

# TCCTA MESSENGER

A Publication of the TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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## Community College Day “Tells Our Story”

Hard times on campus created by legislative under-funding served to unite all constituencies of Texas community colleges on February 17, for “Community College Day” at the Capitol.

The event, a combined effort of TCCTA, the Texas Association of Community Colleges, and the Texas Junior College Student Government Association, was held in conjunction with the TCCTA annual convention in Austin.

Over 1,000 people from colleges all over Texas participated, including TCCTA members bused to the Capitol from the convention site, the Renaissance Austin Hotel. A “Community College Fact Sheet” was distributed to TCCTA members in the Rotunda, as educators and students visited with senators and representatives.

TCCTA lobbyist Beaman Floyd was on hand for the event, giving practical advice on how to communicate directly with lawmakers.

“Lawmakers don’t often witness such an impressive event of this nature.” Mr. Floyd said. “It is rare indeed for all the stakeholders in such a major enterprise as Texas community colleges to work together so closely and in coordination.”

“At the end of the day, I made the rounds, ask-



WORKING TOGETHER during Community College Day at the Capitol, faculty, administrators, and students meet with Governor Rick Perry (center).

ing staffers and legislators their impressions,” he added. “Without exception, they were impressed with the professionalism, courtesy, and sincerity of faculty, students, and administrators.”

“It’s the model for how such events should be conducted.”

TCCTA activities were coordinated by Legislative Committee volunteers, headed by committee chair Nancy Kral, Tomball College. Members were encouraged to attend the festivities on the Capitol grounds and listen to speakers, in addition to visiting the offices of their representatives and senators.

Speakers included Sen. Todd Staples (R-Palestine), Sen. Royce West (D-Dallas), and Rep. Peggy Hamric (R-Houston).

“I thought Community College Day at the Capitol was a tremendous success,” said Glenda Easter, El Centro College. “It was so neat to see everyone working together. I visited with the higher education liaison of Rep. Yvonne Davis (D-Dallas) and we discussed at great length the ‘proportionality’ issue.”

“I think it was very important for each of us to meet with our representatives,” said Harry Wagner, The Victoria College, “to let them know that the community college in their district is vital to the economic development of their area. We visited with Rep. Geanie Morrison (R-Victoria), chair of the Higher Education Committee.”

“We should definitely do this again in two years,” said Peter Hacker, Tarrant County College—North-east Campus. ☆

See more photos and information about

Community College Day on page 11 of this issue of the Messenger.

## Regular Session Approaches Adjournment

The clock is ticking on the closing days of the 79th Regular Session, with many vital issues for community and technical colleges still unresolved.

Although the atmosphere in the House and Senate is more collegial when compared to the notorious 2003 session, the thorny issue of public school finance continues to hold up any final resolution of the state budget for the next biennium.

Members are urged to visit the TCCTA Web site ([www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org)) often for the latest information.

A joint conference committee has been assembled to work out a compromise between the House and Senate versions of the appropriations bill.

The House version of the general appropriations bill no longer funds group health insurance for

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I contemplate the coming year as your state president, it might be appropriate first to remind ourselves of the school term just concluding and to assess our current situation.



Naturally we are all concerned about the impending results of the 79th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature and how community and technical colleges will fare. For the latest information, I urge each of you to pay close attention to the Legislative Updates sent to TCCTA

members from Austin. These are vital, timely, and authoritative messages which also contain practical advice on actions you can take, along with contact information on members of the House and Senate.

If, for any reason, you did not receive these electronic Updates, please visit the TCCTA Web site (www.tccta.org) under "Announcements" for the latest information.

As a member of the TCCTA Executive Committee over the past several years, one of the accomplishments of which I am most proud is the employment of Beaman Floyd as our professional lobbyist. This is the second Regular Session during which we have taken advantage of Mr. Floyd's services, and every day I am grateful for his vital addition to our legislative strategy. Working closely with our state office, he gives us unprecedented access to policy makers. I hope each of you will take the opportunity to meet and hear Mr. Floyd at one of our conferences if you have not already done so. You'll go away from the experience very proud of the work your association is doing to represent you.

Speaking of pride, I can't help but mention "Community College Day at the Capitol," which is discussed elsewhere in this issue of the Messenger. Anyone who participated in this event (which was held in conjunction with our annual convention in Austin) could not help but feel we made a distinct—and favorable—impression. We thank our partner organizations, the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Texas Junior College Student Government Association.

