

## **Daily Commercial "Laker Lines" Columns**

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**November 18, 2008**  
**State of the College**  
**Dr. Charles Mojock, President**

The *Daily Commercial* has invited Lake-Sumter Community College to produce a weekly column. Its purpose is to connect you, the reader, with the many resources that tie the college and our community together. In case you do not follow our sports programs, "Lakers" is our team name. In coming weeks, we will bring you informative columns about our programs and services. We will share timely advice such as how to pay for college; how to pick the right career; and how to learn better and faster. We will share our faculty expertise on subjects such as alternative fuels; health and nutrition; civic responsibility and the arts; and, we will talk about our favorite subject-our students.

The future of our community depends upon them. They are the nurses who care for you at hospitals, the computer technicians who keep your networks going, the sales associates who help you at your favorite businesses, the pre-school teachers who watch over your child and the utility lineworkers who get your power back after a storm. Some of these students go directly from their associate degree programs into the local workforce. Others, continue their education, acquiring bachelor's and even graduate degrees, then return to their hometown to teach your children, manage your business, design new roads or serve as leaders in police, fire and public safety programs. Our graduates tell us that their decision to start their education "close to home" is what compelled them to return, rather than explore "greener pastures." That is a great thing when we can bring our best and brightest back home to help build our community and improve our quality of life.

This fall, nearly 4200 students enrolled in college-credit classes at one of LSCC's three campuses or through its "virtual online campus." They are part of the largest enrollment in the 46-year history of the college. This growing enrollment has been the trend for the last several terms, making LSCC one of the fastest growing colleges in Florida. Much of this growth has been on our South Lake Campus in Clermont, which first welcomed students in 1999. However, the original campus in Leesburg, which opened its doors in January 1965, is still the largest. If you are wondering how LSCC can be 46 years old when the Leesburg Campus opened in 1965, it is because the first classes were held at Leesburg High School starting in 1962. The Sumter Campus, established in 1995, was the college's first branch campus. It is a true learning center for the community, as it houses Sumter County Schools' Adult Education Center and a joint-use Sumter County Library.

Not only is the student population growing, but the student profile also is changing. Community colleges have been the choice of most "non-traditional" students in higher education. A term referring to adults 25 and older who return to college after working for some time, serving in the military or raising a family. Why do they come to us? We are open access, which means we do not require high grades or essential test scores for admission-only a high school diploma or GED. And, since most adult students work or have a family, they cannot move away to pursue their education. Though this group still comprises the majority of our part-time students, the younger students, right out of high school, now make up about half of our student population, a 40 percent increase since 2000.

In addition to being younger, our students are more diverse. African American and Hispanic students each account for about 10 percent of the student body, with Hispanic enrollment doubling the past five years. Other minorities make up another 5 percent. This variety of backgrounds and cultures makes for a lively and interesting campus climate and contributes to the educational experience of all students.

What is ahead for LSCC and our students? We hope that you read our column each week to learn more about "your community college."

**November 25, 2008**  
**Teacher Certification Classes**  
**Dr. Glenn Ricci, Dean of Programs, Arts & Sciences**

In 2006, the state of Florida projected a shortage of 35,000 teachers over the next five years. Because of this, Lake-Sumter Community College applied for a grant to implement a new program targeting those wishing to change careers. Teacher Certification classes would be developed for people who have bachelor's degrees in majors other than education, yet have always wanted to teach. Its curriculum would provide the supplemental education required to sit for the Florida Teacher Certification Examination.

I was chosen, as the dean of Arts and Sciences, to lead the grant application process and the project. After writing, applying for, and successfully receiving grant funding in October 2005, a team of personnel, chosen for their specific areas of expertise, would develop a model for a program that would help produce more K-12 certified teachers.

In just three months, the LSCC team identified the best method of course delivery (classroom and online) based on demographics of the population. Once the course delivery method was chosen, an infrastructure to support distance learning and other segments of the program had to be established.

The team expanded to include other college-wide departments to resolve details concerning applications, registration, financial aid, support services, transcripts, and use of technology. An advisory board was created with members from the local school community and open meetings began with the common goal of producing graduates capable of meeting specific needs of district schools. The end result was a weekend teacher series with so many facets that it essentially was like a college within the college.

By January 2006, Teacher Certification was in place with curriculum content and course syllabi developed; a faculty of experienced K-12 teachers hired; staff offices in place; faculty and student resource materials purchased; ads placed; information sessions held; and a full class of 27 students enrolled. The series then expanded to other LSCC campuses, where an additional 53 enrolled. As of October 2008, LSCC's Teacher Certification course started its ninth series of classes.

By developing a concentrated curriculum of weekend classes and online assignments, the series runs for only seven months. Students, many of whom are already in established careers, can fit their studies and classroom attendance into their work schedules. Some of the TC students have included a big box store manager, a hospital CEO, a stay-at-home mother, a chiropractor, a police chief, a pharmacist, a musician, a graphic designer, and many others from various professions.

