



3rd Annual Community Outreach

Painted Desert Campus, Holbrook

April 17, 2013

Northland Pioneer College, Painted Desert Campus in Holbrook hosted the Campus's 3rd annual community outreach meeting on April 17, 2013 at the Tiponi Community Center. Those in attendance were:

Dr. Jeanne Swarthout – NPC President, Blaine Hatch – NPC Vice President for Administrative Services, Mark Vest – NPC Vice President of Instruction and Student Services, Captain Larry Parks – Arizona Department of Public Safety, Jim Reilly – APS/Cholla Power Plant, Kathleen Smith – Holbrook Chamber of Commerce, Cher Reyes – City Clerk for City of Holbrook, Ed Wilson – Maintenance Engineer for Arizona Department of Transportation, Brad Traver – Superintendent of Petrified Forest National Park, Peggy Sample – Office Manager for QK, Inc., Dr. Hannah Rishal – Pediatrician at North Country Healthcare, MiAnna Tyler – NPC Campus Manager at Painted Desert Campus and Kathy McPherson – NPC Assistant to the Campus Manager at Painted Desert Campus.

Ms. Tyler started by welcoming everyone to the meeting. She stated that the big bars overlooking the Tawa Center is construction of the new skill center. She said that the new skill center is approximately 28,000 square feet, and will have an exterior enclosed service court area. The skill center will house three departments which are: Welding, Construction and Mechatronics. There will be faculty offices for each department, four classrooms, shop areas and a computer testing lab. Ms. Tyler noted that we are shooting for completion date of August 12th and that fall classes have already been scheduled. She noted she is excited to have the skill center on campus and to have the Welding shop from Hermosa Drive here on campus. Ms. Tyler then turned the meeting over to President Swarthout.

President Swarthout stated to the community members present that the purpose of doing these outreach meetings is to sit down with communities throughout our service area. To listen to the needs of our communities regarding a number of things; to find out what the communities need more of and/or what NPC needs to improve on. She noted we have yearly outreach meetings from Kayenta to Whiteriver, Winslow to St. Johns and Springerville/Eagar. She stated to the

group that we appreciate them taking the time to meet with us. President Swarthout started by stating that our procedure for strategic planning hasn't changed significantly over the past few years and that the college does a three year strategic plan. The information that is taken from the outreach listening sessions with communities is really important and could be used in our strategic plan. President Swarthout stated to the group that we wanted to bring our strategic plan up in front of our budget so that they were more clearly linked. That is why our timing has changed on how we do the strategic plan; in that it will go in this early fall rather than late spring; we made the change because we were in danger of letting our budget drive our plans rather than let our strategic plan drive our budget. We are close to adopting a final budget; which will be due in May for the next fiscal year.

Vice President Hatch stated that the college is moving along with business as usual; however, he stated that he did have some concerns about enrollment. President Swarthout stated that every community college in the state has a decline in enrollment, probably a result of the length of the recession, and the lack of jobs here. President Swarthout stated to the group that there are a couple of areas where the community members could help her out. The first one being Federal Pell Grants, she stated that there have been some federal changes regarding Pell Grant dispersal that affect rural, part-time students; which is a large part of our student body. We need help making sure students are aware of these changes; one change being students can no longer use Pell Grant monies to take summer classes.

Vice President Vest stated that programs like industrial maintenance and operations, where there are jobs available; we have strong enrollment. The welding program is turning students away; we have as many students as we can manage. In other areas where jobs may not be as readily available; that is where we're seeing the enrollment decline. Vice President Vest stated to the group that he thinks it is important to note that the number of students we have isn't changing; the amount of money they have to go to school is what's changing. He stated that one of the biggest changes in all this; is that we know the longer it takes our students to go through school, the longer the attrition is. As students drop from being full-time to part-time and their time of completion stretches out – there is greater opportunity for life to get in the way of what the students are trying to accomplish. He also stated that in a way; the Holbrook campus is kind of turning into the workforce development campus – which isn't a bad thing, President Swarthout agreed with that statement. Vice President Vest stated that we have the industrial maintenance program here; the welding program; which is going to expand because they will have a larger space and be able to accommodate more students once the skill center is completed. He noted that the construction program is here and that the Bureau of Labor and Statistics stated that over the next ten years; construction will be one of the fastest growing fields in the state; we will have to wait and see about that. He stated that the students skills set in the construction program are going to work for them in a number of different areas; they will have initial certifications that they can use in a lot of different sectors. Mechatronics is computer or robotic assisted manufacturing; which is starting to be used in a lot of different areas – including potash mining.

