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## ABSTRACT

Drawing from site visits to 10 community colleges located in New York (New York), Miami (Florida), Cleveland (Ohio), Jacksonville (Florida), Kansas City (Missouri), Dallas (Texas), Los Angeles (California), Denver (Colorado), Pittsburgh (Pennsylvania), and Detroit (Michigan), this report traces the efforts of inner-city community colleges to provide education, training, and urban survival skills to new immigrants, high school dropouts, homeless, and socially and economically disadvantaged, as well as to large numbers of traditional students. Part 1 of the report presents a position statement by the Commission on Urban Community Colleges of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges concerning the role of urban community colleges. Part 2 offers introductory information on the purpose of the study and on the campuses that were visited. Part 3 offers brief descriptions of each college's efforts to establish partnerships with the community, build articulated and cooperative programs with schools and universities, and establish partnerships with business and industry. This section also highlights the colleges' role in the education and training of nontraditional students, in providing community services, and in serving as a home for community-based organizations and activities. In part 4, conclusions stress that: (1) the colleges' commitment to the central city in the face of extremely challenging odds appears to be firm; (2) urban community college leaders are firm in their belief that quality education is not and should not be sacrificed in the name of programs related to meeting social needs; (3) enrollment declines of the early and mid-1980's appear to have been reversed; (4) campus leadership continues to struggle with the issues of social change and higher education; and (5) there appears to be no national consensus on the multiple missions and roles of the central city campus and its special programs that reach out to the community. In conclusion, part 5 offers seven recommendations. (JMC)

ED312008

# Who Cares About The Inner City?

*The Community College Response to Urban America*

**By Maurice D. Weidenthal**

**American Association of  
Community and Junior Colleges  
National Center for Higher Education  
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A REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSION ON URBAN  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
OF THE AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COMMUNITY AND  
JUNIOR COLLEGES

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# FOREWORD

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## Accepting the Challenges of The Next Century

The AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges, at its meeting in December 1988, agreed to sponsor a national study and report on the status of central city community college campuses, with a special focus on colleges represented on the Commission.

It was agreed that there is a need to give visibility and national attention to the dramatic developments on our campuses as they attempt to respond to the changing environment in the cities they serve.

Clearly, there is increasing concern about the emerging role of inner city campuses as they face the pressures imposed upon them by their urban neighborhoods. In many cases our campuses are viewed as the best hope for a generation of Americans that has virtually no other opportunity for education, training, and in some cases, economic and social survival.

Bud Weidenthal, a former journalist and Cuyahoga Community College administrator, was asked to do the research and writing of an

Urban Commission document that could serve as a centerpiece for important follow-up activities by the Commission. Weidenthal authored the first report on urban community colleges for AACJC in 1967.

Special appreciation is extended to Commission member colleges whose cooperation and support made Weidenthal's site visits possible, and to the leadership and support of Cuyahoga Community College and its president, Nolen M. Ellison.

William J. Mann, Chancellor  
The Metropolitan Community Colleges  
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Urban Community Colleges—1988-1989

Ronald J. Temple, President  
Wayne County Community College  
Detroit, Michigan  
Chair, AACJC Commission on  
Urban Community Colleges—1989-1990

# P R E F A C E

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This publication of the Commission on Urban Community Colleges of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges is timely and important to the urban areas of the country. Through the examples and models provided, one can see the great potential for the involvement of community colleges in community development and collaborative undertakings. As any close observer of the urban scene will attest, nothing but an all-out effort by all community institutions will suffice in the face of a changing economy and altered demographics.

The new Denver Comprehensive Plan contains 10 "Core Goals," which are responsive to the pressing needs of this major urban center in Colorado. At least four of these goals require direct involvement of the Community College of Denver (CCD). The four goals are:

- Stimulate the economy
- Educate all of Denver's residents with excellence
- Help the disadvantaged help themselves
- Celebrate the city's arts, culture, and ethnic diversity

Collaborative efforts including CCD are expected and necessary if Denver is to thrive amidst the changing dynamics of urban life. Denver's demographic profile, like those of most major cities, is undergoing profound changes. There has been a shift toward the young, the elderly, and to singles as more

families have located in the suburbs. With this, the average household size has declined while the number of single-parent and female-headed households has increased. Consistent with national trends, a greater proportion of Denver's population is poor, disadvantaged, and minority than is the case for the suburbs.