As the course continues to grow, enhancements are added. Credit-by-exam for qualifying students, e-portfolios, pretests, mini-cam recorders to capture student teaching, field placements in model schools, voice recorders to capture missed lectures, laptops for lending, software similar to that used in public schools, student response systems (clickers), and various technology support are some of the tools available to students. Additionally, each student is assigned a TC case manager, available to address issues and provide advisement during non-class hours.

During the development of the TC, LSCC was not only able to meet Florida's challenge by significantly adding to the pool of qualified K-12 teachers, but also invested more than 50 percent of TC grant funds into key areas of the college that innovatively enhance overall institutional quality during a time of economic decline. Spending decisions were based on what equipment and supplies would be an investment directly serving the TC, as well as the entire college student population. The TC implementation process involved responsive and strategic internal departmental partnerships that remarkably impacted and enhanced overall institutional quality by utilizing funds in key areas including Distance Learning, the Media Center, the Library and the Learning Center, optimizing student success college-wide.

Within three years, LSCC developed a model hybrid Teacher Certification series which has expanded twice and remains viable even during a time of decreasing teacher vacancies. To date, 96 graduates have been prepared to sit for the state examination and approximately 95 percent are already teaching. The TC course has earned an impressive reputation based on the caliber of its graduates and their success in the classroom.

Teacher Certification has also expanded its services to include current educators as well. It offers online and classroom courses for re-certification, along with multiple opportunities for professional development of practicing teachers.

The tenth Teacher Certification series begins February 21, 2009, and enrollment projections already exceed those from previous registration periods. A TC information session will be held Monday, December 1, at 4 p.m., at Village High School, Room 120. Please, feel free to attend. Contact Dr. Glenn Ricci at 352-365-3527 or riccig@lsc.edu, if you have any questions.

December 2, 2008

**The Community College: Opening Doors for the Future**  
**Mark Swearingen, Director, Admissions & Registrar**

If you are thinking of continuing your education, a community college may be just the place for you. No longer the “college of last resort,” community colleges offer an academically rigorous curriculum that prepares you to continue studies at a four-year university or to enter the workforce. Community colleges, such as Lake-Sumter Community College, have several advantages over four-year universities, especially for non-traditional students:

**Open-Door Policy.** Regardless of your previous school performance, most community colleges will admit you as long as you have a high school diploma or GED. Graduation from a community college also opens the door to admission at most state universities. Many community colleges and universities have “articulation agreements” through which your admission and transfer of credits are almost guaranteed.

**Convenience.** Community colleges are attended by people of very diverse backgrounds and have an especially high concentration of working adults. Because of this, a variety of class days and times are offered to accommodate students with job and family responsibilities.

**Class Size.** Community colleges generally have smaller class sizes than universities that frequently hold freshman and sophomore classes in massive auditoriums. Rather than being a number on a roster, your professor may know you by name.

**Cost.** Tuition at community colleges is considerably less than tuition at four-year universities. For the cost of taking one class at a university, you can take an average of three classes at a community college. Additionally, you may qualify for financial aid, student loans, or scholarships. If you are working toward a bachelor’s degree, you can save a considerable amount of money by completing the first two years of coursework at a community college.

**Success.** Notable community college alumni include leaders in business, education, government, politics, entertainment, sports, the arts, and even space exploration. For many, community college is the first step in a successful educational career. If you have the drive and are committed to working hard, the odds are that you will do well. In Florida, almost 75 percent of community college graduates continue their education at four-year institutions; some to graduate schools.

**Community College Fast Facts** from the American Association of Community Colleges:

- 44 percent of all undergraduates in the U.S. attend a community college.
- The average age of a community college student is 29.
- Women comprise 58 percent of the community college population; 42 percent are men.
- Tuition at a community college averages \$1,518 annually.
- 63 percent of students attend community college part time; 37 percent full time.
- It is often assumed that courses at a community college are easier than those at a four-year school. The reverse can be true. Classes at community colleges often can be more challenging.
- The average expected lifetime earnings for a graduate with a two-year associate's degree is over \$1 million; approximately \$250,000 more than a high school graduates.
- 95 percent of businesses that use them recommend community college workforce education and training programs.
- There are 1,132 public and independent community colleges in the U.S.

So, what are you waiting for? Lake-Sumter Community College’s spring term begins on January 7, 2009. Students can register online now at [www.lsc.edu](http://www.lsc.edu). New students who need to apply for admission can find the application form and the enrollment steps online under the “Future Students” tab. For additional information call (352) 787-3747, or visit the Leesburg, South Lake or Sumter campuses’ Admissions office.

**December 9, 2008**

***LSCC Career and Technical Education Programs Prepare Students for the Workforce***  
**Dr. Mary Jo Rager, Dean of Programs, Business & Technologies**

“Substantial increased investment in Career and Technical Education (CTE) will play an integral role in strengthening the American economy,” says Alisha Hyslop, an assistant director for the national Association of Career and Technical Education. “CTE programs can generate the knowledge and innovation that will spark economic growth across the country.”