Hats off also to the TCCTA Legislative Committee, chaired by Nancy Kral, Tomball College. During "our day" at the Capitol, the group, along with Brian Dille, Odessa College, provided essential volunteer help,

giving directions and distributing valuable information to members as they arrived in the Rotunda. TCCTA provided bus transportation from the Renaissance Hotel all day during the event.

Plans are already underway for another "Community College Day" when our annual convention returns to Austin during the next Regular Session in 2007.

Now a word about the future. TCCTA retains its strong membership and sound financial footing. This will continue. As with all professional organizations these days, however, we face challenges. The task is to view these challenges as opportunities.

This coming year, we intend to concentrate as never before on recruiting "new" members and leaders for TCCTA. The demographic tidal wave of Baby Boomer retirements attracting so much attention in the media these days will affect our schools—and thus our profession—profoundly.

Fortunately community and technical colleges are growing in most parts of the state. We owe it to the next generation of professionals to educate them, individually and collectively, on the benefits, responsibilities—and sheer enjoyment—of participation in TCCTA.

To help us with this ongoing project, our tax-exempt foundation, the Foundation for Professional Excellence in the Community College, is busy seeking resources for bold new programs. We are grateful for the leadership of board co-chairs Patsy Lemaster, Amarillo College, and Mike Clark, Kingwood College.

I'll have more to say on the future over the next few months. Whether you are teaching this summer or not, please stay "connected" to TCCTA. I truly believe good things lie ahead.

Patsy Allen

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## Legislative Resolutions Community College Day

### HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 398

WHEREAS, Community colleges play an increasingly important role in higher education in the State of Texas, and on February 17, 2005, a delegation of more than 1,000 Texas community college students are converging at the State Capitol; and

WHEREAS, Leaders of the Texas Junior College Student Government Association, including President Cal Pifer, are being joined by community college honors students, members of the Texas Community College Teachers Association, and members of the Texas Association of Community Colleges to discuss the essential contributions their schools make to the state; and

WHEREAS, The total annual enrollment for Texas community and technical colleges exceeds one million students, accounting for more than 44 percent of the state's postsecondary student population and the largest sector of higher education; last year alone, enrollment increased by 15 percent; and

WHEREAS, The community colleges of Texas clearly serve a vital function in the educational and economic development of the state, and it is a pleasure to welcome these outstanding students, teachers, and administrators to Austin; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 79th Texas Legislature hereby recognize February 17, 2005, as Community College Student Day at the Capitol and extend to all the participants best wishes for a memorable and productive visit.

### SENATE RESOLUTION No. 144

WHEREAS, The Senate of the State of Texas is pleased to recognize February 17, 2005, as Community College Student Day at the Capitol and extend a warm welcome to community college students today; and

WHEREAS, Community colleges provide affordable, quality higher education and play an essential role in educational opportunities and economic development across Texas; and

WHEREAS, Participants in Community College Student Day include: President Cal Pifer of Kingwood College and other leaders of the Texas Junior College Student Government Association; students from Texas community college honors programs; representatives of the Texas Gulf Coast Consortium of Community Colleges; and members of the Texas Community College Teachers Association and the Texas Association of Community Colleges; and

WHEREAS, Community colleges constitute the largest segment of higher education enrollment in Texas, and their enrollment increases every year, including a 15 percent increase last year; community colleges accommodate nontraditional students and offer affordable educational alternatives for students to pursue higher education degrees; and

WHEREAS, Community colleges play a vital role in the higher education system of this state, and they are indeed worthy of legislative recognition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, hereby commend our state's community colleges for the many contributions they make to their communities and to Texas and extend best wishes to them on this important day; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared as an expression of high regard from the Texas Senate.

## TCCTA Supports Retirement Plans

TCCTA representatives appeared before the House Committee on Pensions and Investments, supporting bills intended to enhance benefits under the Texas Teacher Retirement System and Optional Retirement Program.

The association expressed support for HB 346, introduced by Rep. Juan Escobar (D-Kingsville), which would increase the state's rate of contribution to TRS to seven percent of payroll in Fiscal Year 2006 and to eight percent in 2007. For several years appropriations have provided for only a six percent state contribution, the constitutional minimum. If HB 346 passes, the appropriations bill would still have to provide the revenue for higher rates.

The TRS fund remains very healthy, especially compared to similar funds in other states. However, raising state contributions would help mitigate long term funding difficulties and presumably allow for future benefits enhancements and *ad hoc* increases for retirees.

TCCTA Lobbyist Beaman Floyd testified in favor of a trio of bills related to ORP on April 14. Each was introduced by Rep. Craig Eiland (D-Texas City), who chairs the Pensions and Investments Committee.

