

Category Nine: Building Collaborative Relationships

9C1 Key Collaborative

Relationships: As the only institution of higher education in St. Joseph County, the College seeks to develop and maintain multiple and varied collaborative relationships within the county. Key relationships for the College are those that really make a difference with respect to the College's mission with its focus on "transforming lives and advancing communities" (O1). Relationships exist with educational institutions (public and private secondary schools and other community colleges and institutions of higher education), with businesses and industries, and with service agencies. Although most relationships are built within the county, many exist beyond it, especially those with higher education institutions and those that provide professional support at the state level or beyond.

Some of the educational relationships have existed for many years as either sources of entering students (feeders) or as destinations of current Glen Oaks' students (receivers). Within those existing educational relationships, some are both feeder and receiver, with, for instance, Glen Oaks being fed students for summer school only and then sending the same students back in the fall to the receiving school. The majority of the emerging educational relationships, however, are feeders. The following list reflects a sample of the collaborative

relationships that exist or are emerging for the College:

Existing Educational Relationships: Feeders

All public high schools within a 30 - 40 mile radius
Family Independence Agency
Intermediate School Districts and Career Centers of the Region (St. Joseph, Branch, and LaGrange Counties)
Private Schools within the County
St. Joseph Co. Athletic Directors Association
St. Joseph Co. Counselors Academy
Michigan Works!

Existing Educational Relationships: Receivers

Franklin University
Goshen College
Kalamazoo Valley Community College
Southwestern Michigan College
Spring Arbor University
Trine University

Existing Educational Relationships: Feeders and Receivers

Davenport University
Grand Valley State University
Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative
Western Michigan University

Emerging Educational Relationships: Feeders

Centro De Ayuda
Michigan and Indiana Home School Association

Emerging Educational Relationships: Receivers

Robert B. Miller College
Ferris State University

Existing Business and Industry Relationships

Area Hospitals
Human Resources Council for St. Joseph County
Land Use Council for St. Joseph County
Private Businesses and Industries that Support Internships and Externships
Southwest Michigan Five-County Collaborative
St. Joseph County Economic Development Corporation
St. Joseph County Manufacturers Council
Upjohn Institute

Existing Relationships with Support Associations and Consortiums

Adventures in Lifelong Learning (Organization for Senior Citizens)
American Red Cross
Bizzy Hands (Child Care Center)
Chambers of Commerce and other Diverse Service Organizations
Domestic Abuse Shelter
Glen Oaks Community College Foundation and Donors
Homeless Shelter
Local Media Sources
Michigan Community College Athletic Association (MCCAA)
Michigan Community College Association
Michigan Community Colleges: Total Quality Improvement Project (MiTQIP)
Michigan Department of Career Development

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA)
St. Joseph County Intermediate School District: Superintendents Association, Principals Association, and School Board Association

Category Two contains further references to some of these collaborative relationships as they partner with the College to advance the region's businesses and communities. Category Three contains further references to some of these collaborative relationships as they reflect measures of stakeholder satisfaction.

9C2 Relationships Reinforce Institutional Mission: As presented in the "Foundational Statements" to Vision 2010, the College's strategic plan, "Glen Oaks' mission is to empower individuals, businesses, and communities to achieve their goals through accessible and quality higher education services" (O1). The College continuously strives to improve student learning and empowers students to achieve their career, academic, and other life goals. The institution provides an open door of services for all who can benefit from them. Further, the College partners with business and community groups to advance the quality of community life.

Through direct contact with the above partners, representatives of the College hear what specific needs

each partner may have, and the representatives are able to assess how the College can best respond to those needs. Through relationships with support associations, specifically with those of the Intermediate School District, the College is able to coordinate programs and services for students within the county and within the College's service area. Partners in businesses and industries not only respond to services currently offered by the College but also recommend changes in services and offer suggestions for improvement. Individuals from business and industry relationships, for example, serve as members of the College's program advisory boards, and they, along with others from that sector, participate in program review at the College. The direct involvement of College personnel in collaborative relationships provides an opportunity not only for the personnel to hear the needs of the partners and work to respond to them but also for the partners to hear what the College can do for them, thus reinforcing the institutional mission of "Transforming Lives and Advancing Communities."