During these times of economic uncertainty, we often find that individuals seek educational opportunities to develop new skills or improve existing ones to become more saleable in a competitive job market. Lake-Sumter Community College offers a number of Career and Technical Education programs that are designed to prepare individuals to enter the workforce, refresh job skills, or train for a career change. One-year certificates and two-year degrees provide individuals for career opportunities in nursing, business, computers, office administration, graphic design, public safety, electrical distribution (lineworker), and health information.

Each CTE Program has an advisory committee that includes business and industry representatives from our local community. These individuals provide faculty with information on training needs, curriculum suggestions, and job placement opportunities. By working directly with business and industry representatives, LSCC faculty can design the courses and programs to provide individuals with core knowledge and skills that can be applied and adapted in a variety of work settings. This relationship enables the college to be responsive to community needs and partnership opportunities with local employers, which is why we like to say that “community” is our middle name.

Local employers report that some of the most important job skills and workplace behaviors that they look for in an employee include technical skills, communication skills, computer literacy, critical thinking, a strong work ethic, and workplace etiquette. It is through the education and training via CTE programs that individuals gain these skills to become “workforce ready.”

According to the 2008 State of the Workforce Survey, published by Workforce Central Florida, jobs in information technology and health care are expected to grow in our region. LSCC can assist you with career plans and training needs in these critical job areas. For more information on industries offering the most new jobs in Central Florida, go to the Employ Florida Marketplace at [www.employflorida.com](http://www.employflorida.com).

If you are interested in improving your job skills or changing careers, now is the time to apply to Lake-Sumter Community College for spring semester Career and Technical Education classes. Day and evening schedules are available at the Leesburg, South Lake and Sumter campuses and are offered in a traditional, face-to-face format, online, or a mix of online and classroom delivery.

Have questions about what classes to take or what careers to pursue? Information about each CTE program, career options, and salaries can be found in the LSCC Catalog located on the college website at [www.lsc.edu](http://www.lsc.edu). Spring term begins January 7, 2009. Class schedules, application procedures, and financial assistance opportunities are also available online, or visit or call any of our three campuses. Leesburg Campus, 352-787-3747; South Lake Campus (Clermont), 352-243-5722; and Sumter Campus (Sumterville), 352-568-0001. LSCC’s staff will be glad to help you with any questions.

**December 16, 2009**

***Early Learning: One Key to Economic Health***

**Dr. Joanne Greata, Program Manager & Instructor, Early Childhood Education**

“The answer for all our national problems - the answer for all the problems of the world - comes down to a single word. That word is ‘education.’” - Lyndon B. Johnson

At a time when our nation faces many problems, it looks to the future with hope. Hope that lays with the young people in our public and private educational institutions such as early childhood education facilities; elementary, middle and secondary schools; and colleges and universities. To cultivate this future, young people require teachers who can inspire, nurture, guide, coach, care for, and educate.

Often, the number of available teachers cannot fill the demand. Some contributing factors for this demand is the number of retiring Baby Boomer teachers, an increased enrollment of younger children entering early childhood education facilities, the establishment of full-day kindergartens and universal preschools by various states, and the reauthorization of Head Start through the year 2012. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the projected increase in demand for all teachers through 2016 should be about the same as for all jobs - 12 percent. However, the demand for teachers in early childhood education facilities or in universal pre-K or kindergarten classrooms has a projected increase range from 22 to 46 percent. In other words, early childhood education is a growing profession.

The growth in the ECE profession gathered momentum during the 1990’s, when technological advances allowed researchers to conduct more invasive, yet ethical studies on children, the brain, and the process of learning. This research confirmed the belief of many educators that the early years were critical to the development of the child. More specifically, it reduced the most critical years for building a foundation from the first six to the first three years of life. These reports also came at a time when more mothers of infants were entering the workforce. As the research results were dispersed to the general public, state regulatory agencies began to require that teachers in early childhood education facilities be more qualified to work with infants through preschool-age children. Additionally, the national Head Start program increased the level of education required for teachers in its centers.

A new and unexpected group of advocates has joined educators in their recognition of the importance of early childhood education - economists. The National Education Association’s research indicates that children who attend quality early childhood education programs exhibit lifelong benefits such as reduced unemployment, enhanced earning potential, less delinquent behavior as teens and young adults resulting in lower crime rates, and less reliance on social and welfare services. Economists now believe that spending money on high-quality preschool programs can lead to economic health in the future.

If you are interested in teaching, Lake-Sumter Community College can help. LSCC offers a two-year Early Childhood Education associate in arts degree that transfers into an ECE bachelor’s degree program, required by elementary and secondary public schools. Its two-year associate in science and associate in applied science ECE degrees prepare graduates to work with children from infancy through eight years old, and offer specializations in preschool or child development center management.