HB 2945 would allow (but not require) higher education institutions to expand ORP eligibility to some types of employees who are not currently eligible. The new categories must be based on "the competitive labor market requirements of the institution of higher education." The Coordinating Board would have authority to review and issue rules.

HB 3125 would allow (but not require) schools to pay into the ORP accounts of retirees who return to work.

HB 3126 would enact new standards of conformity for vendors and investment advisors who issue ORP contracts to participants on campus.

For the current status of bills, visit "State Agencies" at [www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org). ☆

To find the latest about  
"Tracked" bills,  
Legislative Updates, and  
"Who represents me?"  
visit the TCCTA Web site  
at [www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org)  
under "State Agencies."

### TCCTA 2005 Legislative Program

1. Support restoring community and technical college formula funding as requested by the Texas Association of Community Colleges.
2. Support restoring ERS funding to improve health insurance benefits for all covered community and technical college employees.
3. Support efforts to ensure adequate funding and benefits for community and technical college employees and retirees in TRS and ORP.

Approved by TCCTA Executive Committee,  
October 15, 2004.

# “Community Colleges Are Essential”

by **Arthur Vargas**  
Austin Community College  
Texas Regional President  
Phi Theta Kappa



**Arthur Vargas**

“Our voices shared a  
common goal.”

*[Editor's Note: Following are remarks by Arthur Vargas, Texas Regional President of Phi Theta Kappa, at the 58th Annual Convention of the Texas Community College Teachers Association.]*

I would like to thank the Texas Community College Teachers Association Executive Committee, staff, and college representatives for inviting me to join you this evening.

I bring you greetings from Phi Theta Kappa of Texas, including the regional officers, district and regional coordinators, and the advisory board.

It is great to be surrounded by fellow Texans. Many of you may not be from Texas originally, but you know you are in Texas, if:

- there is a Dairy Queen in every town with a population of 1000 or more
- your local newspaper requires six pages for sports coverage
- your classes are cancelled because of inclement weather.

The weather did not prevent us from canceling class today. In fact, we had a Texas-sized classroom at the State Capitol. As you know, everything is bigger in Texas.

History instructors noted the historic event of Texas Community College Day that took place. Math instructors were heard muttering about the probability of record-breaking numbers. Speech instructors helped students overcome their fear of public speaking. Government students participated in civic engagement.

Today over a thousand college presidents, faculty, and students joined to address our state officials and leaders. Our voices shared a common goal—to increase awareness about the importance of our Texas community and junior colleges. *Community Colleges Are Essential.*

Approximately 1,100 American community and technical colleges serve more than 10 million students annually. Nearly two-thirds of the nation's freshmen start at community colleges; Texas alone contributes to the vast number of students, with 50 community college districts. Community colleges enroll 74 percent of the freshmen and sophomores in Texas public higher education. Seventy-six percent of minority freshmen and sophomores attending public institutions of higher education attend Texas public community colleges.

These students almost exactly mirror the ethnic diversity of Texas, making these schools crucial to the success of the “Closing the Gaps” initiative.

It is important to recognize the contributions

that minorities and women have made in education. Two-year college students reflect greater diversity of race, gender, and culture than students at most four-year institutions.

The goals of Texas community and technical colleges are: (1) to meet or exceed the standard of excellence; (2) to ensure quality educational programs and services, and (3) to promote student diversity, growth, and success.

In addition to offering a wide range of educational programs, community colleges provide career and personal counseling, learning and tutorial centers, and other services needed by a student body. Job placement and career counseling are among the most widely used of these services.

There is little doubt that community colleges are making a difference for individuals and industry. *Community Colleges are Essential.*

Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Study Topic, “Popular Culture: Shaping and Reflecting Who We Are,” allows us to explore a combination of factors that establish a world of popular culture, some of which include entertainment, media, technology, sports, politics, and history.

Whether it is “his” or “her” story, the 58th Annual Texas Community College Teachers Association Annual Convention has brought us all here together to “Tell OUR Story.”

I am one voice in a sea of many—a representative for students across Texas—and it is important that I share my story with you.

My story began a couple of years ago when I decided to come back to school. Beginning college later in life was quite overwhelming. I was rather apprehensive, considering that I had not stepped foot into a classroom in almost ten years. I weighed my options of attending a four year institution or community college. Fortunately, for me, I am part of the community college family.

I recall a conversation I had with an instructor; he had inquired about my work schedule so he could coordinate a study group for our class. I had recently lost my job through a company downsizing, so my response to him was, “Well, I am just a student.” He replied, “You are much more than just a student.” His words still resound in my head. His reply changed my life, and allowed me to reach for my full potential.

