



An International Organization for the
Community College Baccalaureate Degree

BEACON

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WHAT IS THE CCBA MISSION?

*To promote better access
to the baccalaureate degree
on community college
campuses, and to serve as
a resource for information
on various models for
accomplishing this purpose.*

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First Book Specific to CCBA Issues Terrific Success!

The first book to look at this issue in depth, *The Community College Baccalaureate: Emerging Trends and Policy Issues*, was published in late 2004. If sales figures are a reflection of the interest in the topic, it is clear that the subject is popular.

Under the editorship of Deborah L. Floyd (Florida Atlantic University), Michael L. Skolnik (University of Toronto) and Kenneth P. Walker (Chairman of the CCBA Board of Directors and President of Edison College), twelve scholars addressed the issues of access. The book describes and explains current developments; presents essential background information; offers examples of practice and different models of delivery; and gives voice to the views of proponents and critics alike.



Michael L. Skolnik and Deborah L. Floyd
autograph copies of *The Community
College Baccalaureate*

A book signing was held at the Fifth Annual Conference in New York. This champagne celebration drew many attendees who, although not registered for the CCBA Conference, were interested in meeting the authors and obtaining an autographed copy of this milestone publication.

A full description of the book can be found at the CCBA website, www.accbd.org.

Planning Ahead?

The Sixth Annual Community College Baccalaureate Association Conference

Mark your calendar with the dates of the Sixth Annual International Community College Baccalaureate Association Conference. Next year's meeting will be held immediately before Innovations 2006 in New Orleans, Louisiana from March 17 until March 19.

Community College Access to Baccalaureate Degrees: Not a New Idea

From its founding in 1944 until today, New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, part of the State University of New York system, has been a community college. There is no doubt that FIT is an unusual community college, focused on meeting the need for training in fashion design and merchandising in New York City. "The Fashion Institute of Technology prepares students for professional excellence in design, fashion, and business by providing the premier educational experience that fosters creativity, career focus, and a global perspective." (www.fitnyc.suny.edu)

Since Mortimer Ritter's presidency in 1944 and up to today's president, Dr. Joyce Brown, FIT has identified needs in the community and met those needs. In the 1970's, FIT saw the need to confer baccalaureate degrees and have been doing so ever since. The majority of the school's students continue to enroll in certificate or associate's degree programs.

"FIT is as committed to career education in the industry and the world of work today as it was when it was founded in the 1940's," says Dario Cortes, vice president for Academic Affairs. "By offering bachelor's and master's degrees, we have expanded the options for our 11,000 students, many of whom are enrolled in associate's degree or certificate programs. This makes FIT a unique community college."



Pioneer Awards

Kenneth P. Walker, Founder of the Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCBA), was honored with the organization's *Pioneer Award* at the CCBA Fifth Annual International Conference in New York last week. Dr. Walker is the District President of Edison College in Ft. Myers, Florida.

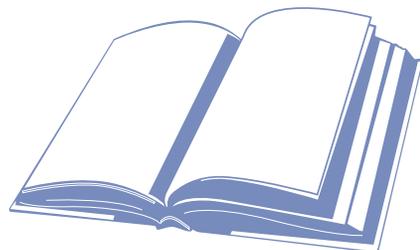
The *Pioneer Award* is presented annually to an individual who has taken the lead in improving access to postsecondary education in the United States and Canada. The award's name recognizes that such leadership required the same bravery and tenacity exhibited by early settlers in the United States and Canada.

"Expanding access to four year degrees has been a passion throughout my career in higher education," said Walker. "The CCBA has experienced tremendous growth since its inception five years ago, and the number of community colleges now offering baccalaureate degrees in areas of demonstrated need is indeed rewarding."



Contribution to Knowledge Award

Deborah L. Floyd, professor at Florida Atlantic University, was the first recipient of the organization's new *Contribution to Knowledge Award*, presented in recognition of research, publications and presentations about community colleges and baccalaureate models that have contributed greatly to shaping conversation about this emerging movement. Floyd received this award at the CCBA conference in New York in March. Floyd spearheaded the writing and publishing of *The Community College Baccalaureate*, the first comprehensive book on the subject. Walker served as an editor and contributing author.



Angelica Bertot, a student at the Miami-Dade College, Wolfson Campus received a \$1,000 scholarship from Community College Week for her award winning essay. Miami Dade College received \$1,000 for Student Government Association.

Why We Should Offer Four-Year Degrees at Community Colleges in Florida

By Angelica Bertot

John F. Kennedy once said, “Liberty without learning is always in peril; learning without liberty is always in vain.” Community colleges have made their mark by providing a wide range of students with access to higher education. Since the first community colleges were founded, they have become increasingly diverse and open to a wide range of disciplines and constituencies, including technical and vocational, non-credit community classes, adult education, remedial support, and distance learning. Today, the demand for community colleges proves that higher education is becoming more and more compelling. I believe that it is crucial for the state of Florida to offer four-year degrees in our community colleges because it helps the economy in Florida and helps the students with higher education in the workforce.

