

Dr. Robert R. Jones Introductory Comments  
Collective Negotiations Session, June 8, 2007

Colleagues,

We've just experienced an intense peer review process for our SACS visit. We were held to high standards—higher than any previous. And we prevailed brilliantly, but not without quantum leaps in a short amount of time in the areas of learning outcomes, student assessment and continuous improvement.

Through a high degree of collaboration and intense mutual support exhibited by both our faculty and our administration, we were able to achieve many things. None of us want to lose this momentum, much less the collaboration. This momentum can enable us to reach the full potential of Edison College, its faculty, its staff, and its programs. I credit the faculty, the faculty leadership, and the College's administration for this evolution and growth. We are becoming a true learning organization. We know our business. We cooperatively designed a program that puts academics at the core of our agenda. Now, this is how we get things done. We are guided by this core mission for continual renewal, and it will serve to validate our thinking for each twist and turn in the road that lies ahead.

If our negotiating teams can continue this momentum and demonstrate a high level of mutual support and collaboration, then we will be able to formalize these changes, and they will transcend us all. During the collective negotiations process, I believe we will make significant progress in faculty shared governance and thus self-governance, reaffirming the responsibilities of the faculty in the areas of academic freedom, curriculum design, learning assessment, peer review, professional development, and evaluation. At the same time, I believe that institutional governance and the management of the total learning environment cannot be delegated beyond those who are both accountable and the fiduciary responsibility for managing the organization.

We should never take any of our progress for granted. But rather, we should sustain our effort until subsequent generations of faculty and administrators emulate what we have accomplished. This is my goal for this organization and for this upcoming collective negotiation. My vision is that you'll be able to mark this day as a turning point when Edison College emerged as a more contemporary model of a strong, self-reliant community college.

Thank you.