Community colleges offer a more personalized experience, with smaller classes and professors who often take the time to get to know students by name. They are sincere about ensuring a student's quality of education.

Bill Beattie once said, “The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think—rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with thoughts of other men.”

Through education, we can broaden our horizons, challenge the beliefs of others, and develop an appreciation for lifelong learning.

There is a new catchphrase going around, and the term is “service learning.” The concept combines service and learning objectives so students will gain experience in self-reflection, self-discovery, and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge. Service learning creates a powerful positive impact on students’ attitudes and behaviors through civic engagement, education, and life skills.

Service learning also offers opportunities for students to band together in times of tragedy. Students embrace the importance of service and continue to work to rebuild and unite various communities. Through service learning, students can also discover their leadership abilities.

From a shy and timid fellow who sat in the back of his classes, to standing before you as a representative for all Texas community college students, my story continues.

I have become an inspiration to my peers and have made a commitment to servant leadership. I have gained confidence in myself, and I have attained growth from my experience with Phi Theta Kappa. Phi Theta Kappa allows students to achieve a higher level of success. Students are more likely to get involved with their chapter, college, and community.

I certainly did not make it here alone. My advisors, Mary Kohls and Walter Cooper, offered their guidance. My peers believed in my leadership abilities, and my instructors have improved my learning skills. I have witnessed first hand the tremendous relationships that evolve among college faculty and staff with students. There are many opportunities to assist students in reaching their full potential, and there is an even greater chance to increase their ability to succeed.

**N**ow it is your story that needs to be heard. The story of the instructor who unlocks her door for a student who arrives one minute after her conference time is up. The story of the professor who will be home late for dinner so he can get his grading done. The story of an unpaid advisor who stands by a club or organization. The story of the college president who talks about his student being selected for the All Texas Academic Team. And, most importantly, the gathering of the 58th Texas Community College Teachers Association.

Each of you has a personal story. Each of you wakes up in the morning to go to work at a community college somewhere in this great state. Whether you are a faculty member, staff, or college president, you are making an impact in the lives of those around you.

If people go to work or school and then straight home, opportunities will certainly pass them by. I would like to encourage you to invest in your college even further. Encourage your students to reach their full potential. Consider teaching other subjects, or think about becoming an advisor, if not for Phi Theta Kappa, perhaps another club or organization. Texas community college students will continue to gain knowledge from you. I also hope that you will gain insight from their experiences.

I am one voice in a sea of many. But together our voices can become a wide ocean of strength and courage. It is important that we continue to tell each other’s story.

As I strolled on the Capitol grounds today, I made an extra effort to ask students to tell your story.

Angelica Diaz from San Jacinto College–South, in Houston, said that her professor Julia Jay elevated her pursuit of education in English.

Students became emotional when they talked about Charlotte Twardowski, *aka* “Mrs. T,” from the North Harris Montgomery Community College District. Erica Acevedo was inspired by her to finish her education. Other students agreed she was a “mother figure” in their lives due to her overwhelming compassion.

Dustin Butler was excited to talk about Dr. Gordon Lee of Lee College. His energetic teaching has helped Dustin gain an appreciation for art and an interest in philosophy—things he would never have expected.

Benny Barrett of North Lake College stated that Dr. Aguelfo has a “matter of fact” attitude in his teaching. Benny is a realistic and compassionate person who appreciates the high quality of teaching he receives.

**I**applaud you, and on behalf of all Texas community college students, extend our gratitude and praise. The common thread that binds us all together is education and the pursuit of excellence. *Community Colleges are Essential*.

I would like to close with a quote from W.E.B. DuBois:

*Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental. The freedom to learn has been fought by bitter sacrifice. And whatever we may think of the curtailment of other civil rights, we should fight to the last ditch to keep open the right to learn, the right to have examined in our schools not only what we believe, but what we do not believe; not only what our leaders say, but what the leaders of other groups and nations, and the leaders of other centuries have said. We must insist upon this to give our children the fairness of a start which will equip them with such an array of facts and such an attitude toward truth that they can have a real chance to judge what the world is and what its greater minds have thought it might be. ☆*

“Now it is your story that needs to be heard.”

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# News Briefs and Links

## First Lady, Cabinet Secretary Promote Community Colleges

As reported in the March 1 issue of *Community College Times*, First Lady Laura Bush, speaking at the National Legislative Summit for community colleges in Washington, D.C., encouraged community colleges to expand teacher education. Two million new teachers will be needed over the next decade, she said.