As described in 8P1, the strategic planning process involved multiple focus groups representing employees and citizens of the college district. Following the identification of 6 Core Strategies, the College Council continued the strategic planning process by identifying Strategic Goals and related Council projects. In order to support the Council's planning decisions, it requested additional information and data. The College

provided the information and data in part through contracted CLARUS Corporation scans (2R1 and 8P1). Business, industry, and education collaborators responded to the Workforce Development and the High School scans. The information gathered assisted the College Council in completing its strategic planning. The College's collaborative relationships continue to aid the institution in the identifying the expectations (3C2) and the changing needs (3P3) of stakeholders.

9P1 Creating, Prioritizing, and Building Relationships: Personal contact creates and builds relationships with educational institutions, businesses, and other organizations from which the College receives students. The President of the College, the Deans, the Athletic Director, coaches, the Director of Admissions, counselors, the Director of Business Services, and faculty—all make visits to personnel at and/or attend regular meetings of "feeder" organizations. Because the nature of the community college is geographical, proximity contributes to prioritization of "feeders," placing those within the College's taxation area (St. Joseph County) at the top of the list. Funding programs and services is also a contributory factor to prioritization.

Personal contact also creates and builds relationships with "receivers" and dual "feeders/receivers." Contacts by counselors develop relationships that support internships/externships for students

in vocational programs; contacts by the Assistant Dean of Nursing and Allied Health develop relationships that support clinical assignments for nurses. Counselors, coaches, and the Athletic Director all work to ensure that student athletes comply with eligibility standards of “receivers,” such as MCCA and NJCAA. The College works to develop seamless articulation agreements with “receiver” institutions. Relationships are further developed as representatives of allied health, business, and industry serve on the advisory boards for all occupational programs offered by the College. In addition, individual faculty participate in the building of relationships as they are contacted one-on-one to recommend qualified potential hires. Overall, flexibility and adaptability by the College are key contributing factors to the building of “receiver” relationships.

The College considers important all organizations that provide services to its students. However, once again, proximity contributes to prioritization. Personnel of the College are directly involved with many service agencies in St. Joseph County; some serve on the boards of those agencies (2R1). Again, it is direct participation by College personnel that creates and builds relationships with these organizations.

Providing scholarship opportunities is a major service to students. Thus, direct contact by College personnel is a priority with organizations, such as the Glen Oaks Foundation and the St. Joseph County Athletic

Directors Association, that secure scholarship assistance for students.

Providing space on campus for employment services, such as Michigan Works!, and offering College facilities—the Business Development Center, the Nora Hagen Theatre, the gymnasium, the baseball/softball complex, and the concourse area—to various organizations illustrates the sharing concept that further contributes to the development of relationships.

The College uses the same personal approach to creating all other relationships with education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community. The same one-on-one contact by College personnel builds these relationships. The PR/Marketing Manager of the College, however, specifically works with regional newspapers and radio stations to solidify relationships with the general community through presentation of the College’s programs, services, and achievements.

Items 2R1 and 3P4 of the Portfolio also offers insight into the building and maintaining of relationships with key stakeholders, such as those in collaborative relationships.

9P2 Ensuring Needs Are Being Met: Through formal evaluations and personal feedback, the College ensures that the needs of those involved in collaborative relationships are being met. For example, at the conclusion of each customized training course, students

are directly asked, “Were you satisfied?” On a five-year rotation schedule, the formal Perkins evaluation of all occupational programs asks students, faculty, and community members of each advisory board their level of satisfaction with the program. Twice each year, the Athletic Director reports on the eligibility of student athletes so that the students meet the standards of the “receiving” institution. On a larger institutional level, the meetings of the Board of Trustees are open so that community members may attend and express their satisfaction with the programs and services provided by the College.

