



STEP UP TO THE FUTURE

The word 'FUTURE' is rendered in large, white, bold letters. Each letter contains a different image: 'F' shows a microscope, 'U' shows a person working with electronic equipment, 'T' shows a person working with electronic equipment, 'U' shows a person working with electronic equipment, 'R' shows a person in a blue lab coat, and 'E' shows a person in a blue lab coat.

Executive Summary

Feasibility Study Overview

The Central Community College Foundation and its consultant Tom Paulson Consulting (TPC) conducted a feasibility study during the period of May 6 - May 10 to seek the counsel of business, industry and community leaders on whether Central Community College should launch a major gifts campaign for Columbus and the surrounding area, and, if so, which initiatives would best serve the needs of the region. TPC conducted 60 interviews for the study. There were also 87 individuals who participated in a community summit.

Economic and Workforce Challenges

Three major economic and workforce concerns in the community were identified:

- Significant workforce shortage within the Columbus region. Lack of affordable housing further exasperates this challenge.
- The area has suffered from recent flooding. While the recovery from the disaster has started, it will be a slow process.
- Lack of adequate retail makes attracting new residents difficult.

Economic Opportunities

Study participants also identified economic opportunities for Columbus, with the following three items emerging as most important:

- Increase affordable housing to help grow the community and the workforce.
- Expanding and increasing industry, entrepreneurship and healthcare will help to provide more economic opportunities.
- Flooding has negatively impacted the economy, “but the rebuilding of roads, bridges and infrastructure will create economic opportunities.”



Findings of the Feasibility Study

The study found a significant majority of participants believe Central Community College is worthy of support:

- 93% of respondents are very familiar or familiar with CCC.
- 89% of respondents are favorable toward the CCC Board of Governors.
- 79% of respondents are favorable toward the CCC Foundation Board of Directors.
- 84% of respondents are favorable toward the administration, staff and faculty at CCC-Columbus.
- 94% of respondents are favorable toward the proposed major gifts campaign.
- 97% of respondents are favorable toward establishing a \$500,000 endowment for student scholarship support and future technology upgrades.
- 90% of respondents were favorable toward conducting a capital campaign.
- 77% believe the college will reach or exceed the \$3.5M campaign goal.
- 85% believe the proposed campaign schedule is well-advised.
- 95% of respondents indicated they or their company would be willing to make a financial contribution to the campaign.



Summary

Central Community College’s presence in Columbus has contributed to the growth and development of the region’s education system. Respondents in this study appear to strongly agree with the college administration and Board of Governors that the Center for Science and Technology project is a priority in order for CCC to continue to further contribute to the growth of this area within the region and allow for CCC-Columbus to remain competitive in the science and technology areas.

While this study identifies challenges for CCC-Columbus, it indicates extremely strong support in the community through a major gifts campaign to renovate and expand the existing science and technology building. Support also exists for a scholarship and technology funding initiative.

Strengths

Community members participating in the study identified these strengths for the Columbus Campus:

- Delivers “highly-skilled workers for high-demand positions” allowing students to be employed immediately following graduation.
- Works with business and industry to customize training and develop programs needed in the 25-county service area.
- Employs strong leadership that ensures the quality of education is competitive. Leadership strives to keep tuition and fees as some of the lowest in the state.
- Offers “ a wide variety of programs taught by quality faculty” that provide students with the personal attention gained through low student to faculty ratios.

Opportunities

The study identified the following areas of improvement for CCC-Columbus:

- Increase the visibility of campus through public relations and marketing emphasizing the return on investment of a two-year degree.
- Develop and conduct regular assessments of constituents to keep on track with industry needs.
- Become more proactive in keeping pace with technology by promoting faculty development and innovative collaboration.
- Pursue opportunities for increased academic programing.
- Expand flexibility of class schedules by increasing time frames classes are offered.



For more information contact:

Dean Moors
CCC Foundation Executive Director
Campaign Manager
(402) 460-2153
dmoors@cccneb.edu

Campaign Management Initiatives

Participants are very positive toward the two initiatives proposed by the college for a major gifts campaign.

- 94% of respondents are favorable toward the Center for Science and Technology initiative. Respondents indicated the expansion is critical in continuing to provide competitive quality education in the STEM area.
- 97% are overwhelmingly favorable toward the scholarship and technology upgrade endowment initiative, believing that “providing scholarships and on-going technology upgrades is an essential component of a forward-thinking institution.”

Recommendations

As a result of the overwhelmingly positive answers in the study, Tom Paulson Consulting recommends Central Community College initiate an 18-month major gifts campaign. Other recommendations are:

- Set a working goal of \$3 million in cash, three to five-year pledges, grants, contracts and planned gifts for the construction and equipment, and \$500,000 toward scholarships and technology upgrades.
- Select and appoint 10-member leadership team.
- Invest financially in a marketing and awareness campaign specific to the Columbus region in advance of, during and following the campaign to help improve the public's awareness of the CCC-Columbus campus and its story.

Campaign Strategy

To further enhance CCC's ability to achieve goals of a major gifts campaign, Tom Paulson Consulting recommends CCC address the following common interviewee concerns during the planning, awareness and solicitation phases of the campaign.

- Increase marketing efforts and broaden outreach to enhance awareness of the opportunities CCC offers the region and its students and help to “tell its story.”
- Develop a strong case for private-sector support that demonstrates a solid return on donor investment.
- Contend with issues surrounding property tax increases, flooding aftermath, potential downturn in the agricultural industry, and other competing projects in the area.
- Cultivate strong campaign leaders and volunteers representing a broad range of community and industry interests including diversity.
- Clarify and address frequently asked questions and identify projected or anticipated outcomes.
- Prepare a detailed campaign plan.

Center for Science and Technology