"I encourage all community colleges to look for ways to expand and diversify our teaching force," Ms. Bush said. "Talk to state officials and to community leaders about new ideas for teacher recruitment and retention. Of the millions of students enrolled in community colleges, I know there are thousands of potential great teachers."

The First Lady mentioned President Bush's new initiative that includes \$125 million for dual enrollment programs in his 2006 budget. She also encouraged community colleges to reach out to those making the transition from gangs and prison. "Community college can be a beacon for these young people," she said.

Education Secretary Margaret Spellings also spoke at the summit, as well as several members of Congress, both Democrats and Republicans. Secretary Spellings said she learned about community colleges when she worked at Austin Community College in a number of positions, including in professional development and continuing education. "I learned a lot about community colleges—how responsive they can be to individual students and local employers, how they work 24/7 to meet people's needs on their own timetables," she said.

## Will Software Replace Teachers?

A report in the March 18 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* explores the highly speculative possibility of computer software replacing, not just supplementing, traditional college instruction.

The technology is ready," said John C. Miller, director of the Algebra Courseware Project at City College in New York. "It's a question of when, not if," he says flatly.

Mr. Miller delivered these remarks at Innovations 2005, the annual conference of the League for Innovation in the Community College.

Others, including at least one Texas community college faculty member attending the conference, disagreed.

Nasrin Shafai, associate professor of mathematics at Montgomery College, argued that such software is more of a threat to advanced, graduate-level courses because students in those courses are already used to working with less instruction, the article reported.

"My students need me," she said. "They need me to motivate them. A computer can't do that."

## Burnside Scholar Savors Variety of Rural School

At the 58th annual TCCTA Convention in Austin, the Charles Burnside Scholarship for Academic Excellence was awarded to Annika Jones, a sophomore at South Plains College.

Ms. Jones graduated from Sanderson High School in May 2003, salutatorian in a class of twenty. She notes, "Because Sanderson is such a small, rural West Texas community, a lot of emphasis was placed on school involvement. I was able to participate in a wide variety of academic, athletic, fine arts, and leadership activities."

She adds, "Because of this, I wanted to attend a college with similar benefits. South Plains College has provided that opportunity, as I am involved in several campus organizations."

Ms. Jones is a Campus Ambassador, a member of Phi Theta Kappa, and serves as treasurer for Delta Psi Omega. She has been a member of the Concert Choir and Ensemble and was selected to compete at the National Association of Teachers and Singers vocal competition. She was cast in the SPC theater productions of "Streetcar Named Desire" and "Arsenic and Old Lace," as well as the musical productions of "Swing!" and "Carnival."

"I have also been able to play an active role in the Baptist Student Ministries," she says. "Although my activities are an important part of my college life, my academics still hold priority."

Ms. Jones made the President's List and the Dean's List while at SPC. "I plan on continuing my education at a four year university," she says. "Although I have yet to decide on the specifics, I am leaning toward a degree in education."

The scholarship is named for Charles Burnside, Executive Director of TCCTA from 1973-2001.

## All-USA Team for Colleges Announced

The April 11 issue of *USA TODAY* featured students chosen for the 2005 All-USA Academic Team for Community Colleges. The program recognizes 60 outstanding two-year college students. First, Second, and Third Teams, each consisting of 20 members, are selected. The 20 First Team members receive stipends of \$2,500 each.

Texas students represented on the First Team are: Adele Bailey, Collin County Community College; Debra Esparza, Kingwood College; Mary Gallery, McLennan Community College; and Olga Nikiforova, Mountain View College. Second Team students from Texas schools are: Jennifer Brooks, Tyler Junior College, and Kimberly Fellner, Trinity Valley Community College. Third Team students are Joaquin Acevedo, Northeast Texas Community College, and Dawn Lassiter, North Lake College.

Phi Theta Kappa, *USA TODAY*, and the American Association of Community Colleges sponsor the program annually.



Annika Jones

## Capitol and Campus

by Beaman Floyd  
TCCTA Lobbyist



Beaman Floyd

It is difficult to provide any *current* information in this space regarding the 79th Regular Session, since circumstances are changing rapidly, here in its closing days. Please pay close attention to the TCCTA *Legislative Updates* that are sent to the membership via e-mail by the state office, and consult the Web site ([www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org)) regularly for the latest information.

This is my second legislative session as your lobbyist. I continue to be genuinely impressed with your organization, especially after meeting and working with many of you during the "Community College Day" festivities on February 17 at the Capitol.