For those interested in teaching students of all ages, LSCC offers its Alternative Teacher Certification program. People who have bachelor’s degrees in fields other than education can take a seven-month course that prepares them to sit for the teacher certification examination.

For information about LSCC’s three Early Childhood Education degree programs and the Alternative Teacher Certification, call Dr. Joanne Greata at 352-435-5048.

**December 23, 2008**

***Computer Technology Programs Prepare Students for In-demand Careers***  
**Bonnie Holloway, Department Chair & Professor, Accounting**

Do you need to develop computer skills that will help you land a good job and/or do well in school? Lake-Sumter Community College's degrees and technical certificates in Computer Science are designed to make you immediately marketable and/or prepare you to continue your education when you transfer to a four-year university. You can work on a technical certificate (which could be completed in a year by a full-time student) or a degree (which could be completed in two full-time years). Taught on state-of-the-art computers and with industry-standard software packages, our flexible Computer Science programs are designed to accommodate students who attend part-time or full-time, in the day or the evening, in Clermont at our South Lake Campus or at our Leesburg Campus.

In just nine courses (27 credit hours), you can earn a technical certificate in Information Technology Analysis that will prepare you for a job as a Computer Support Specialist (help desk), which could pay \$24,000 - \$30,000 annually. In this certificate program, you will develop basic competence in Microsoft Office 2007, including Word (word processing), Excel (spreadsheets), Access (database management), and PowerPoint (presentation software). You will also learn to develop a web page, the basics of microcomputer hardware, introductory programming, and network administration, as well as the latest in wireless technologies. These are all skills that are widely sought after by local employers.

The Computer Programming technical certificate consists of eleven courses (33 credit hours). In this program, you will not only develop competence in computer hardware and in Microsoft Office 2007, but also learn how to program in high-demand languages such as Visual Basic, C++, and Java. Workplace skills also are enhanced by studying Human Relations in Business and Industry. If you have a logical mind and are good at problem solving, this certificate might be a great fit for you.

If you start out in a certificate program and then decide that you would like to pursue a degree, the great news is that most of the certificate classes also count toward a degree.

LSCC's 63-credit-hour Computer Information Technology Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree is designed to prepare students for immediate employment in a variety of entry-level positions such as PC Repair Technician, Help Desk Technician, Network Technician, or Operating System Administrator, with starting salaries that could exceed \$25,000 per year. Students not only develop competence in hardware and in Microsoft Office, operating systems, network administration, network security, wireless technologies, and basic programming, but also learn the basic business and interpersonal skills needed to be successful in the world of work. Thus, this great degree exposes students to both the software applications and the technical sides of computer science.

The 63-credit-hour Computer Information Technology Associate in Science (A.S.) degree is for students who ultimately wish to pursue a four-year baccalaureate degree in computer science. While many of LSCC's A.S. degrees transfer to a state university, the Computer Information Technology degree is designed especially with our partner school, the University of Central Florida, in mind. This A.S. degree provides all of the technical and marketable skills of the A.A.S. degree that can lead to a new career or promotion, in combination with the general education requirements to enter a comparable bachelor's degree program...the best of both worlds!

Technical classes do not exceed 20 students, so our small class size guarantees lots of individual attention from instructors and hands-on opportunities to practice all program skills. Our dedicated full-time faculty is supplemented by expert adjunct instructors who are currently working in the computer science field. In addition, an Advisory Committee of employers from Lake and Sumter counties helps us keep our programs up-to-date and serving local needs. For more information about exciting career opportunities in Computer Science, please call me at 352-323-3627.

**December 30, 2009**

***A Criminal Justice Degree Opens the Doors to Many Career Options***  
**Rebecca Nathanson, Department Chair & Instructor, Criminal Justice**

Are you the person who worries about having a boring career in a predictable workplace? Worry no more. The Criminal Justice program at Lake-Sumter Community College is the place for you. There are many employment opportunities in the criminal justice field such as police officer, corrections officer, private investigation, park ranger, fish and wildlife officer, retail security, private security, victim advocate, corporate security, deputy sheriffs, crime scene technician, highway patrol officer, probation officer, and many, many more. A career in the criminal justice field will be anything but boring. It will probably involve shift work, often working in very unpredictable conditions at any time of the day or night. You definitely will not be sitting behind a desk in a nice comfortable office. You need to have a willingness to help others, and enjoy working with diverse populations. Good decision making skills and self discipline are a must.

The associate in science degree in Criminal Justice is designed for students who want a career in the criminal justice field. Students who earn this degree may transfer to a state university's criminal justice program as well.

The first criminal justice course students should take is Introduction to Criminal Justice. This course introduces students to the entire criminal justice system and acquaints them with how the system works. Students are also required to take courses in criminal law, criminal procedure, and ethics and criminology. Students take some elective criminal justice courses, as well as some supporting elective courses. These electives are designed to add to a student's base of knowledge and are related to his/her criminal justice course work. This program also requires students to complete 24 hours of general education courses as part of the degree. Toward the end of the program, students complete a three-credit practicum which allows them to actually work in a criminal justice agency (unpaid) to allow them to experience the career first hand.

