President’s Message

I have worked at Moraine Valley Community College since December 1986, and in my almost four decades, I have watched hundreds of faculty and staff come and go. Oftentimes, I thought a particular person would be difficult to replace, but that simply has not been the case. And that’s because we have a history of hiring the best people, ultimately creating a strong workforce that is innovative and enthusiastic.

I am particularly proud of our current faculty and staff, who have not allowed a global pandemic to slow them down. Instead, they have collaborated in new ways, relied upon each other to become experts and share their knowledge, and been a support system through innumerable ups and downs. Their commitment to their craft is inspiring and has kept our students on track to earning a college credential.

And they didn’t just “do enough” to get by. As usual, they did it the “Moraine Valley way,” going the extra mile to create virtual programs and support students to the utmost extent. Their level of excellence has continued to be recognized nationally and locally. The number of awards presented to our faculty and staff continues to amaze me.

I applaud each one of them for always bringing their best and for keeping Moraine Valley a world-class institution of higher learning.

Sylvia M. Jenkins
College President

Jenkins named regional Pacesetter

Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, president, received the 2021 Pacesetter of the Year Award from District 3 of the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) at the district’s annual conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The award recognizes a community college president or CEO who has demonstrated special leadership and support in college communications and marketing. Each of NCMPR’s seven districts chooses a regional winner who then competes for the national award presented in March at the national conference.

Jenkins’ nomination highlighted her accomplishments on the national, state and local levels as well as how she has significantly positioned and advanced both Moraine Valley and community colleges in general, the many ways she garners support from the college community, and how she supports marketing and public relations practices at the college and NCMPR.

Her support of Moraine Valley’s Marketing and Communications staff who belong to NCMPR has allowed the college to shine on the district and national stages. Many staff members have presented at conferences, won awards, written articles for the organization’s publications and coordinated judges for its awards programs.

In accepting her award, Jenkins said, “This is truly a wonderful surprise and very humbling. I am fortunate to have such a talented and committed team at Moraine Valley. It is because of the work they do we are able to continue to do the work community colleges were founded to do. Thank you very much for this honor.”
Jenkins wins state Advocacy Award

Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, president, received the 2021 Advocacy Award from the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA). The ICCTA Executive Committee created this special award in 2006 to honor individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in advocating for the needs of students and the Illinois community college system.

“Sylvia has kept us informed, networked with allies and adversaries, and constantly reminded of why we are part of a unified community college movement,” said Jon Looney, ICCTA president.

Jenkins has served in dual leadership roles this year: as president of Moraine Valley and as chair of the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents. She guided the council through a difficult but productive year, helping set the agenda for systemwide discussions on federal stimulus funding, and expanding MAP grants for short-term certificates and community college baccalaureate degrees. Her ability to lead during a crisis was especially evident this past year when Illinois community colleges were forced to adapt overnight to a virtual working and learning environment.

“I am grateful for the recognition especially because the award highlights the great partnership of presidents and trustees working toward the same goal of advocating on behalf of our students and the communities we serve,” Jenkins said.

Assistant to the president/board liaison wins state award

The Illinois Community College Trustees Association presented Dawn Fredrikson, senior administrative assistant to the president and the board liaison, with the 2021 Professional Board Staff Member Award.

Fredrikson has worked in her current role since 2012, when Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, college president, took the position and asked her to move to the office with her.

“I needed to have someone by my side who I could trust and depend on to get work done and get it done in an exemplary way. Dawn accepted my offer, and our partnership is working wonderfully,” Jenkins said. “I see her as an equal partner in this job. I trust her totally. She’s very professional and confidential.”

Fredrikson has been transcribing the board minutes since 1987, but officially became the board liaison in 2014. Joe Murphy, a trustee for over 20 years, said Fredrikson’s experience and expertise is highly valued by the board.

“Dawn is quiet and kind but takes her work extremely seriously as she is meticulous in her documentation of the board’s discussions and votes. It has been a pleasure to have such a pleasant and professional secretary assist all the trustees,” he said.

Fredrikson was honored to receive the award. “In 33 years serving as board recorder and the last seven years as board liaison, I have always tried to do my best on behalf of the board and the college. To have that work recognized with this award is very special and something I will always treasure,” she said.
Equity Academy welcomes first scholars

The college introduced a new Equity Academy in the fall during which 24 scholars from various college departments attend monthly workshops on diversity, equity and inclusion topics and complete an action research project. A second tier of 70 employees who wanted to join the sessions but not complete a research project as a scholar is called “allies.” The academy runs through fall 2022.

Participants complete modules that feature a guest speaker, short quizzes and related resources. Some of the topics focus on foundations of race and racism, emotional intelligence, micro aggressions and unconscious bias.

“We hope the academy will be the beginning of people engaging in critical discussions surrounding these topics to ultimately create more equitable and inclusive spaces for each other and our students,” said co-chair, Dr. Sadya Khan, director of Institutional Research and Planning.