Solutions must be found now to avoid a skill shortage growing out of the mismatch between the needs of the labor market and the profile of the labor pool. Cities have no choice but to help the disadvantaged help themselves if they are to produce vibrant economies, successful businesses, and an enhanced quality of life for their residents. Community colleges should be full partners in the efforts because it is unrealistic to expect the poor central city residents to leave their neighborhoods in large numbers to gain access to higher education. Access and opportunity must be provided in a convenient fashion at a low cost.

I commend the work of community colleges and encourage my colleagues around the country to involve their local institutions in community development activities.



Federico Peña  
Mayor of the City and  
County of Denver

# COMMISSION ON URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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\* term expired in 1989



# I. COMMISSION STATEMENT

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It is quite clear, as we approach the 1990s and beyond, that the nation's central city community colleges find themselves facing a continuing crisis that threatens to dwarf the urban concerns of the '60s—a crisis inflamed by drug use and its associated crime, gang warfare, joblessness, despair among the disadvantaged, illiteracy, and academic disadvantage.

In the face of growing unease about our urban future, we stand now, as always, committed to respond to the formidable challenge of the central cities of our nation. We view ourselves as catalysts and partners, beacons of opportunity and stability amidst our changing and challenging urban environment.

We pledge, within the limits of our resources, to reach out to our neighborhoods, our schools, and our businesses to form partnerships for urban progress. We will continue to be aggressive, flexible, and creative in order to meet the ever-changing needs as we move, in the spirit of the report of the AACJC Futures Commission, toward the 21st century.

The urban community college remains the source of opportunities for the underprivileged, the newcomers to our shores, the undereducated, the victims of technical and social change, as well as the thousands of traditional

high school graduates seeking higher education opportunities that might otherwise not be available to them.

*We accept the commitment to the central cities, aware that we cannot solve their social and education problems alone. We reach out to all segments of our urban communities for partnerships as we strive together to deal with what may be the most significant issue of our time. . . the future of America's cities.*

As we look ahead to the 1990s and the 21st century, we find ourselves stepping well beyond the traditional bounds of higher education by serving the homeless, the underachievers, the school drop-outs, the needy living in public housing projects, felons in jails, the swarms of new immigrants to our shores, the latch-key children, the underemployed, the unemployed. We find ourselves allied with business and community leaders as trainers and brokers for new economic development, which is so critical to the future of our urban centers.

*We have new students, preparing for a new era and another century. Traditional, narrowly focused thinking about the urban campus mission no longer applies.*

*In a very real sense our campuses have become the community, our students a broad range of*

*its people who are seeking education and skills for survival under very difficult circumstances.*

Our central city campuses are poised strategically to play a critical leadership and support role in the renewal of American cities, their central city neighborhoods, and their downtown and business communities. *These open-door campuses are emerging as anchor points in American cities that are reeling from social and*

*economic change.*

The role of urban community college campuses should be viewed in that challenging perspective, and nothing less.

Failure to grasp the vision or its enormity is a failure to understand where our campuses are now and where they are going in the coming decade.

## II. INTRODUCTION

---

As the urban crisis in American cities exploded in the late 1960s, the leaders of the nation's big city community colleges gathered in Dallas, Texas, to examine the challenges confronting them.

It was a time of urban disintegration and public discontent. It was also a time when many of the nation's finest institutions of culture, commerce, and education were fleeing the cities for the more tranquil and prosperous environment of the suburban inner and outer rings. In the face of such disarray, the leaders of the community college movement issued in 1967 a written commitment to stand fast:

"To continue to provide in our central cities the training and education so critical if the nation's inner cities were to survive."

In part, the document, titled *The Community College Commitment to the Inner City*, said: ". . . the structure of our society is in delicate balance in the core of our cities. Here. . . lies the future strength or weakness of American civilization. . . We accept the challenges of the inner city with all its complexities, its difficult problems and immense costs."