It was also my privilege to deliver the address at your general session and banquet that evening, during your annual convention. Many of the points I make below were included in my remarks.

After "Community College Day" was concluded, I "graded your papers." During the late afternoon, I went around to many of the offices you and your colleagues had visited, sticking my head in the door, asking for a reaction. I did this, not out of idle curiosity, but because so many such gatherings at the Capitol during sessions fail to achieve their objective, to put it mildly. Sometimes "damage control" is needed after the event.

But your "Community College Day" was fantastic. Staffers and policy makers invariably commended faculty, board members, administrators, and students, for their sincerity and professionalism.

The speeches on the grounds were also great, but the most impressive activity involved your office visitations. You went in prepared with facts provided by your professional association and stated your case in a friendly, courteous manner. You stayed "on message," as the saying goes today.

In Austin we use the term "stakeholders" a great deal to describe those people potentially affected by a public policy. In your case, the principal stakeholders are community college students, faculty, administration, and board members. Your cause is highly exceptional because all the stakeholders are on the same side. This is not often the case with "interest groups" that visit the Capitol.

As you know, your legislative story can seem to be one of hardship as a perverse "reward" for excellence. Why? Simply put, the legislative leadership was elected, and re-elected, on a platform of not raising taxes to fund current services.

But I believe we have succeeded in raising the consciousness of lawmakers on the crucial role of your profession in shaping the economic future of Texas. Lawmakers are definitely hearing your collective voices. (*Ask them if they have heard of "proportionality" for community college health insurance and see what happens!*)

You have no enemies. The only thing across the table from you is scarcity. Keep working with us at TCCTA to make sure your story gets through effectively. ☆

## Legislature

(continued From page 1)

community college educators "proportionately" to reflect the state's share of financing the schools.

The Senate version phases in "proportionality" by reducing funding by 12.5 percent per year, beginning in fiscal year 2007. However, the \$13.25 million deducted from group health insurance was added to the community college formula appropriation. A note to the bill adds: "This incremental application of proportionality for purposes of funding benefits is intended to be coterminous with progressive state support to fund the full costs of instruction and administration at public community and junior colleges."

Because of its presence in the Senate version, health insurance "proportionality" is being considered by the conference committee, along with all-important formula funding for community and technical colleges.

Members of the Senate named by Lt. Gov. Dewhurst to the committee are: Senators Steve Ogden (R-College Station), chair; Kip Averitt (R-Waco); Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock); John Whitmire (D-Houston); and Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo).

House members appointed by the Speaker are: Representatives Jim Pitts (R-Waxahachie); Sylvester Turner (D-Houston); Vilma Luna (D-Corpus Christi); Lois Kolkhorst (R-Bryan); and Dan Gattis (R-Georgetown).

### TCCTA Supports Varied Bills

TCCTA joined with community colleges seeking to allow schools to charge a higher rate of tuition for students who repeat courses more than twice. During the last Regular Session, "Rider 50" of the appropriations bill cut off formula funding for such courses.

State President Gail Platt, South Plains College, submitted written testimony to members of the Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education in support of SB 531. The measure allows schools to charge a higher rate at their discretion. Testimony was also provided to the House Higher Education Committee in support of HB 994, a similar bill.

TCCTA also supported HB 1173, by Rep. Fred Brown (R-Bryan), which attempts to set regulatory standards, including criminal penalties, upon purveyors of "fraudulent or substandard degrees" that have not been approved by recognized accrediting agencies.

TCCTA Executive Director Richard Moore testified in support of the bill before the House Committee on Higher Education on April 18, citing the need to prevent "counterfeit" credentials from driving down the value of higher education.

"Texas wants the genuine article," Mr. Moore told the committee, noting that TCCTA is committed to academic integrity.

The current status of these and other bills potentially affecting two-year colleges is on the TCCTA "Tracking" list, which is updated daily. Visit "State Agencies" at [www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org). ☆

"You have no enemies.  
The only thing across the  
table from you is scarcity."

# Retirement Nest Eggs and Long Term Care: Key Questions to Consider

by Cass Grange

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## **How do I make sure I don't outlive my retirement nest egg?**

I propose considering a five percent withdrawal rate and an eight to ten percent growth rate annually. A five percent withdrawal rate might seem a bit austere, but it has proven to be a dependable number for trusts, endowments, and charities for generations. It is also a basic tenet of financial planning that, all things being equal, it is better to err on the side of safety.