Item 2R1 of the Portfolio further addresses meeting the needs of business and industry. Item 3P3 comments upon identifying needs of stakeholders and partners, and 3P7, determining their satisfaction.

9P3 Creating and Building Relationships within the College:

As with collaborative relationships, internal relationships are also built through personal contact. The Organizational Chart by Function included in the prefatory material to the Portfolio reflects one way through which contacts occur. Cross-functional teams are another way contact occurs and relationships are built within the institution. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Leadership Council
- College Council
- Project Teams of the College Council
- Curriculum Committee

- Scholarship Committee
- Graduation Committee
- Distance Learning Advisory Team
- Calendar Committee
- Program Review and Development Committee
- Perkins Review Committee
- Registration Committee
- Technology Committee
- Search Committees.

The building of some relationships is department-to-department. For example, the athletic department builds relationships with faculty through progress reports on student athletes. Two reports in the fall and two in the spring monitor attendance and academic progress of the student athletes. Faculty may note individual concerns on the reports, and coaches or the Athletic Director responds to those. Also, Academic Affairs/Instruction has responsibility for contractual Faculty Forums and In-Service days for annual contract and full-time faculty and reinforces department-to-department relationships at them. Personnel connected to Student Services (for example, counselors, the Director of Financial Aid/Scholarships, Upward Bound Project Advisor, Special Populations Advisor/Single Parent Program Coordinator, Director of Grants/Institutional), the Network Technician, the Library Directory, and other non-faculty may participate in these meetings so that appropriate academic issues can be discussed with members of another department directly in contact with students.

The building of other relationships occurs throughout the entire

institution through events such as the summer/fall picnic, the Christmas party, and three college-wide meetings per year. Further, the efforts of the Coordinators of Recreation and Social Activities (3P2) create opportunities for not only students but also college personnel to come together and build relationships.

The foundation for all of the College's relationships (collaborative and within the institution) is the statement of "Glen Oaks Community College Values and Commitments" contained in 1C2. Segments from the statements offer insight into the building of internal relationships:

"We value service provided by individuals and groups, working together for the common good of the College and our service area. . . .

We are committed to interacting in ways that demonstrate civility, caring, and respect. We develop our working and learning relationships based on mutual trust, recognizing that each individual has inherent worth and unique talents. We appreciate and value diversity of expression, collaboration and partnering, and finding ways we can communicate effectively across difference.

. . . We promote the development of questions, ideas, and College activities that engage students, faculty, and staff, area employers and communities in taking reasoned risk and pursuing new learning. . . .

We are committed to diversity as an educational and social value. We understand that diversity

requires caring, cultivation, and effective communication processes in order to build unity and insight from difference."

Technology facilitates communication at the College. Novell GroupWise delivers communication across relationships to all personnel. In addition to individual postings, a weekly electronic internal publication, "What's Happening," and information from the President's office are communicated via GroupWise. Further, for each monthly Board of Trustees meeting, the President selects a focused topic and invites appropriate personnel to address the Board on that topic. These presentations are included in the minutes of the meeting which are placed on the College's shared drive and are available for all personnel. The institutional shared drive permits any interested employee electronic access to minutes of College Council meetings, survey and scan results, and other material. The College Website also permits communication across relationships.

A biannual print publication for both internal and external stakeholders, *Connections*, contributes to communication across internal relationships, as does the mid-year college-wide meeting at which the President responds to employee questions. Item 5P5 details the format of the meeting and highlights other formats of communication between institutional levels.

9P4 Measures of Building

Collaborative Relationships: The College collects and analyzes regularly the following measures of building collaborative relationships:

- Enrollment data, specifically that on dual enrolled/high school guest students from the public and private schools within St. Joseph County
- Enrollment data, specifically that of students from public schools within St. Joseph County
- Enrollment data, specifically that of students from private schools and home schools
- Student Profile Report, compiled biannually for fall and winter semesters
- Annual Perkins Report on occupational program
- Business Services course evaluation (ongoing)
- Business Services follow-up visit with company (following each training course)
- Upjohn Institute research findings on training courses that business has expressed an interest in or needs.