Vice President Vest stated to the group that because we are small and because we are rural – when we look at programs for workforce development; we try to look for things that have the potential to cross with a lot of different areas, where students have skills that are portable that they can maybe take from one industry to another. He also stated to the group that the college brought back the Law Enforcement Academy this year. Stuart Bishop, who is our Public Safety and Information Officer, told the College Board that half of his students that will complete the program have already been hired. Captain Parks stated that was true, he said the program started out with 25 students and they now have 13; he stated that there is always about a 50% attrition rate. Vice President Vest stated that we have already seen a demand for the Law Enforcement Academy. So again, it's just like what we see with the power plant and welding programs – if students see a job at the end of the line, we've got a lot of demand for it. Mr. Reilly asked if they could use the same training at the academy to help with the Arizona Border Patrol. Captain Parks stated the once the students complete the academy they will be state certified police officers; border patrol are federally certified.

President Swarthout stated to the group that there are two areas where they could really help the college. One is in the area of Pell Grants; these are federal student grants to go to college. The restrictions on students with Pell Grants are increasing. Students can no longer go to summer school on a Pell Grant. Pell Grants used to be based exclusively on how many credits you took; they keep shrinking the number of credits you can take on a Pell Grant; and now they have moved to a semester approach. That impacts students in rural poor areas who can't go to school full-time. As you talk to people in the community; the more students are aware of those tightening restrictions on the Pell Grant, they need to come and talk to us so we can advise them carefully on how they use the Pell Grant. Vice President Vest stated that NPC dispersed \$4.1 million in Pell Grants this year; five years ago we paid out \$2 million with the thought that we would never break that threshold. So it's really driven by the overall decline in people's ability to pay; more and more people are qualifying for Pell because of their inability to pay.

President Swarthout stated that we also need help on the changes to GED testing. Vice President Vest stated that GED has been a paper and pencil exam; relatively cheap. Pearson Testing Services acquired the full rights to do the GED testing beginning January 2014. The test will be a computer based test only and the price will at least double; we don't have a finalized price yet. Vice President Vest stated that NPC has two concerns on this. In January 2014 any work that anyone has done on their GED will become invalid, unless Pearson changes their mind very quickly on what the rules are. Presently there are about 700 students in the county who have taken the GED and only partially completed it; there are different content areas and you have to pass them all. If they don't come back and finish up their partial completion by the end of December – they will have to start over with the Pearson computer based test, with a different curriculum and pay twice as much. He also stated that GED is not Pell Grant eligible because to become Pell eligible; you have to have a high school diploma or GED. Vice President Vest stated that one of NPC's biggest concerns is that we're going to have to not just teach people the

content of the GED – we're going to have to teach people to get comfortable doing high stakes testing. A lot of people don't have access to a computer and the only time they can use one is when they go to a public library or come to NPC. He stated to the group that if they know anyone who needs to get their GED that we are doubling up on the number of exams for the next nine months, please get those students into NPC before the test changes because we really don't know what the test environment is going to look like after January 1st, right now we have a high pass rate.

Dr. Rishal asked if we had some brochures that she could pass out. Vice President Vest stated that we are working on the brochures and he will get them to Ms. Tyler once completed to distribute. Dr. Rishal stated that at every well check-up she does, she always asks kids what their future goals are and what they are doing in school.

Vice President Hatch stated to the group that the new skill center is a little behind schedule at this point; but assured we would be ready for fall classes. He stated that we did receive a grant for our Mechatronics program. Vice President Vest stated that the grant is a TACCCT grant that is different sectors of the energy industry; coal, fire, nuclear, everyone is involved. The grant is a \$13.8 million grant statewide. Part of it went to purchase the mechatronics equipment that will be in the new skill center; and the rest of it goes to what is called stackable credentials, we can use the grant in all of the workforce development programs that we run.

The Mechatronics program will help students in the IMO program with the instrumentation and controls. Mr. Reilly stated that is his biggest gap because there is not a lot of automated industry in Arizona. The biggest industry would be the power plant and potash mines.