Remember that most of us need to plan for at least a 35-year retirement even if we work well into our sixties. That is why the *five percent/eight to ten percent* combination can work so well. The twin culprits, inflation and taxes, are ever present throughout the retirement years and simply must be factored into any equation. If your withdrawal rate in retirement is several percent less than your growth rate, your nest egg can continue to grow to help offset inflation and taxes. In other words, as a result of your principal amount increasing in retirement, the actual dollars produced by five percent annual withdrawal rate can continue to increase as well.

Do the math yourself. This is a strategy that allows peace of mind concerning the prospect of running out of money at some point in the future. The key component of the strategy is to build a nest egg large enough to provide the desired annual income.

The chart below will give you some benchmarks, assuming a five percent withdrawal.

<i>Nest Egg Assets</i>	<i>Annual Income</i>
\$150,000	\$ 7,500
250,000	12,500
450,000	22,500
750,000	37,500
1,400,000	70,000

## **Should I consider buying a Long Term Care Policy?**

Many people believe that Medicare and Medicare Supplemental Insurance provide for this type of care. This is simply not true, as Medicare pays for just 16 percent of all long term care in the U.S. today. For the most part, it provides for only skilled nursing care or skilled rehabilitation care, not custodial or intermediate care.

## **What are the chances that I might need it and what costs are involved?**

It is estimated that 60 percent of the U.S. population will need long term care at some point. Contrary to popular belief, an overwhelming 78 percent of care is provided at home or in the community, not in a health care institution.

If you are a female, your chances of needing long term care are much higher than a males' because women have longer life expectancies and

usually outlive their husbands if they are married. It can be argued that LTC is fundamentally a woman's issue. That is, they are more likely to pay for these services so they will not become a burden to their loved ones.

## **How are these policies purchased?**

You choose the amount of coverage you want per day and the length of time you want to cover. The choices are often three to five years or unlimited coverage. Of course, the longer time and more coverage you choose, the higher your premiums. What you are doing is calculating how much risk you want to retain and how much risk you want to transfer to the insurance company. In other words, how much could you pay "out of pocket" versus how much the insurance company will pay.

## **Should I investigate long term care insurance?**

The answer is yes.

## **Should I buy a policy?**

The answer to this question is the same as many questions in life: It depends! It depends on your financial situation, your expected longevity, the current status of your health, how much money you want to leave your heirs, *etc.* I would encourage you to discuss these issues with your campus benefits coordinator to determine if long term care insurance has a place in your financial plan. ☆

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Cass Grange

*"It is estimated that 60 percent of the U.S. population will need long term care at some point."*

## Save 2005 Taxes by Making Contribution to Foundation

TCCTA's foundation, the Foundation for Professional Excellence in the Community College, is accepting tax deductible contributions. Proceeds will be used to develop new professional development programs for all community college educators.

These efforts will be in addition to the current activities of the association. Contributors will receive a letter from the foundation for use in documenting tax returns.