Many people ask if the degree program and state certification are the same. The answer is no. A person can be state certified in law enforcement, corrections, or both and not have a college degree. The A.S. Criminal Justice degree is not state certification. Even after earning a degree, a student would still need to become state certified to work in certain criminal justice positions. However, not all positions require certification. If a student comes to LSCC and currently holds state certification, we can articulate (transfer) credits for his/her certification into the A.S. Criminal Justice degree program. The public safety academies that provide the state certification will not admit a student for certification unless the student will be 19 years of age by the time that he/she takes the certification test. The Criminal Justice program at LSCC will admit students who are eligible to be admitted to the college, even dual enrollment students. If a student knows that he/she wants to go to a public safety academy for certification in the future, we have a plan in place that is based on our articulation agreement with Lake-Technical Institute of Public Safety. The plan shows the student which classes will articulate to prevent him/her from duplicating course work, so that he/she can earn a degree and get the state certification seamlessly.

The A.S. Criminal Justice degree program at Lake-Sumter Community College is designed to provide students with a very comprehensive background in the criminal justice environment and to provide the community with a very knowledgeable and competent criminal justice workforce. For more information about the Criminal Justice program please email [nathansr@lsc.edu](mailto:nathansr@lsc.edu).

**January 6, 2009**

***Financial Aid Options to Help Students Finance Their College Education***  
**Audrey Williams, Director, Financial Aid**

In this time of economic uncertainty, with family budgets stretched, there is still hope for students who would like to receive funding to help meet their educational needs. Finding money for college is a lot like going to school. The way to succeed is to do your homework. Now is the time to apply for federal financial aid for the 2009-2010 academic year. Waiting too long will result in missed deadlines. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the form used by virtually all two and four-year colleges, universities and career schools for the awarding of federal student aid and most state and college aid.

Tell your friends! The official FAFSA is at [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov). This is not a ".com" website. If you go to a ".com" site, you will be asked to pay to submit the FAFSA. Remember, the first "F" in "FAFSA" stands for "free," so use the official government site to submit your application. Be sure to register for a pin number and you can electronically sign your FAFSA application. Your parents may need to register for a pin number as well.

By completing the FAFSA, which is the basis for receiving federal financial aid, students are able to tap into millions of dollars in financial aid available through grants, work-study, loans, and scholarships. With an unduplicated headcount of 5,563 students last year, 3,791 LSCC students were recipients of financial assistance worth a total of \$5,436,933. That averages to over \$2,723 per student. During the current academic school year, that number is expected to increase. With the downturn of the economy, more students are expected to enroll in college, creating an increase in the need for financial aid.

Students should also explore other resources such as scholarships. High school seniors should start filling out applications for scholarships now! Do not wait to be accepted to a college before researching and applying for private scholarships. The LSCC Foundation, Inc. is a great resource to consider. It publicizes scholarships every fall, spring, and summer semesters. Information about application posting dates is available on the Foundation website at <http://www.lsc.edu/foundation>. Scholarship opportunities also can be pursued through civic organizations, churches, and scholarship websites. If you do not receive a scholarship the first time around, do not get discouraged. Most scholarships are not limited to freshmen; you may have better luck the following year.

LSCC wants to take this opportunity to alert students to importance of April 15...the priority deadline date to complete the FAFSA application. The deadline dates for universities and private institutions begin even earlier on March 1. Those who apply early receive the best financial aid packages and perhaps more funds. A financial aid package usually includes grants, work-study, loans, and scholarships.

The Lake-Sumter Community College Financial Aid office is open to assist students with the application process, Mondays through Fridays, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If you have questions or need assistance, contact us at [finaid@lsc.edu](mailto:finaid@lsc.edu). So, don't delay; apply today!

**January 13, 2009**  
***Helping Students Succeed***  
**Marion Kane, Director, Learning Center**

Almost every college has a Learning Center. At Lake-Sumter Community College there is one on every campus. Ours are busy places. In the fall semester alone, we logged over 8,000 student visits for a total of nearly 17,000 hours of use. Those figures suggest that students enjoy using our services. But what is a Learning Center, and how does it help our students and our communities?

To understand how the Learning Center fits within the mission of Lake-Sumter Community College, we need to look at LSCC students. No student is turned away; everyone has access to a higher education. This presents some intriguing challenges, as we often need to level the playing field for many of our students. Some come directly from high schools (some are still in high school as dual-enrollment students), but many have spent years in the workforce or raising families, coming back to change the direction of their lives. Ages for new students range from 16 to 60 years old, and each student has a special story.

A great many of our students come to LSCC as first timers – no one in their families has attended college. They look for help to steer through this new environment, and need some reassurance that things will be OK. The Learning Centers give these students a place to get information and, more importantly, to meet people just like themselves. Students are encouraged to work together, to form study groups, and to create team projects. The Centers are not “silent” learning environments; idea sharing is part of learning. Growth takes place when students discover their strong points and forge solid friendships.