The idea for the Equity Academy came about when the Partnership for College Completion requested grant proposals for funds to help advance equity efforts on college campuses. The college was awarded a $12,000 ILEA Catalyst Grant to set up the academy and to support additional DEI-related professional development efforts.

Equity Academy scholars also will explore a research-based project relating to their interests and responsibilities. Ideas include examining policies and practices in areas such as the Student Code of Conduct and Library cataloging, exploring the underrepresentation of men in health care career programs, accessibility, and creating safe and inclusive classrooms for all students. After completing their research projects, scholars will share their findings with colleagues.

College partners with food depository on workforce training

Moraine Valley has partnered with the Greater Chicago Food Depository to create the Certified Logistics Warehouse Technician Program, which trains individuals with low skills, low literacy and extreme barriers to employment for entry- to mid-level jobs in the warehouse and supply chain industries.

Participants in the program learn warehouse and distribution skills in a classroom through curriculum created by the college and receive hands-on practice in the food bank’s warehouse. The Food Depository also trains students in soft skills and work readiness, and helps them complete OSHA certification and forklift training within their own work environment. Upon completion of the program, participants are placed with employment partners for an externship and receive assistance finding employment.

Food Depository staff reached out to the college upon discovering it was one of the few, if not the only, nearby community college that offered Certified Logistics Associate (CLA) and Certified Logistics Technician (CLT) certificate programs that include professional certification training from the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC).

“The Greater Chicago Food Depository’s internal operations are a very sophisticated supply chain management organization. Our certificate programs teach those exact skills. It just made sense for us to work together,” said Steve Pappageorge, executive director of Community Education, Workforce Development and Government Relations at Moraine Valley, who oversees the two noncredit training programs.

The inaugural 10-week program began in April 2021 with 11 students, 10 of whom earned both MSSC certifications and one student earning just the CLA.

“We had really solid results with the first cohort,” said Pappageorge.

The next cohort, planned for spring 2022, will again focus on nontraditional students in underserved communities, specifically people with English as a second language, women, returning citizens and those with other extreme barriers to employment.

“The missions for both the college and the Greater Chicago Food Depository are similar. It’s about making yourself self-sufficient. This is a win-win-win for the organizations and the participants. You can see a lot of these individuals may not have had this level of success in their life. For them, it’s a morale boost, a personal achievement,” Pappageorge said.

Student Rachel Tchamko operates a forklift during training in the Greater Chicago Food Depository warehouse.
Cyclone Athletics celebrates 45 years

Sometimes life is all fun and games, particularly for Cyclone Athletics, which is celebrating its 45th anniversary. Sports at Moraine Valley officially started in 1976. In 1982, a contest determined the athletes would be called the Marauders; another contest in 1998 changed the name to the Cyclones. Over the last four decades, thousands of athletes have helped grow the current 12 sports programs into the well-respected teams they are.

Men's basketball has flourished to include nine conference championships, six NJCAA Region IV championships and trips to nationals, with a runners-up finish in 2013. Women’s basketball boasts 10 conference championships, four region titles and trips to nationals, and 10 NJCAA Division II All-Americans. Volleyball has seven conference championships, eight region championships and several trips to nationals as well. In total, Athletics has 28 NJCAA All-Americans, 52 teams that have competed at nationals, 37 region championships and 74 conference championships.

In 2005, the men's soccer team was the first college from the U.S. invited to participate in the World Interuniversity Games tournament in Rotterdam, Holland. They competed abroad two more times (to Germany and Italy) for the annual event. The volleyball team also competed in Ireland in 2006 and joined the soccer team in Italy in 2009.

In 2018, the Athletics Hall of Fame was created to honor student-athletes, coaches, teams and contributors who have impacted the college.

“I’m excited to recognize 45 amazing years of athletics at Moraine Valley. Our athletes and coaches have done an unbelievable amount of work, and our department has grown to become a well-respected and well-known program across the country,” said Bill Finn, athletics director since 1983. “We’ve sent thousands of athletes to four-year universities on athletic scholarships. We also have former athletes who have been drafted or signed to professional/free agent contracts in the MLB, NBA, NFL, ABA, overseas, with the Harlem Globetrotters and more.”

Hundreds of Moraine Valley students receive scholarships each year from the Moraine Valley Foundation. Generous donors provide funds to support it throughout the year, and the Foundation hosts several events that provide participants an enjoyable time, while raising funds for this worthy cause.

The Foundation hosted its 40th annual Golf Outing at Cog Hill Golf and Country Club in September, with a goal of raising $40,000. The event sold out, and with the support of golfers, donors, sponsors and supporters, this ambitious goal was met.

