

# FOUNDATION UPDATE

DEC 2024

## COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Dr. Brian Knetl, College President*

The College is in the final stages of developing its strategic plan, which will be presented for board approval in January. The plan, titled "Rise 2030," focuses on four key priorities: Redefining the College's relationship with the community, investing in academic innovation, strengthening the student experience, and enriching the employee experience.

The College is also launching a new wastewater and clean water treatment program in response to industry needs, with support from an NSF grant. The Technical Education Center, a \$60 million, 100,000-square-foot building, is nearly enclosed and is set to open by Fall 2025. The College will soon initiate searches for a new Provost and a new Vice President of Finance and Administration.

## BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Edward Keating, Foundation Board President*

Mr. Keating was honored to support this year's Giving Tuesday appeal with a short video about why he gives; other board members are encouraged to share their stories. The Foundation board hopes to foster greater connections with the Trustees, who provide support through personal contributions, attendance at Foundation events, and funding for the Development team. The board will conduct a self-assessment survey to inform the strategic planning retreat in February.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*Dr. Melinda Tejada, Vice President of Community Engagement & Executive Director of the Foundation*

The Foundation board retreat will take place on Thursday, February 6. AGB consultant Jane DiFolco Parker will guide the board through the first steps of developing a strategic plan to complement and support the College's strategic plan. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) conference in October provided additional insights into the process of preparing for an endowment campaign.

*The Foundation's quarterly meeting was held on December 3 at the Aurora downtown campus, followed by a tour.*

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Finance and Audit

*W. Richard Hoster III, Chair*

In 2024 the Foundation netted roughly \$10,000 from the 5k and \$63,000 from the golf outing. The full amount will be allocated to scholarships for 2025-26.

### Investment

*Dr. Thomas Huberty, Chair*

The portfolio has returned 11.4% net of fees so far this year and was valued just under \$7.5 million as of October 15.

### Nominating and Governance

*Dale Berman, Chair*

Caroline Rossow has been elected to the Foundation board. Ms. Rossow served as a judge for the John J. Swalec Jr. President's Achievement Awards and is Vice President Commercial Banking at Wintrust Financial Corporation.

### Revenue Generating

*Matt Winkle, Chair*

In July and August the Foundation received 259 gifts totaling \$39,000; since then the Foundation has received a new endowed scholarship, a new annual scholarship, and a \$10,000 gift. The golf outing brought in 10 first-time sponsors, and sponsorships at the silver level increased nearly threefold. The committee continues to discuss strategy, with an increased focus on pursuing major and planned gifts.

## EXECUTIVE TREASURER'S REPORT

*John Bryant, Interim Vice President of Finance & Administration  
& Executive Treasurer of the Foundation*

The FY2024 audit was accepted by the Executive Committee on behalf of the full board and has been approved by the Board of Trustees. Investments had another strong quarter, bringing total assets just under \$7.9 million as of September 30.

## DEVELOPMENT OFFICE REPORT

*Emma Donatille, Director of Development*

The Development team continues to build capacity with the addition of Kourtney Gallagher as Development Engagement Manager and Robin Borgione's promotion to Development Outreach Associate. Board members are asked to amplify the Giving Tuesday message and to continue helping the team build connections.



## STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

*Julian Flores, AAS HVAC/R  
2024-25 Recipient of the VIA Manufacturing  
& Technology Endowed Scholarship*

When Julian Flores graduated from Oswego High in 2020, he thought he might pursue a career in accounting or computer science. After completing his gen eds, however, he knew: "I am not a desktop individual!" He discovered an aptitude for working with his hands in Waubensee's HVAC program. "After that first introductory class," he says, "I was all in." Last spring Mr. Flores competed in the State Skills USA competition, where he placed first, advancing to Nationals and placing seventh. He plans to obtain a Bachelors in Engineering with the ultimate goal of becoming a project manager or energy consultant and someday teaching at Waubensee.

Mr. Flores says his scholarship provided the "edge" he needed to go beyond his coursework. "No longer having to worry about the next payment really relieves the financial stress," he says. "The Foundation helps students like me to succeed and grow."

## COMMITTEE REPORTS (CONT)

### Scholarship

*Dr. Diane Homan, Chair*

Approximately 230 donors, recipients, and guests attended this year's Scholarship Fest event on November 8. The application for awards for 2025-26 academic year is now open, with a priority deadline of February 3 and a secondary deadline of May 5.

## EDUCATION & STRATEGY: ADULT & WORKFORCE EDUCATION

*Adam Schauer*

*Dean for Adult and Workforce Education*

The Adult Education program serves more than 2,500 students, mainly non-native English speakers from diverse backgrounds. Adult Education offers GED and ESL classes on campus, through local employers and community organizations, and at correctional centers. Bridge classes enable students to transition to a career or to credit-level college classes. The program is funded by federal and state grants with additional support from the College, and classes are free to participants.

The Workforce Education program partners with local employers to provide industry-specific training in the workplace, and Waubensee Works supports at-risk youth, offering tuition-free training and job placement in high-demand fields such as healthcare and manufacturing.

**The mission of the Waubensee Community College Foundation is to cultivate philanthropic donors, to responsibly steward its assets and to equitably award scholarships to students to help them achieve their educational goals.**