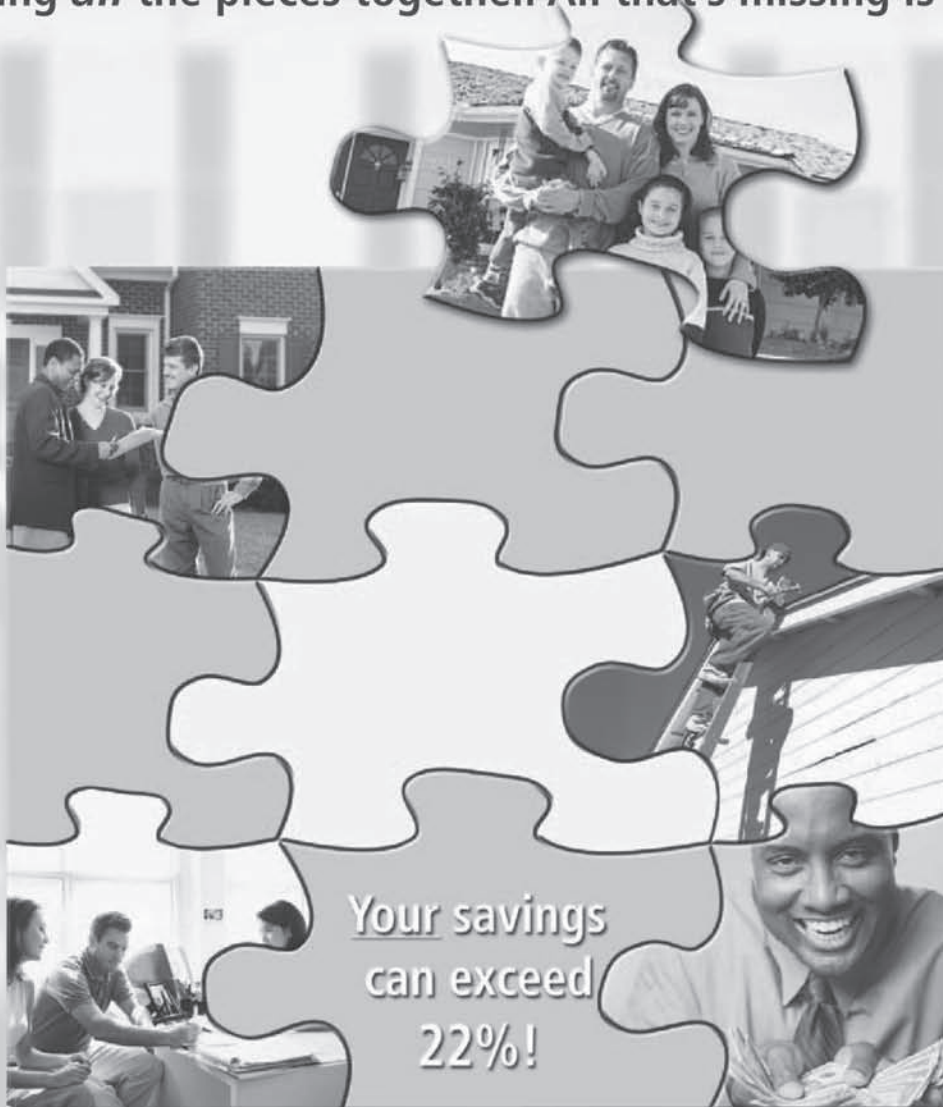
Make a personal check in any desired amount out to the Foundation for Professional Excellence in the Community College (FPECC), and mail to:

TCCTA  
5113 Southwest Parkway  
Suite 185  
Austin, Texas 78735



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# Community College Day at the Capitol

## “Telling Our Story”



**tccta** | texas community college teachers association



OVER 1000 faculty, students, and college officials participated in Community College Day.



*“It’s the model for how such events should be conducted.”*

—TCCTA Lobbyist Beaman Floyd

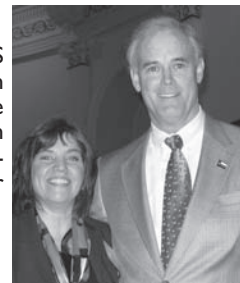


TCCTA provided bus transportation to the Capitol from the convention site at the Renaissance Austin Hotel.



STUDENTS were brought to Austin from campuses all over Texas, including Caleb Pifer, President of the Texas Junior College Student Government Association, pictured top left.

GOVERNOR PERRY’S Legislative Director Dan Shelley was among the attendees. He is shown here with TCCTA Legislative Committee Chair Nancy Kral.



The TCCTA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE conducted its meeting in a Capitol Hearing Room.



TCCTA lobbyist Beaman Floyd and Executive Director Richard Moore provided practical tips.

To view more photos from Community College Day, see “Announcements” at [www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org).

## 2005 CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



TCCTA PRESIDENT Gail Platt, South Plains College, was the presiding officer of the 58th Annual Convention, at the Renaissance Austin Hotel.



The GENERAL SESSION AND BANQUET were held in the Ballroom of the Renaissance Austin Hotel for members and guests. TCCTA leaders and former presidents were recognized for their contributions to the association.



In the KEYNOTE ADDRESS, TCCTA lobbyist Beaman Floyd spoke on "Telling Our Story to the Legislature."



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR speaker Sandy Shugart (left), spoke on the subject, "Telling Our Story: The Teacher at the Heart of the Community College." The presentation was broadcast live via STARLINK throughout the United States and Canada.

TCCTA President Gail Platt (right), South Plains College, presents a plaque of appreciation to Immediate Past President Lola King, Trinity Valley Community College—Terrell Campus.



ANOTHER LUCKY WINNER at the Raffle in the Exhibit Area at the Renaissance Austin Hotel, receives a prize from Deann Merchant, Amarillo College, Chair of the TCCTA Convention Committee. Donated prizes included books, two IPODs, a digital camera, and a DVD player.

### Mark Your Calendars!

Fall Conference for Faculty Leaders  
October 7-8, 2005  
Austin Doubletree Hotel

59th Annual Convention  
February 23-25, 2006  
Westin Galleria, Houston

Visit the [TCCTA Web Site](http://www.tccta.org)  
For the Latest Information  
[www.tccta.org](http://www.tccta.org)