The annual Halloween 5K Run/Walk attracts runners and supporters who enjoy this race because they can dress in crazy costumes such as aliens, monsters, superheroes and more. Kids also have their own Kid’s Dash and can participate in fun, Halloween-themed activities. This year’s 5K raised over $9,000, with all proceeds going to student scholarships.

Moraine Valley employees also strongly support the mission of the Foundation through the college’s Employee Giving Campaign. This year’s theme was Dreams Made Possible ‘in an Impossible Year, and employees helped make students’ dreams come true by donating over $90,000, making this the largest fundraiser of the year and breaking the record for how much money an employee giving campaign raised since campaigns began. These funds support scholarships, expand the Foundation’s Student Emergency Assistance Program and help the college in numerous additional ways.
Student Achievements

Online tutoring wins another innovation award
The Illinois Council of Community College Administrators presented Moraine Valley with its 2021 Innovation Award at its annual conference in Champaign. The college submitted its Innovation of the Year Award winner, the Online Tutoring Implementation Initiative, for this award.

On hand to accept the award were (from left) Jeffrey Carpenter, Tutoring coordinator; Dr. Pamela Haney, vice president for Academic Affairs; Kipp Cozad, manager of Tutoring and Literacy; and Kaylyn Walters, tutor. Cozad also gave an overview of the project during the awards luncheon.

“On behalf of Tutoring, thank you all for your support. We could not have achieved this award without the tremendous latitude we were given by Moraine Valley leadership to get online tutoring up and running in a very short amount of time under unprecedented circumstances,” Cozad said.

Vaccinated students receive tuition credit
The college offered one free tuition credit ($131) to eligible students who were fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Oct. 1. This one-time incentive was applied to 3,847 students.

“This incentive was designed to benefit students on their educational journey while also preserving the health and safety of our campus community,” said Dr. Sylvia Jenkins, president. “The college has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to keep our students safe. We wanted our fall classes to meet the needs of all our students and to remove as many obstacles as possible for those who wanted to get started on their college journey.”

ASL students sign at White Sox game
Students from the American Sign Language program served as interpreters on Deaf Awareness Night at the Chicago White Sox game last July.
Nursing students engage in act of kindness project

Students from a nursing clinical practicum positively impacted their community in various ways through “The act of kindness” project. This course is part of the pediatric experience for third semester students. The goal of the project is to create community awareness, particularly in the pediatric population, of how a simple act can positively impact others.

Bridget McCormick, of Orland Park, went to her local park district to talk to a small group of adolescents with special needs about oral hygiene and the importance of going to the dentist. Filomena Paolella, of Oak Forest, went to Edison School in Stickney to do vision screenings for a kindergarten class. Two parents were told to take their children to an optometrist because of vision issues discovered in the test.

“The students reported a sense of purpose. They learned that being a nurse is not just caring for the sick, but it’s also about health promotion and disease prevention in our community,” said Dr. Katrina Escarilla, Moraine Valley nursing instructor. “The students did a pretty good job making the activities interesting, so the kids remained engaged the whole time. I am so proud of these students.”

Staff Achievements

The National Academic Advising Association awarded a Certificate of Merit in the Outstanding Advising Award - Academic Advising Administrator category to Debby Blatzer, assistant dean of Advising and Counseling and New Student Orientation. Blatzer has led the Academic Advising Center for the last 12 years and New Student Orientation for the last five.

The Illinois Academic Advising Association awarded Dr. Kim Golk, academic advisor, with the Outstanding Advisor Award and Sumeet Singh, academic advisor, with the Outstanding Advising Administrator Award.

The National Academic Advising Association awarded a Certificate of Merit in the Outstanding Advising Award - Primary Advising Role category to Anna Chmiel, academic advisor. She began at Moraine Valley as an adjunct advisor in 2012 and became a full-time advisor in 2018. She also teaches College 101.

Terra Jacobson, dean of the Learning Resource Center, won the 2021 Valerie J. Wilford Scholarship Grant for Library Education from the Illinois Library Association. The award is granted to those in pursuit of education in librarianship.
Marketing and Communications won nine awards in the annual Education Digital Marketing Awards, recognizing the best education websites, digital content, e-communications, mobile and social media.

**GOLD**
- Athletic Promotion – [2021 Spring/Summer Sports Report](#)
- Digital Video (over 2 minutes) – [Workforce Custom Training](#)
- Email Campaign – [Student Vaccine Video Campaign](#)
- Misc. Interactive Media – [Golf Outing Invitation](#)

**SILVER**
- Digital Video Ad – [Explore Summer at Moraine Valley](#)
- Misc. Interactive Media – [Foundation Gala Invitation](#)

**BRONZE**
- Digital Publication (single) – [July 2021 Valley View](#)
- Digital Video (over 2 minutes) – [Women’s Basketball vs. Alumnae Game](#)
- Digital Video (under 2 minutes) – [Moraine Valley offers Tutoring Online](#)

The college’s comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020, qualifies for the Government Finance Officers Association’s Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.