9R1 Results in Building Key Collaborative Relationships:

An analysis of enrollment data will reveal an increase each fall (2005 – 2008) in the number of In-District high school graduates who have enrolled at the College:

<i>In-District Graduates Enrolled</i>	
Fall 2005	126
Fall 2006	136
Fall 2007	137
Fall 2008	155

Approximately a 20% increase is shown between fall 2005 and fall 2008, with over a 10% increase between fall 2007 and fall 2008. Further, the percent of seniors from the combined In-District graduation classes (eight public schools) choosing to attend the College has also increased:

Percent of Seniors from Combined In-District Classes

Seniors 2005	18.3%
Seniors 2006	18.1%
Seniors 2007	18.3%
Seniors 2008	20.6%

Data also reflect an increase in the number of dual enrollment sections offered by the College at area high schools. For the 2005 – 2006 academic year, 17 dual enrolled sections were offered; for 2006 – 2007, 15 sections; and for 2007 – 2008, 21 sections. The 2007 – 2008 academic year recorded a 30% increase in sections compared to 2005 – 2006.

The enrollment data reveal that the College is attracting more In-District graduates and more In-District dual enrolled students. The College believes effective collaborative relationships with Intermediate School Districts of the region are in part responsible for these increases. In addition, a collaborative program through which the College’s counselors go to area high schools in the spring to administer placement tests and to sign up graduating seniors for the fall semester has contributed to the increase (3P2).

Another focused example of an effective relationship that directly affects students at the College is the financial support in the form of scholarship assistance given by the St. Joseph County Athletic Directors Association. Since 1998, the Association has provided annual scholarships totaling \$1,000 for two St. Joseph County student athletes attending Glen Oaks Community College.

Other relationships that directly affect students are those that exist between the Nursing Program of the College and the cooperating agencies that may be used at various times throughout the Level I and Level II curricula. In 1999, the number of agencies was 13. Over the years, the number has increased steadily. The 25 used during the 2008 – 2009 academic year reflect results of effective collaborative relationships.

The collaborative relationship that exists between the College and its Foundation is illustrated through the Mission Statement of the Foundation: “The mission of the Glen Oaks Community College Foundation is to award scholarships and grants to students, faculty and staff members of Glen Oaks Community College and to maintain and develop the facilities and services of Glen Oaks Community College for broader educational opportunities and services.” Its purpose is to raise, receive, and distribute contributions from private sources to benefit education and distribute contributions from private

sources to benefit education and community services at the College.

The following programs and services at the College have been wholly or partially funded by gifts from the Foundation:

- Scholarships, awards, and emergency and loan funds
- Learning resource and individualized instruction centers
- Furnishings and equipment for the Business Development Center
- Equipment for the Fitness Center
- Equipment for Nursing, Automotive, Data Processing, Electronics, and Science Departments.

The results of collaborative relationships through the Glen Oaks Community College Foundation are seen in the extent to which the Foundation has contributed to facility development; funded scholarships; awarded faculty, staff, and program grants; and provided witness to the viability of the College. Results are detailed in Item 3R4 of the Portfolio.

The results of collaborative relationships with area businesses and industries are addressed in Item 2R1. Information presented in 3R3 (Results for Stakeholder Satisfaction) also serves this category since stakeholders include those individuals and agencies identified among the College’s key collaborative relationships. One, however, will be highlighted.

The St. Joseph County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) provides great value to the county in a variety of ways, including the tremendous return on investment the county has received through the organization. Another notable way that the St. Joseph County EDC has impacted the county is in its support of education and training for local manufacturers through its local educational partners.

Glen Oaks Community College and the EDC have a partnership that runs deep and began with the inception of the EDC over 11 years ago. The College's Dean of Student and Community Services participated in the group that met to discuss activation of the EDC, which led to a community forum that officially set much of the groundwork for the organization. Since that time until 2008, the Dean served on the EDC Board of Directors with much of that membership being an officer of the board. The College President now serves as the college liaison to the board.