In response to continuing and growing pressures in the nation's urban centers, the AACJC

created the Commission on Urban Community Colleges in 1983. In 1985 the Commission published its initial document, *Challenges for the Urban Community College*. Its preface, written by then Commission Chair Flora Mancuso Edwards, declared: "The urban community college stands poised on the cutting edge of our nation's future. If it grapples with serious problems and faces what often appear to be insurmountable challenges, it is graced with even greater potential to serve as a major force in recasting the future of Urban America."

In its 1988 monograph, *Minorities in Urban Community Colleges*, the Commission declared: "We are faced with a great challenge as well as a great opportunity. Our success is critical to the well-being of our society, for through the work of the urban community college can we give the greatest gift a free society can bestow on its citizenry—the right to be useful and productive citizens."

Later the same year in its landmark report, *Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century*, the AACJC Commission on the Future of Community Colleges said: ". . . Because their doors are open to students regardless of age, race, or ethnic origin, the nation's community colleges can be leading architects in building communities in America. As partners in a

network of institutions stretching from coast to coast, they can help the least advantaged move into the mainstream of American life, serve students of all ages, and provide continuing education, civic empowerment, and social integration for a growing number of citizens. Such community building amidst diversity is, we believe, vital to the future of the nation."

It is against this backdrop of persistent and awesome challenge that we, the members of the AACJC Urban Commission, issue this report, its findings, and recommendations in an effort to call to the nation's attention the creative, effective, and often heroic efforts of urban community colleges as they confront the challenges of the central cities of America.

In researching and writing this report, Bud Weidenthal undertook an urban odyssey to ten of America's largest cities. He viewed with a journalist's eye how urban community colleges are responding to the challenges of economic and social change, and he witnessed first-hand a new generation of students struggling for survival during a very difficult period of the nation's urban history.

Focusing on colleges whose presidents were members of the AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges, he visited

- The Bronx Community College, New York
- Campuses of Miami-Dade Community College, Florida
- The Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Community College in Cleveland, Ohio
- The Downtown Campus of the Florida Community College at Jacksonville, Florida

- Penn Valley Community College of The Metropolitan Community Colleges in Kansas City, Missouri
- El Centro College of the Dallas County Community College District, Texas
- Los Angeles City College of the Los Angeles Community College District, California
- The Community College of Denver, Colorado
- The Allegheny Campus of The Community College of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Campuses of Wayne County Community College in Detroit, Michigan

These colleges represent only a small sample of the nation's urban campuses, but they provide exciting examples of the work done by urban community colleges across the country.

As he travelled from one end of the nation to the other, Weidenthal found central city community colleges performing heroically in the shadow of enormous change. He found undereducated and underemployed populations seeking high quality education and training. He found uncommon colleges serving uncommon needs, frequently reaching out to partners in the community to share the challenges.

Because they are viewed as anchor points in their changing communities, urban community college campuses find themselves providing education, training, and urban survival skills to large numbers of new immigrants, particularly in such cities as Los Angeles, New York,

and Miami. Thousands of high school drop-outs and potential drop-outs, the homeless, the dispossessed, the socially and economically illiterate, in addition to the large numbers of traditional students, are seeking quality higher education as they prepare for the jobs of a new decade and century.

The Bronx Community College, for example, is located on the former engineering school campus of New York University at the western edge of the New York City borough, surrounded by reminders of urban decay. The largely minority population of blacks and Hispanics has the lowest per capita income of any community in the nation. More than 40 percent of the land is vacant because of burned or vandalized housing. The school drop-out rate is among the highest in the nation, and the numbers of incoming students requiring developmental courses in English or math tops 90 percent. For most of the students it serves from the Bronx and Manhattan, the Bronx Community College is the college of only resort. It represents their sole opportunity to elevate themselves from the hopelessness of their urban neighborhoods to a new kind of life.

In rapidly changing Los Angeles, City College now enrolls students who speak 62 different languages and whose levels of education and ability represent the entire academic spectrum. The people of its crowded surrounding neighborhoods have come by the thousands in recent years from Latin America and the Far East to seek new opportunities. The community college is their passport to a new beginning.

At the downtown campus of Miami-Dade Community College, more than 70 percent of the students are of Hispanic background, with

many of the newcomers lacking basic language or economic survival skills. In both Miami and Los Angeles hundreds of the newest students are illegal aliens learning simple language and American history skills in order to remain in the United States. Los Angeles is serving the largest Korean population outside of the Far East, while Miami-Dade is challenged by newcomers from Nicaragua and a number of other Latin American countries.

In Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Detroit, dramatic efforts have been under way to train and retrain a work force devastated by the industrial revolution of the 1980s. In these heavy industry cities thousands of workers with outmoded skills have been prepared for new jobs in a changing part of the nation.

Central city campuses are almost all located downtown and adjacent to troubled slum areas that include high density public housing projects. Community colleges are at work there in a valiant effort to break the cycle of poverty.

Urban community colleges, because of their location and their stake in the city, have joined with their communities in efforts to rebuild central city neighborhoods and in some cases downtowns. Community colleges have played major roles in the widely publicized revival of downtowns in Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle, the Dallas historic West End, and Jacksonville's booming downtown redevelopment and the creation of its government civic center.

Colleges are playing a key role in economic development plans, such as Cleveland's St. Vincent Quadrangle effort to revitalize a former slum area and the University Heights Development Corp., aimed at turning abandoned,

vandalized buildings into vibrant, useful housing in the Bronx.

Weidenthal found the campuses of urban America deeply involved in their communities, perhaps to a degree not envisioned by those urban pioneers who gathered in Dallas two decades ago, but clearly in keeping with the lofty

goals set by the AACJC Futures Commission. In a sense, he found a new kind of frontier in the nation's cities and a network of community colleges forging new kinds of responses to urgent urban issues.

This is his report.

### III.

# RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE

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#### The Challenge of the AACJC Futures Commission

"We propose, therefore, that the theme 'Building Communities' become the new rallying point for the community college in America. We define the term 'community' not only as a region to be served, but also as a climate to be created.

"Building communities is, we believe, an especially appropriate objective for the community college because it embraces the institution's comprehensive mission. But the goal is not just outreach. Perhaps more than any other institution, the community college also can inspire partnerships based on shared values and common goals. The building of community in its broadest sense encompasses a concern for the whole, for integration and collaboration, for openness and integrity, for inclusiveness and self renewal."

—*Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century*, 1988

What follows is the story of America's urban community colleges, reaching out to their communities, preparing for the challenges of a new century.

#### Partnerships with the Community

*New York City:* Bronx Community College is reaching out to its troubled neighborhoods by

creating off-campus centers, including a large one in the Parkchester Apartments on the other side of the borough. It has also created a senior citizens center out of a former dormitory, which has become a sanctuary for hundreds of elderly who would otherwise have no decent housing. The college is providing extensive social services for the residents.

*Dallas:* The weekend college at the downtown El Centro campus greeted 700 students in its inaugural semester, twice the expected enrollment. El Centro also assumed leadership in the Dallas CAN Academy in South Dallas, which serves troubled youth who have dropped out of school because of drug-related problems.

*Pittsburgh:* The Homewood-Brushton Branch of the Community College of Allegheny County is a success story in a neighborhood that burned and was left to decay in the '60s. The city- and college-financed program is flourishing in what was once a large retail store on the main street of the revitalized neighborhood.

*Kansas City:* A well-established program at the Wayne Minor Federal Housing project is aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty there. The initial program was targeted at mothers and their daughters, but it has now been expanded to serve all residents of the low-income housing

project. Similar programs are under way in Jacksonville, Cleveland, and Denver.

**Cleveland:** The downtown Metro Campus has linked with the Playhouse Square organization to bring brown bag lunch entertainment to downtown office workers and a major jazz festival to the city. The college took a leadership role in the renovation of three of the community's great center city theaters and served as a conduit for state funds for their rebuilding. The college will serve as the educational component for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which will rise in downtown Cleveland, and provided widely acclaimed leadership for bringing the prized national center to the city.

**Jacksonville:** Personal and vocational skills and literacy programs that could change the dismal lives of the homeless are being offered to the residents of the Liberty Street Center across from Jacksonville's Downtown Campus. Many of the nearly 200 who cram the center have accepted the opportunity to better themselves. The Open Campus, based downtown, has produced a television program for latch-key children who must fend for themselves at home while parents are at work. The college has also taken its programs to the Blodgett Public Housing Project, across the street from the Downtown Campus.