In terms of technology, the twitter, text and Facebook crowd are rubbing elbows with the “what’s a computer?” folks in the classroom. This is another area where the Learning Centers help to level the playing field. Tutorial programs and tutors, sometimes student assistants, help neophytes walk through the strange world of Vista and Office 2007. Students learn all the basics at their own pace, and discover that creating PowerPoint presentations can be fun. Formatting guidelines, online sources, self-paced learning software, and personal help are available at the Centers.

Also, every skill level can come for help. In math, there are tutors who will assist in arithmetic to calculus. Students can learn about the parts of speech, the elements of the nervous system, or the workings of a robotic tool. If English is not their first language, we can help there too. There are dozens of online sources for self-paced help, ranging from charts to complete virtual environments.

All of our professional tutors are educators, and many teach full or part time in local high schools, as well as at the college. Student assistants have completed upper-level courses and come to the Centers with faculty recommendations. The staffs know our communities, our industries, and the people we serve, and they understand why our students come to LSCC for their education. They greet students with a smile and make people feel welcomed. The only answer that will never be heard in the Learning Centers is “no.”

The Centers are convenient and free. Operating hours range from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., on most days. Appointments are not required; walk-ins are welcome. You do not even need to be an LSCC student to come in. We tutor anyone who asks for help with a specific question or problem. The best part is that students can come as often as they like and stay as long as they need. As the opening statistics suggest, our students really do come and stay.

**January 20, 2009**

***Distance Learning - The Technological Delivery Method in Higher Education***  
**Jacquie Busboom, Director, Distance Learning**

Lake-Sumter Community College delivers its promise daily of "A Great Education Close to Home." Since the establishment of its Distance Learning Programs department in the fall of 2006, the academic community broadened its promise to undertake the expansion of the remote-access courses, mostly through online distance learning.

This expansion comes with a new experience for many. Instead of students checking to see how long the class times are each day, they now use words like hybrid/blended (everyone attends a class on campus part of the term and works online for other course contact hours). Instead of going to the bookstore to purchase a textbook, students buy bundles at Amazon.com or other website providers, which include CDs, DVDs and passwords to websites. Some instructors build entire electronic courses (e-Learning), including self-produced texts and video with no or low-cost fees to their students, instead of expensive materials. Students access the content by their web cameras, video phones and players like iPods.

At LSCC, we have three marvelous campus facilities. So, why use technology for learning access beyond just our physical campuses? One of the main reasons is physical space. Campuses are bursting-at-the-seams from the record number of students applying. Cost considerations used to be a hindrance to remote access, but technology pricing has become mainstream and more reasonable as educators learn to use the technology already purchased. The cost of time getting to a campus, even locally, can be a deterrent for students who have jobs and family obligations. Students find that financial, home and work demands can be managed along with an education, if they have remote access.

Students are positive they can do it all. This and other concerns from all institutions with remote access are well grounded. As a degree-granting institution, LSCC has a promise to uphold the ability for students to establish integrity of work. For other institutions, allegations of improper testing and students doing other students' work must be handled by the distance learning community with the best practices, often including proctored testing, until more secure forms of online testing are accessible. Also, life gets overwhelming at times for even the most diligent student. Counseling and guidance for distance-education students requires special planning, faculty and staff training, and resources.

Some opponents think this "computer stuff" is just based on popularity. Like ice-cream cravers for the flavor-of-the-month, users will be tempted by remote-access computer technology, but the demand eventually will melt away. In December 2008, the U.S. Department of Education released an initial summary of a major statistical report about Distance Education in colleges and universities during the 2006-2007 academic year. Across the nation, the demand for remote access or distance education prevailed. Sixty-six percent of the institutions reported having distance-education courses, with 12.2 million distance learning students of all levels. Lake-Sumter Community College was one of the reporting institutions who offered courses at all levels - freshman, sophomore and non-credit.

Whether attending small or large institutions, students' demands for distance-learning choices are far greater than any put to Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream. Students are access smart with technology. They just need the kind of leadership provided by LSCC faculty and staff to ensure the promise of an education meets the standards expected for all forms of course delivery.

January 27, 2009

**Do You Have Math Anxiety? Or Math \$@#%&\*!**

**Thom Kieft, Department Chair & Associate Professor, Mathematics**

When you are asked to perform a calculation or a mathematical process do you get sweaty hands, a palpitating heart, a sense of uneasiness, or stomach pains? If so, then you may suffer from math anxiety or a fear of mathematics. Students with math anxiety may skip math class, procrastinate doing math homework, put off taking a math class until the last possible semester, or choose a major with fewer math requirements. Math anxiety is a *learned* behavior that usually stems from unpleasant experiences with mathematics.

