%
Essex	8,868	9,539	7.60%
Gloucester	4,669	4,901	5.00%
Hudson	4,854	5,285	8.90%
Mercer	7,751	7,971	2.80%
Middlesex	10,398	10,688	2.80%
Morris	7,919	8,191	3.40%
Ocean	7,143	7,443	4.20%
Passaic	4,663	5,557	19.90%
Raritan Valley	5,751	5,830	1.40%
Salem	1,166	1,219	4.50%
Sussex	2,286	2,481	8.50%
Union	8,655	8,950	3.40%
Warren	797	982	23.20%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124,585</b>	<b>130,246</b>	<b>4.50%</b>