

Anoka Technical College

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ANOKA TECH REACHES OUT TO UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

New student enrollment from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education increased by 31.5 percent this fall at Anoka Technical College. These groups of learners included students of color, low-income students and students whose parents did not attend college. “The numbers reveal campus, system level and community progress in delivering learning opportunities for all people and the college’s ability to serve underrepresented students and families,” said Mary Ann Jackels, dean of academic resources.

“Preparing students for success, in particular students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education, is critical to our community’s educational and economic vitality,” said Jackels. Anoka Technical College is focusing on building partnerships with high schools to help students transition from high school to college, hosting summer technical camps to introduce youth to technical college opportunities and developing additional support services for dislocated workers. Additionally, the college will continue to initiate and foster best practices aimed at reducing the barriers associated with enrolling in and graduating from college.

INDUSTRY EXPERTS HELP ANOKA TECH PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

As Anoka Technical College continues to experience an increase in the number of people investing in technical education, they called upon industry experts to help strengthen the academic core and position the college for success in the future.

Staff and faculty at Anoka Tech recently completed the first step in a process to strengthen three core academic programs: manufacturing, health and information technology. The experts talked about industry trends that will influence the academic programs and addressed the question: What does Anoka Technical College need to do to help its students, as future employees, become more successful within their industry sectors?

Twenty-two participants from corporations such as Best Buy, Target Corporation, Mate Precision Tooling and Fairview Health Services discussed the stages of their industries as well as their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The faculty and staff participants then synthesized the information and generated recommendations that supported the college’s strategic plan to expand delivery strategies, support student readiness, improve student support and meet the diverse needs of the community.

Sixteen of the final recommendations were specific to the program areas and included upgrading equipment, and exploring program laddering and partnership opportunities. The remaining recommendations shared common themes of advancing technology, building versatile and critical thinkers, addressing globalization and incorporating emotional intelligence into curriculum.

The team presented all 24 recommendations to college administrators and are currently drafting an implementation plan.



COLLEGE FOUNDATION AWARDS SPRING SCHOLARSHIPS

The college foundation recently awarded \$51,750 in scholarships to 64 students during the annual spring scholarship luncheon. The names of the recipients are listed on the college Web site. The foundation received a record-breaking 147 scholarship applications. Learners must complete an application and recipients are selected based on their grade point average, instructor evaluation, career goals and financial need.

LEGISLATORS MEET FOR BREAKFAST AND A COURSE IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Students and administrators at Anoka Technical College shared strategic goals and critical issues facing students and technical education during the annual Legislative Breakfast. On January 28, area legislators and Anoka County elected officials met with students, faculty and college staff to discuss student success, tuition and the importance of technical education. After breakfast, several guests took a tour of the college and of the Architectural and Construction Technology program.

EMPLOYEE SEPARATION PACKAGE PROVIDES SOME RELIEF TO BUDGET CRISIS

Looking for creative ways to manage budget reductions and avoid layoffs or other forms of staffing reductions, college administrators recently offered several faculty and staff a Board Early Separation Incentive (BESI).

“Given the magnitude of the budget challenges facing the State of Minnesota during the next biennium, we are pleased that we have this tool available to help employees transition into retirement voluntarily as well as assist the college in making critical budgetary decisions that improve academic programs and services,” said College President, Anne Weyandt.

Last spring, the legislature authorized the MnSCU Board of Trustees to develop an early separation option for employees to assist college presidents in managing budgets in difficult economic times. The BESI will be offered to all eligible employees in groups targeted by the college leadership. To be eligible, an employee must be age 55 with at least five years of MnSCU service. The BESI funds must be used primarily to cover the employee’s post-retirement health insurance costs.