



President's Report

March 2026

Dr. Brian Knetl, President



Sugar Grove Leaders Discuss Possibilities

Waubonsee was pleased to host the most recent Sugar Grove Community Leaders Meeting in the TEC. It brought together a variety of local partners for information sharing, relationship building, and collaboration coordination. Attending were representatives from the Village of Sugar Grove, Kaneland School District, Sugar Grove Library, Sugar Grove Chamber of Commerce, Conley Outreach Services, and the Sugar Grove Fire Department.

After Dr. Toya Webb and I gave a short presentation on the RISE 2030 Strategic Plan, the discussion focused on potential partnerships to support workforce training for data center careers, collaboration with the Fire District to utilize training facilities, and early ideas for engagement and programming for area youth ages 0–5.

Celebrating Alumni and Enjoying a Show at the Inaugural Waubonsee Night at the Paramount Theatre

The college continues to find new ways to engage with and honor our alumni. One example is the new Waubonsee Night at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora. Last month, more than 100 alumni and guests attended a pre-show reception before taking in a performance of the musical *Dear Evan Hansen*.

At the reception, I was proud to present the college's 2026 Distinguished Alumnus Award to Hugo Salitjeral (*see header photo above*). Coming to Waubonsee at age 35, Hugo overcame lifelong academic struggles to earn a 4.0 GPA—a “spark” that ignited his career of systemic reform and a life of community service. He currently works as the Executive Director of the Valley Sheltered Workshop, serves on the Illinois Governor's Taskforce on workforce reform, and was recognized as the 2025 City of Aurora Fourth of July Grand Marshal.

Achieving the Dream

Team Advances WCC's Achieving the Dream Work at Annual National Conference

Key to the college's Achieving the Dream work is getting employees across all areas involved and informed, and so I was proud to be part of a team of 16 WCC administrators, faculty, and staff that recently attended the network's annual conference. Waubonsee joined more than 300 colleges to exchange evidence-based strategies that drive access, momentum, mobility, and community impact.

Highlights and topics included a recognition of operating in uncertain times; the role of humanities to elevate justice, equity, and community voice; the voices of community college students across the country who have been named DREAM Scholars; and the last keynote from retiring ATD President and CEO Dr. Karen A. Stout.

Coming Up

March 21-24

HLC Annual Conference

March 26-27

ATD Spring Coaches Visit

March 27

WCC SpringFest

March 30

Student Senate Town Hall

April 9

Joint Honors Induction Ceremony and Student Life Awards

April 10

Faculty Development Day

April 11-14

AACC Annual Conference