**Miami:** The bustling Interamerican Center in Miami's Little Havana was the first of a series of community outreach programs developed to serve the influx of immigrants to that international city. It has become so successful in assisting Hispanics in bridging the gap to higher education that permanent quarters were purchased in 1986. The center has become the focus of the amnesty program for illegal aliens,

but also offers almost 200 credit courses, taught bilingually, from political science to Hispanic aerobics. Ten foreign languages are offered at the center, including new classes in Hebrew and Hungarian. Another outreach program is offered in the booming Miami suburb of Hialeah, with a population of 200,000, 90 percent of whom are Cuban. A new \$3 million building is rising in Liberty City in northwest Miami that will serve as an outreach to the section of the city that was torn by racial strife earlier in the decade.

**Denver:** In this city, "the community is our campus." The 1988-89 goals for the Community College of Denver read as follows: "The college should be portrayed as an institution which promotes the urban quality of life, equal opportunity, economic development and educational excellence." The college offers courses in two housing projects, nearby prisons, and juvenile centers; assumes leadership for the Family Opportunities Council, which aims to remove between 500 and 1,000 families from the welfare rolls per year; and provides leadership for the Denver Project on Persistent Poverty, which aims at stemming the growth of the "new underclass."

**Los Angeles:** The City College is providing basic skills and job training to welfare mothers in a concerted effort to remove them from the rolls of public assistance. The college, working cooperatively with the Braille Institute, is also home of the largest number of blind students of any educational institution in the state. City College offers an unusual Homebound Telephone Program that provides equal access to meet the special learning needs of orthopedically handicapped students confined to their homes. The AIDS Center provides a wide range





*Bronx Community College*



*Metropolitan Community Colleges*



*El Centro College*

of education and other assistance to students and members of the community. The Teacher Opportunity Program at City College is designed to prepare students to become bilingual teachers. Upon successful completion of their community college education, they continue their program at the California State University at Northridge and are guaranteed teaching jobs in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

### Reaching Out to Minorities

**Dallas:** El Centro College has begun a major effort to attract more Mexican-Americans to the downtown campus. Hispanics now comprise 9.4 percent of the student body. With the help of the President's Hispanic Advisory Council made up of 18 prominent members of the Hispanic community, an outreach center was established at a predominately Hispanic high school where El Centro staff members offer financial aid and career counseling. Plans for the future include offering some college-level courses at the high school for students and community members.



*Metropolitan Community Colleges*

**New York City:** The Bronx Community College is a pioneer in providing health-care career opportunities for minority students. Under

the Minority Biomedical Research Support Program, students are provided with high quality laboratory experiences, and they spend summers conducting full-time research. In addition, courses in research enrichment are available to all community college students. So far, the program has graduated nearly 60 students, and more than 80 percent have gone on to careers in medicine and health-related fields.

**Detroit:** More than 140 students are enrolled in classes leading to an associate degree in child care at the Sleepy Hollow center in a residential neighborhood of Detroit. Eight classes are offered on site by the downtown campus of Wayne County Community College. Also in Detroit a partnership with the United States Department of the Interior is opening doors to lucrative natural resources jobs for inner city youth. Large numbers of urban students have applied for the program, which links the college with the University of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources.

**Pittsburgh:** The Minority Recruitment, Retention and Transfer Program, headed by a youthful Community College of Allegheny County graduate now working on his doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh, has set as a goal a 10 percent increase in black student enrollment over a four-year period. The program already has achieved a 5 percent increase in the first year. Key to its success is the creation of a black alumni organization that works closely with the city school district in touting the community college.

**Kansas City:** The Partners in Excellence Program brings 282 selected high school students from nine city high schools to the central city Penn Valley Campus to take at least one course.



*Community College of Allegheny County*

The students are provided funds for tuition, books, and transportation. The Teen Literacy Project brings high school junior girls considered at risk of dropping out to the campus for career exploration workshops. Discovery Day is a joint effort with the Kansas City Urban League that provides career information and job-seeking skills to city high school students. The college's full-time "college relations" specialists work with the city's schools to recruit students to the downtown Penn Valley Campus.