Math anxiety is a learned condition, so each person has a different source for the anxiety. For some people it may be from their third-grade teacher having them stand at the chalkboard in the front of the classroom practicing multiplication tables while classmates laughed at the wrong answers. For other people, the origin of the anxiety may be from middle school when they brought their algebra work home to get help from their parents and their mom and dad would scold them for not understanding their explanations. These one-time incidents may create a lifetime of anxiety whenever tasked to do anything with numbers.

This feeling of tension and anxiety can interfere with the manipulation of numbers and the solving of math problems. Yet, as people worry more about these problems, the greater the chance for doing the problems wrong or drawing a blank. The more memory used in stressing that a problem might be incorrect, the less space in the working memory to recall the process or procedure to execute the problem.

Since math anxiety is a learned behavior, it may be managed or unlearned. For many, it would be time well spent to focus on overcoming or reducing this fear. Here are some ideas that may help to reduce math anxiety:

- 1) Do math every day, whether it is for 15 minutes or two hours. Avoid learning math in large chunks of time. It is better to have more frequent shorter study segments than fewer longer sessions.
- 2) Have someone create practice tests for you by selecting problems from a textbook and take these practice tests in an environment and conditions similar to the testing environment. Being unprepared for a math test is certainly going to trigger math anxiety.
- 3) Replace negative self-talk with positive self-talk and self-affirmations.
- 4) Ask your math instructor questions. If you are afraid to ask questions out loud during class, then stay after class or send the questions to the instructor via e-mail.
- 5) Prior to getting too far behind or earning too low of a grade average, seek help from a tutor or fellow student(s).

Mathematics is unlike most other disciplines where you can read class notes or study the textbook to prepare for a test. In math, you must practice the processes and procedures by actually putting pencil to paper and doing problems over and over again. By following the above recommendations and working hard, hopefully, your next math experience will be a positive and relaxing one.

**February 3, 2009**  
***Community Colleges Are Facing a Crisis***  
**Dr. Charles Mojock, President**

Imagine a world without community colleges. What would the impact be on Florida? Our health care would suffer because two out of three nurses are prepared by community colleges. Our sense of safety and security would be diminished because three out of four first-responders (police, fire and EMT/paramedics) are graduates of community colleges. African American and Hispanic families would be frustrated by lack of access to higher education because four out of five start at community colleges.

We would find many of our preK-12 classrooms with an empty spot at the front because six out of ten teaching degrees in Florida are awarded to community college transfer students. And, finally, the number of Floridians attaining bachelor's degrees, already far below the national average, would be slashed by one half because over 50 percent of students in state universities began their education at a community college. That affects the pipeline to every profession from engineers to doctors, attorneys to business executives. If there were no community colleges, it would be a devastating blow to our economy and our quality of life.

Why present such a bleak picture? Are Florida's community colleges threatened with extinction? Fortunately, the short answer is no. But, while community colleges may not be disappearing they are indeed threatened with shrinking. Two years of unprecedented state budget cuts have cost the colleges more than \$100 million. At the same time, the forces of the economy - people being laid off and returning to school, state universities capping enrollment, parents whose crimped budgets do not allow for sending children away to college - all combine to push community college enrollments to record highs. In the past two years of budget reductions, Florida's community colleges have found a way to serve nearly 100,000 new students. That is the equivalent of adding two new medium sized state universities with no funding! As a result, community colleges' funding per student has plunged nearly 18 percent.

So why the concern about shrinking when it looks like business is booming? LSCC and our sister institutions in the state have stretched to the limit trying to meet surging demand with fewer dollars. Locally, we have seen nearly a 20 percent growth rate over the two year period, while losing \$1.2 million in state funds. This could never have been accomplished without our dedicated and talented faculty and staff who have taken on this added burden and found new ways to make room for our students. But now, we are facing the prospect of even deeper cuts in the upcoming session of the legislature. The deficit is an amount so staggering that it is difficult for most of us to comprehend. Suffice to say that it is nearly double the shortfall that caused the recent round of mid-year cuts. That is why I fear the shrinking of opportunities for the people of our district and throughout the state.

Our legislators, even now, are preparing for the daunting task facing them. Some of the leaders have recognized that cuts now threaten the very fabric of our society. They have begun to search for new revenues to cushion the blow. I, too, am a taxpayer and none of us likes the prospect of new taxes. However, we owe it to our children, neighbors and co-workers to look for revenues that will not be a drain on our economy. Is everybody paying their fair share? Why are Florida's cigarette taxes among the lowest in the country? Why don't we collect sales taxes on all internet sales? Local merchants must do so. Are all current sales tax exemptions truly justified? These are tough questions and our legislators will ask them only if we tell them that the times demand answers. The future of our state depends upon it. Let them know how you feel.

**February 10, 2009**

***LSCC Hosts "Go-Higher-Get Accepted" Events To Help High School Seniors Apply for College and Financial Aid***  
**Mark Swearingen, Director, Admissions & Registrar**

Lake-Sumter Community College and Lake and Sumter County Public Schools once again have partnered in support of the statewide "Go Higher-Get Accepted" campaign. The events help students assess their career interests, choose the type of degree or certificate to pursue, submit an admissions application and apply for financial aid.

