



WAUBONSEE  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# President's Report

April 2025

Dr. Brian Knetl, President



## Professor Up for National Faculty of the Year Award

Having been named Waubonsee's 2024 Outstanding Faculty Member, Professor of Education Kathleen Randall is now a recipient of the American Association of Community Colleges' (AACC) Dale P. Parnell Faculty Distinction and one of two finalists for the national Faculty Member of the Year award from the AACC. The winner will be announced at AACC's annual conference the evening of April 15. Professor Randall has been honored not just for her outstanding work in her own classroom, but also for her dedication to the teaching profession as a whole; she has been involved in a variety of local, state and national efforts to address teacher shortages. As she says, "I believe that teachers mark not only with a grade but also mark hearts and minds. Teaching is a unique career, a unique power, and that power allows us to make a difference, a connection, and a meaningful one that will hopefully last a lifetime."



## Recent Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Activities

### HLC Multi-Campus Visit a Success

Waubonsee is in year eight of its 10-year accreditation cycle with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Given that timing and the fact that the college has three or more active additional locations, we underwent a multi-location visit recently, with our HLC peer reviewer visiting both the Aurora Downtown and Aurora Fox Valley Campuses. After touring the facilities and meeting with students, faculty and staff, the reviewer found operations at each location to be adequate, with no further review or monitoring necessary. As the reviewer wrote in the summary report, "Each site also reflects the distinct culture of Waubonsee Community College, while maintaining its own unique identity that complements and enhances the programming offered. This balance between institutional cohesion and local culture contributes to an environment where both students and faculty can thrive."

### HLC Conference Prepares WCC for 10-Year Visit in 2026

Several WCC team members attended the annual HLC conference in Chicago earlier this month. In addition to learning more about HLC's new strategic plan titled "North Star," the group also gathered ideas and best practices on how to get all campus stakeholders invested and involved in the HLC accreditation process prior to the college's 10-year visit, which is scheduled for November 2026. The team also learned more about the revised accreditation criteria that will go into effect this September. The four main criteria include:

- Mission
- Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct
- Teaching and Learning for Student Success
- Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

### HLC Approves Two New WCC Academic Programs

As the college's accrediting body, the HLC needs to approve new credit academic programs before Waubonsee can offer them. Earlier this year, HLC approved the college's new 27-credit-hour Water/Wastewater Career Certificate. Funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, this certificate will be offered beginning this fall. And just last week, the HLC approved another 27-credit-hour career certificate – the Hybrid and Electric Vehicles Certificate in the Automotive Technology area. This certificate will give students the technical knowledge and skills needed to diagnose, adjust, and repair these kinds of vehicles.

## Celebrating Student Success

The spring recognition season was kicked off late last month with the Spring Joint Honors Induction Ceremony and Student Life Awards. More than 350 attendees enjoyed a keynote from Interim Provost Dr. Kimberly Chavis before receiving their honors and awards. Students were inducted into six honor societies - Alpha Beta Gamma, Alpha Sigma Lambda, National Adult Education Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa, Psi Beta, and SALUTE. Individual and registered student organization award winners included:

- Making a Difference Outstanding Volunteer: Wendy Sanchez, Psi Beta
- Outstanding Student Organization Event: Silent Auction, Psi Beta
- Outstanding Advisor: Dani Fischer, Science Club and National Society of Leadership and Success
- Rising Star: Isaac Del Toro, Latinos Unidos
- Outstanding New Student Organization: Journalism Club
- Outstanding Student Organization: Campus Activities Board
- Outstanding Student Leader: Mark Price, Student Senate, Business Club, Kinesiology Club



*Joint Honors Induction and Student Life Awards Ceremony*

## Celebrating Spring as Waubensee Together

Waubensee's long-time annual employee celebration, WinterFest, changed seasons this year, with the debut of SpringFest on March 28. Nearly 300 employees, retirees, board members, and guests gathered at Two Brothers Roundhouse in Aurora to enjoy dinner, dancing, and the always popular Baskets and Beyond raffle. Feedback surrounding the event changes, such as the new date and time, new venue, and more, has been very positive, so we look forward to next year.



## Showcasing Our Campuses

In addition to the year-round lineup of small group campus tours and high school visit days, the college typically hosts open house events across its four campuses each spring. Events have already happened at Aurora Downtown and Aurora Fox Valley in recent weeks, with Plano scheduled for April 16 and Sugar Grove for April 26. The college expects to meet more than 200 prospective students and their families at these events.

# Coming Up

### **April 21 - 22**

ATD Coaches Visit

### **April 24**

Retirement and Service Awards Banquet

### **April 27**

WCC vs Morton Baseball at Kane County Cougars

### **May 1**

Gustafson Scholarship Banquet

### **May 6 - 7**

ICCCP/ICCTA Lobby Day

### **May 17**

Commencement

### **May 22**

Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Student-Athlete Recognition