*Cleveland:* The Jesse Owens Youth Leadership Program, based at Cuyahoga's Metro Campus, brings nearly 800 young people to the downtown center each summer for learning and recreation activities. The aim is to introduce them to the college campus at an early age and

encourage the pursuit of higher education. The Martin Luther King Youth Leadership Program identifies potential leaders at city high schools and brings them together to discuss and learn about cultural awareness and the continuing problems of discrimination and racial stereotyping. These students meet regularly with successful role models such as Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young.

*Jacksonville:* The Florida Community College at Jacksonville has created a single Office of Black Student Success, bringing together a substantial number of programs aimed at reaching out to minorities in the community and in its schools. Some examples: the Fame Program is an eight week program for senior high school students to help them with career and college planning. Star Search impresses on junior high

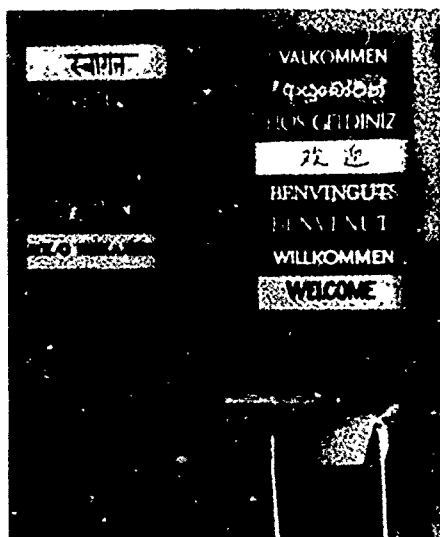
students the importance of academic excellence. The Jobs For the Future Program targets needy youth age 16-24 and helps them earn their high school diploma through the GED test or high school credit. The program operates at the Student Success Center on the downtown campus. Return to Learn—Then Earn targets economically disadvantaged adults 55 and older. Caring For Kids trains welfare recipients to run family day care centers, with the objective of getting them off the welfare rolls. The High School Mentorship program provides a “buddy” system for mostly high school students who are bused to community centers on Saturday mornings.

*Miami:* Miami-Dade has established three outreach centers to bring education and training to Little Havana, Hialeah, and Liberty City. The centers are based in college-owned or leased facilities and aim to bridge the significant gap between the neighborhoods and the campus. At Miami-Dade’s North Campus Hispanics, blacks, and Anglos each represent one third of the campus enrollment, bringing

together diverse factions in a city wracked by racial and ethnic tensions. The Saturday Community Education Program brings students from Miami’s northwest section to the North Campus for tutoring by Dade County teachers and community college student volunteers. The annual College Jamboree brings black college recruiters to North Campus to recruit minority students.

*Los Angeles, Miami, and Denver:* Thousands of illegal aliens from Mexico and Central and South America are being provided basic skills courses in amnesty programs housed on campuses in these cities. For many these courses make the difference between survival and despair.

*Los Angeles:* the front hallway of City College’s main building proclaims “WELCOME” in 30 different languages as it reaches out to its immigrant populations. Korea Town, just down the street from the campus, houses the largest population of Koreans anywhere in the world outside of their home country.



Los Angeles City College



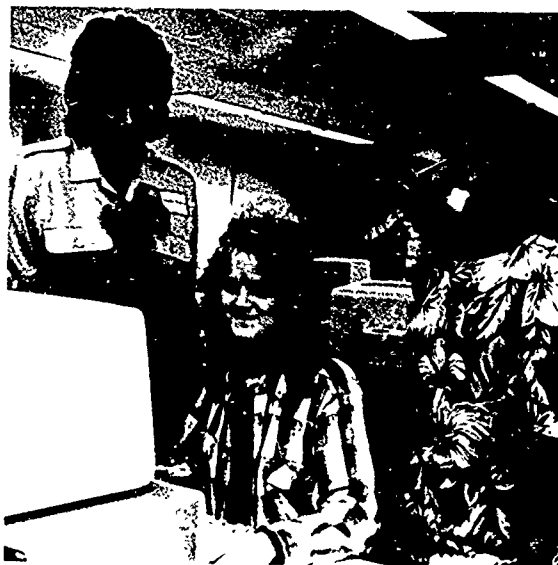
Community College of Denver

**Denver:** The Community College of Denver has taken a leadership role in the Hispanic Agenda of the Latin American Service and Research Agency.