The Florida Department of Education and FACTS.org, Florida's online student advising system, are coordinating the statewide campaign. "Our goal is that every high school senior, by the time they walk across the stage to get their diploma, will have received a letter of acceptance to a college or university," said FACTS.org Executive Dr. Director Connie Graunke. "That will make the next step of going to college much easier."

This year's event is combined with the "Cash for College" (formally College Goal Sunday) campaign, which offers students and parents hands-on professional help filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). So, students and parents will not only be able to visit an LSCC campus, meet with academic advisers and admission representatives, but also speak with financial aid specialists. Filling out the FAFSA can be an overwhelming task, so LSCC's knowledgeable staff will be available to walk you through the process. Computers also will be available for your use. Please bring as many of the following documents with you: 2008 IRS 1040 tax returns and W-2 statements; Social Security benefits; untaxed income records for 2008; Welfare Temporary Assistance to Needy Families; most recent 2009 bank statement; Social Security number, driver's license or alien registration card; and Veteran's benefits. For those wishing to complete and submit an admissions application, please bring along a check or credit card with you.

"Community colleges are a great opportunity for all Florida students to get a quality education at an affordable price," said Community College Chancellor Dr. Will Holcombe. "We encourage every high school student to enroll in their local community college and achieve the American Dream through a great college education that will lead to an outstanding career and higher quality of life."

Lake-Sumter Community College will hold a "Go Higher-Get Accepted" event on its Leesburg Campus, this Saturday, February 7, 9 a.m.-12 noon, Fine Arts Center Auditorium; and on its South Lake Campus in Clermont, next Saturday, February 21, 9 a.m.-12 noon, Building 2 Auditorium.

For more information visit [www.FACTS.org](http://www.FACTS.org) or [www.lsc.edu](http://www.lsc.edu), or call 352-323-3665 or 352-568-0001 in Sumter County.

**February 25, 2009**  
***Service Learning Is Experiential Learning***  
**Dr. Glenn Ricci, Dean of Programs, Arts & Sciences**

Service Learning is a relatively new, dynamic, highly effective teaching tool and method that can benefit instruction, the students, the community, and the college. It is also a growing national educational movement involving collegiate participation in community and philanthropic service opportunities. Service Learning connects academic study to community to increase academic expectations and learning through a blending of discovery, integration and application of knowledge, and transformational teaching.

Research reveals that Service Learning enhances broader learning outcomes, increases student retention, makes learning more relevant, fosters civic participation, provides opportunities for career exploration and preparation, and improves timely graduation rates. Some faculty members integrate service into course curricula that directly ties to specific learning outcomes. This helps students make clear connections between their academic experience and their future professional lives in society. Students employ knowledge to address and help solve societal problems through critical analysis and academics.

Since its inception, Service Learning has swept academia nationally with the Campus Compact, formed in 1985, to support and mobilize service programs in higher education. Service Learning grew into an educational movement of experiential learning, whereby students put academic learning into real-life practice with non-profit organizations, governmental agencies, public schools, and philanthropic arms of for-profit organizations.

At Lake-Sumter Community College, a group of faculty members have named the initiative "Serve to Learn." While definitions vary, the general definition is a teaching tool and method using community involvement to apply theories or skills taught in courses. Service Learning furthers course objectives and addresses broader-based (community) needs as students participate in and learn from service activities.

Service Learning Campus Compact is celebrating 23 years, with offices in approximately 31 states and 1,000 member educational institutions. In addition to national and state government funding, private funding of Service Learning has included the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Reader's Digest Fund, and the W.K. Kellogg, Ford, Charles Stuart Mott, and the Ewing Marion Kaufmann foundations.

Service Learning is already widely used in K-12 education, and many colleges and universities are requiring Service Learning of all graduates, engaging students to solve problems within communities as an integral part of academics. Other colleges and universities designate courses that contain service components. Students receive credit for experience, mastering course content by making meaningful connections between classroom studies and the information's "real-life" applications. Service is recognized as having learned participation skills in acts of kindness, civic stewardship, and community action among many others.

Collegiate coursework in any academic discipline can incorporate Service Learning to promote engaged teaching and learning. Through service projects, students develop citizenship skills and values, while encouraging collaborative partnerships to address community needs. Some examples of Service Learning include: criminal justice students working with teens in the juvenile justice system; education majors tutoring at-risk youth with K-12 partners; writing students creating grant proposals; art students designing brochures for local nonprofits; and botany students applying studies and knowledge to create community gardens in poor community areas.

At Lake-Sumter Community College, the Service Learning institutional initiative is in the process of implementation to accommodate faculty, students, and community. The mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and learning. The goals are to increase student engagement; to enhance student learning; to foster civic and personal responsibility; and to develop an environment of collegial participation among students, faculty, and the community.