Mr. Reilly asked if NPC still show the same percentages of male and female students as you see with state colleges. President Swarhout stated that nationally; the balance of gender is heavily female. Mr. Reilly said that he struggles with getting more females into the trades; in engineering and management. He stated that females don't think that is a viable income for them. He stated that most of his guys at Cholla Power Plant are making between \$80,000 and \$90,000 a year and the management people are above that. President Swarhout stated that in the power plant and welding programs there are very few women coming in. Ms. Sample stated that she thinks it might take a woman communicating this to the younger generation of females. She stated that her daughter was in the welding program; and she loved it, but everyone around her told her she needed to do something else. Mr. Reilly stated that the high school counselors need to help get the message out by telling them that they need post-secondary education. Dr. Rishal stated that she asks kids about college, and she encourages their parents about talking to their children about college. She stated that as far as the gender gap that the college and industries need to get to the pre-teen kids. Mr. Reilly stated that he sees kids coming out of the IMO program from NAVIT and NPC; and there are not a lot of women. He stated that he has 266 employees and out of that he has two women that work as craft personnel and six that work in administration; and they are all young. Ms. Sample stated that she thinks the NAVIT program is very helpful, because they

have the experience and it is easier for an employer to place them. She stated that at QK, Inc. she has people that come in and say they have experience and she puts them to work; but they can't do the job.

Ms. Smith stated that there needs to be communication between high school girls and high school counselors about college. She stated that there was an organization in Phoenix called Junior Achievements; they bused kids into their working facility and they do a mock city. Kids need to learn early on about different jobs, salary ranges and what classes they need to take to achieve their career path. She stated that local businesses should hold a one day event to talk to kids; Mr. Reilly stated that he is available.

Ms. Reyes asked why this all couldn't be pulled together at high school freshman orientation, why couldn't representatives for local industry go in and speak to the students about what post-secondary classes are needed for a student to go to work in a particular industry, so that when they meet with their high school counselors they have some idea of what classes they need to be taking in high school to be able to work in a particular industry. Ms. Tyler stated to the group that NPC does offer College 101 nights for parents and students and a financial aid representative is available to answer questions; and they can start as early as their freshman year.

President Swarthout asked how NPC could get more diversity into trade programs; she stated that it is hard to get students who are interested in science and math. Vice President Vest stated that NPC may have made history four years ago, in that we turned a \$1.5 million dollar science foundation grant back over to the science foundation because we couldn't recruit enough students to run the program, we need to get students interested in science and math. NPC is increasing the Kids College program, because studies show that the earlier kids are on a college campus, the more open and less fearful they are to go to college when the time comes. You have to sneak the science and the math in, he stated to the group that the new faculty in construction for NPC taught two kids' classes last summer, and he loved it, they built bird houses. This summer they are building bird houses for the Game and Fish Department. Dr. Rishal stated that she had not heard of Kids College and asked for brochures for that as well. The classes for Kids College will be from one day to two week classes for kids eight to fourteen.

Mr. Traver stated to the group that at the Petrified Forest, they hire people to work and within a couple of years they are gone off to other parks where they make more money. Captain Parks said they have the same problem with retention as well.

Mr. Reilly asked if NPC had computer students who could intern; he needs someone who can convert computer documents. Vice President Vest referred him to Jeremy Raisor, NPC's Career Services Director; he manages internships.

President Swarthout stated that the welding students had constructed the trash cans along the Deuce of Clubs in Show Low; and they are gorgeous and the students did an outstanding job. Captain Parks stated to the group that he is also with the Kiwanis Club here in Holbrook; and

they might be able to use students to help with some projects around town that the Kiwanis are involved with.

Mr. Reilly stated that at the Four Corners plant they will be shutting down units one, two, and three. He stated that there is going to be some equipment that APS may be able to donate to NPC; he will check with the corporate office.

President Swarhout stated to the group that our programs did amazing at Skills USA. She stated that NPC received thirteen medals and Vice President Vest stated that two students from NPC will be going to Nationals. In addition, President Swarhout stated to the group that NPC took the top three places in job interviewing skills at the Skills USA competition.

Mr. Wilson stated to the group that he is glad that NPC is here and for everything we are doing; he stated that he is impressed with the academics and the types of hands-on training they provide.

President Swarhout concluded the meeting stating that NPC is putting more focus on the career and technical division – because that is what our communities need right now but it costs a lot of money to run these programs.

President Swarhout stated to the group that Ms. Tyler would be e-mailing all of them a short on-line survey to fill out and if there were any questions they forgot to ask or suggestions they may have, they can add them on the survey.

President Swarhout and Ms. Tyler thanked everyone for taking the time to come to the community outreach and for all of their input.

Kathy McPherson

NPC – PDC

Note taker