I believe community colleges are well equipped and qualified to meet the needs of today’s lower middle class students because of the emphasis placed on teaching, and the advanced technology and support they offer. However, some believe that offering four-year degrees is against the traditional community college mission, and that it will generate conflict with four-year universities. Miami-Dade College started out as a community college, offering Associates Degrees. Now, it is a college offering four-year degrees in selected high demand majors. Miami-Dade College has over 100,000 students and is growing. Offering four-year degrees at existing community colleges around Florida helps students by providing a broader sense of education at more convenient locations, in a more student-centered learning environment, and at a much lower price than offered by other colleges and universities. Community colleges are well qualified for educating students to go directly into their job, without hurting the principle or mission of the community college. In fact, I believe that offering four-year degrees at Miami Dade goes right along with the mission statement which states, **“The mission of Miami Dade College is to provide accessible, affordable, high quality education by keeping the learner’s needs at the center of decision-making and working in partnership with its dynamic, multi-cultural community.”** The College is enforcing its mission by helping students achieve

their goals and then preparing them to serve the community’s needs.

In Florida, Governor Bush agrees community colleges should offer four-year degrees because “greater access to bachelor’s degrees for non-traditional students in fields where we are experiencing critical workforce shortages”, would give us economic and cultural advantages. Florida has a considerable number of students graduating with Associates Degrees, but not enough with Bachelor’s degree. “Florida ranks 3rd in the number of Associates Degrees awarded, but only 47th in the number of Bachelors Degrees it grants.”

Another important factor I believe plays a big role in the granting four-year degrees in community colleges, is the benefit to the state’s economy. The more students you have graduating with four-year degrees, the more skilled workers you have in the community, which is a benefit for the economy. Eduardo J. Padrón, Miami-Dade College president, believes that this opportunity will bring an “opening”. He believes other major institutions around the city are too expensive. He views “his institution as a people’s college that can fill a niche and offer four-year degrees”.

I believe by offering Baccalaureate Degrees at community colleges, we are fulfilling essential needs of our students as well as our community. The majority of students at community colleges are older, employed or have families, and the schedule and tuition of universities is too demanding. By offering these programs at a community college level, the schools, students, community, and the state benefit.



**Dr. Leslie Roberts, Miami Dade College
and
Angelica Bertot, Essay Contest Winner
Essay Contest Winner from Miami Dade College**

Edison College Receives Bachelor's Degree Approval

Edison College District President Kenneth P. Walker has announced that the Florida State Board of Education has approved the College's request to confer the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree in Public Safety Management.

"I am very excited about the State Board's action," said Walker. "It is a milestone in the evolution of Edison College and results from strong partnerships with Southwest Florida's Criminal Justice, Fire and Emergency Medical Services professionals, and Florida Gulf Coast University officials."

Edison College originally filed an application to offer the program in 2001. Since that time, the program has been jointly offered under a cooperative agreement with FGCU, with degrees conferred by FGCU.

"Because most students enrolling in this program will hold one of five Associate in Science degrees from Edison College, they will now seamlessly move to upper division courses and complete their degrees without transferring to another institution," said Walker. "I am grateful to Dr. Merwin, FGCU President, for his support in this initiative."

Robert Pastula, U.S. Marshal, represented the area's public services professionals at the meeting. "This action culminates years of cooperative planning, and I am extremely pleased with this positive outcome," said Pastula.

Prior to beginning the program, Edison College will acquire the additional accreditation necessary to award the bachelor's degree. This process should be completed in approximately one year.

It isn't just the weather that's hot in Arizona

The decision to eliminate criminal justice courses from its undergraduate justice studies program at Arizona State University's main campus in Tempe was not the cause of the ongoing legislative debates in Arizona but it probably added to the battle. This decision, according to John Kavanagh, director of the criminal justice program at Scottsdale Community College, left hundreds of students who want to become police and corrections officers, federal agents, parole officers and probation officers with no convenient place to get an affordable four-year college degree.

It isn't easy to say when the debate about meeting community needs through community college baccalaureates really heated up but the last month has seen a number of legislative events that suggest the climate is definitely warmer than last year.

The major higher education reform proposal considered this winter in Arizona that would impact the degrees offered by community colleges is House Bill 2079. Under a proposal by Rep. Laura Knaperek, R-Tempe, nearly any community college that is not in Yuma/LaPaz, Cochise, Coconino, or Yavapai counties could have offered bachelor's degrees in limited areas. Only half of the Maricopa and Pima community colleges would have been able to offer those degrees.

The bill passed 31-24 in the House and passed its first Senate committee by a vote of 5-1. From there, HB

2079 moved to the Senate appropriations committee where it was defeated 6-5.

Under this bill, up to 12 community colleges would have been allowed to offer four-year degrees for law enforcement, fire services, health professions and teacher education, as well as any workforce-related discipline that is not currently offered by state universities.

The bill had been strongly opposed by representatives of the state's public and private universities, mostly because it would have allowed community colleges to issue four-year undergraduate degrees. The measure was designed in part to meet what is believed to be a substantial demand for baccalaureate programs at community colleges, and to remedy workforce shortages in areas such as nursing and teaching.

On April 13, the state House gave the bill a new start as Senate Bill 1109. It passed the full House 31-28 and was headed for the floor of the full Senate where the vote was expected to be very close.





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