



WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

President's Report

June 2026

Dr. Brian Knetl, President



Celebrating the 1,000+ Members of Waubonsee's Class of 2026

At Waubonsee, 1,005 individuals earned associate degrees during the 2025-2026 academic year. More than 400 of these students walked in the college's commencement ceremonies on May 16.

Youth Services Manager for the City of Aurora and Waubonsee Alumnus Simon Rodriguez served as the commencement speaker, telling the grads, "And now, in all of your splendor, in those prestigious caps and gowns, go! Go into the world and make it better. Go out against the ideas of doubt and fear! Go and be the change we need now! Go, and hopefully along the journey, you pay it forward to that next generation of graduates. That next generation of leaders!"

[View our news headline on WGN News.](#)



Recognizing Athletic and Academic Excellence

During the annual Athletics Banquet, three new Hall of Famers were inducted: record-setting volleyball player Erin Bowe; former softball and basketball standout Kim (Schaubel) Groom; and broadcaster and friend of the program Mark Krueger, who was inducted posthumously. Athlete awards included:

- Basketball player Niallie Evans, Sophomore Female Athlete of the Year
- Basketball player Chikasi Ofoma, Sophomore Male Athlete of the Year
- Softball player Brooklyn Marks, Freshman Female Athlete of the Year
- Basketball player Freddy Hassan, Freshman Male Athlete of the Year



Statewide Recognitions and Local Support

At the recent Illinois Community College Trustees Association Awards Banquet, we were proud to honor the college's statewide nominees for: Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Member, Audrey Farrell, Adjunct Faculty for Business and Social Sciences; Outstanding Full-Time Faculty Member, Dr. Lisa Fozio-Thielk, Professor of Psychology; and Distinguished Alumnus, [Hugo Saltijeral](#).

Several team members and I attended the recent grand opening of the Sugar Grove Fire Protection District's new burn tower and training facility. We continue to seek government funding for future phases of that project to expand opportunities for our students and the region.

And I was proud to join more than 50 WCC staff, students and family members at the Aurora Pride Parade on June 14, as we showed support for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Annual Trail Run Breaks Records

This year's Waubonsee Foundation Trail Run was the most successful yet, with 325 participants helping raise more than \$14,000 for student scholarships. Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CAD) students "gave back" by designing and producing this year's race medals.

At its quarterly meeting at the start of this month, the Foundation Board approved the allocation of \$15,000 of its funds to help seed the forthcoming Sugar Grove Campus food pantry. In addition, the Foundation will soon provide ways for other donors to donate and designate funds specifically to the food pantry. [Watch our news feature on ABC7 News.](#)



Growing Employee Teamwork and Excellence



Employee Community Garden

With warmer temperatures came the official grand opening of the Waubonsee Employee Community Garden for 2026. As in recent years, the opening was once again celebrated with a farm-to-table cooking demo, this time by Executive Chef Jason Herling of Sweet Baby Ray's Catering Company. Here's to a healthy harvest for all the participating departments! [Watch ABC7 News shout-out.](#)

2026 Staff Awards for Excellence

The Staff Advisory Committee has announced its annual Staff Awards for Excellence winners.

The three categories and winners are:

- Service & Quality: Dr. Robert Galuski, Learning Resource Center Manager (of 22 nominees)
- Innovation & Creativity: Meghan Edmonson, Graphic Design Coordinator (of 11 nominees)
- Diversity & Inclusion: Emily Rollins, Community Engagement Manager (of 5 nominees)

My sincere congratulations to all the well-deserving winners and nominees.



Pictured L to R: Meghan Edmonson, Dr. Robert Galuski, and Emily Rollins

Coming Up

June 19

Juneteenth (college closed)

June 23

Adult & Workforce Education
Recognition Ceremony

June 23

Waubonsee Faculty & Staff
Juneteenth Panel

July 3

Independence Day
(college closed)