Because of the EDC's devotion to supporting manufacturing in the county, the collaboration with Glen Oaks has been positive for all parties involved. The Executive Director of the EDC has made many referrals for training to the Department of Business Services at Glen Oaks, has provided input in the training and education needs of area manufacturers, and has been a valuable resource for ideas and information.

As a result, many area manufacturers have received from the College information and/or training that may have otherwise been sought outside of the area. Grant funding obtained through the State of Michigan and resulting in a partnership with the State, Glen Oaks, and local corporations is another example of the EDC's Director connecting industry to the right sources.

In addition to the support of education and training for area manufacturers, the EDC has also been a promoter of collaborative efforts on a variety of levels. For example, area economic developers are coming together to create a regional marketing plan with hopes of helping diversify manufacturing in the region. These same individuals are also working together to implement a database system that will allow participants to accumulate information on manufacturers based on site visits. This database will allow for a more targeted approach to services for manufacturers. The hope is that such a program will eliminate duplicate visits to manufacturers to respect their time and best utilize their resources.

These collaborative efforts benefit not only local education partners and manufacturers but also the region as a whole.

One collaborative relationship with a state-wide consortium, the Michigan Total Quality Improvement Program (MiTQIP) began in 2001 with the inception of the program. At that time, MiTQIP was a loosely

organized group of those few Michigan colleges that had joined AQIP. Much of the meeting time was spent on helping each other to navigate the new approach to reaccreditation. Over the years, MiTQIP has evolved to the point where over half of the 20 Michigan AQIP colleges attend meetings (3 held annually). The organization is open to all colleges in the state, not just community colleges, and non-AQIP colleges may join to learn more about the Academic Quality Improvement Program.

In July 2008, MiTQIP identified 4 goals:

- Encourage engagement in the Developmental Education Benchmark project.
- Share Action Project listings among colleges. (Give name and brief project description and measurement used for reporting results.)
- Develop a common survey instrument and benchmark graduate data.
- Share experiences so that participants can take knowledge back to respective colleges to enhance the likelihood of CQI success.

As a working consortium, MiTQIP has benefited from Glen Oaks' participation, most recently in having the College's Dean of Student and Community Services as president, and the College's Director of Student Services/Registrar as secretary. As the College continues to participate in its collaborative relationship with MiTQIP and addresses the goals of

the consortium, the institution will benefit and results will be evidenced.

911 Improving Current Processes and Systems:

No formal process for improving current processes and systems for building collaborative relationships exists at the College. Improvement occurs most often through one-on-one relationships between representatives of the College and of the collaborators.

Opportunity for Improvement:

Community Connectedness is one of the 6 Core Strategies of "Vision 2010." Through the work of the College Council, Strategic Goals have been identified for it. One is to develop a partnership model/plan with business/industry/ K-12/government agencies. Although *Community Connectedness* was not identified as an Area of First Focus in 2006, during the current review of the Areas of First Focus and Council project, it may merit attention.

912 Setting, Prioritizing, and Communicating Targets:

Targets for improvement are set to align with the institutional Strategic Plan and the Board-approved Core Strategies of the plan. The process by which the College Council identified, developed, and prioritized Strategic Goals and Council Projects related to each Core Strategy is explained in 8P1. The Core Strategies, Strategic Goals, Areas of First Focus, and Council Projects are presented in 8C1 and 8C2.

Current results and improvement priorities are communicated to faculty, staff, and administrators in

multiple ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Formal reports to the Board of Trustees
- Novell GroupWise electronic communication
- Reports posted on the institutional electronic shared drive
- Presentations at each of the three college-wide meetings held each year
- College Council's printed tri-fold
- College Website.

Current results and improvement priorities are communicated to relationship partners and appropriate students and other stakeholders in multiple ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Formal reports to the Board of Trustees
- College Council's printed tri-fold
- Presentations by College personnel
- College Website
- *Connections*, the College news report to the community
- Area media coverage.