### Building Partnerships with Schools and Universities

**Kansas City:** The Learning Exchange, a nationally known resource center for teachers, is relocating to Penn Valley Community College. Housed in a \$3 million addition scheduled for completion later this year, The Learning Exchange will bring elementary and secondary students and teachers to the downtown campus building to share the latest in instructional techniques. Seventy surrounding school districts in both Kansas and Missouri will participate in the privately financed educational program. Project TALENT is a new teacher training program that is designed to attract non-traditional students. Backed by support from a private foundation and cooperation of the city school district, the project is moving its first class of 35 toward an associate degree and ultimately to teaching careers in urban schools.

**Miami:** The New World School of the Arts is a 2 + 2 + 2 program with Dade County Schools, the Wolfson Campus of Miami-Dade Community College, and Florida International University. The School of the Arts is adjacent to the Wolfson campus. The Junior High Gifted Program brings 400 young people to Miami-Dade North Campus where they are taught by Dade County and community college teachers. They are exposed to the college library, computers, journalism labs, and a campus learning environment. More than 300 Miami high school students come to the North campus each Saturday



*Wayne County Community College*

for special counseling, tutorials, and classes provided by the public schools and Miami-Dade. Students are referred by teachers, counselors, churches, and community groups. The Stay In High School Project involves 70 selected juniors and seniors from Northwestern Miami High School who are provided with counseling to help them finish school and prepare for college.

**Cleveland:** Creating an Urban Demonstration Model and making it work depends on building effective partnerships between downtown community colleges and the city school districts. Cuyahoga Community College has created a "laboratory model" based on available research concerning the crisis in city schools, including the growing drop-out rate, underachievement, and the declining rate of college attendance, particularly among minority males. The model hopes to increase the number of minority students graduating from high school and then to increase the number of underprepared and minority students who successfully graduate

from two- and four-year colleges and universities. The goals of the model have been adopted by the Ohio Board of Regents, and a proposal for funding is moving through the state's General Assembly. The objective is to build partnerships between community colleges and city school districts statewide.

**New York City:** Bronx Community College has linked with the New York City Public Schools to create a successful high school and junior high school on campus. The Middle College High School enrolls 276 students, grades nine through 12, who were all considered at-risk and potential drop-outs. The junior high is called the Urban Academy of Technology, and enrolls 140 eighth-graders aged 14 to 16, also considered at-risk and potential drop-outs. The Middle College drop-out rate is below 10 percent, and 85 percent of the graduates go on to college. The campus atmosphere at the community college makes the critical difference, according to the students.

**Cleveland, Los Angeles, the Bronx, and Detroit:** Significant efforts are under way in these cities to identify and assist urban students as they move through high school to the community colleges and then to the university. The projects are funded by the Ford Foundation's Urban Community College Opportunity Program (UCCTOP). Although each UCCTOP project differs, each is aimed at opening doors of opportunity to young people in urban areas in new and creative ways.

**Detroit:** The college has completed articulation agreements with the Detroit Public Schools and two other area districts for an Urban Teachers Program, which will enroll up to 300 urban students at Wayne County Community College to

prepare them for teaching careers in urban schools in order to meet the growing shortage of minority teachers. The program is linked to Eastern Michigan University, where the students will enroll after they complete their associate degrees.

**Denver:** Four elementary schools in the city school district have become partners with the Community College of Denver to help at-risk students in the very early school years, by providing basic education and parenting skills to their parents. In the predominately Hispanic Cheltenham school, 40 students in grades K-2 were identified by teachers, and their parents were invited to enroll in classes offered by the college at the schools in late afternoon and evenings. Child care was provided for the youngsters. Reading and language skills, GED preparation, and courses in parenting and homemaking were provided. Strong emphasis was placed on parents reading to their children. Follow-up studies show significant reduction in risk among the children involved. The same approach is being tried in three additional Denver public schools in black and Hispanic neighborhoods.

**San Francisco:** Operation Excel provides 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>-graders in the San Francisco City Schools with the opportunity to take college courses for credit while still in high school. The Summer Academy provides eighth-graders with a stimulating session on campus that includes career and life planning programs designed to motivate students to go on to college.

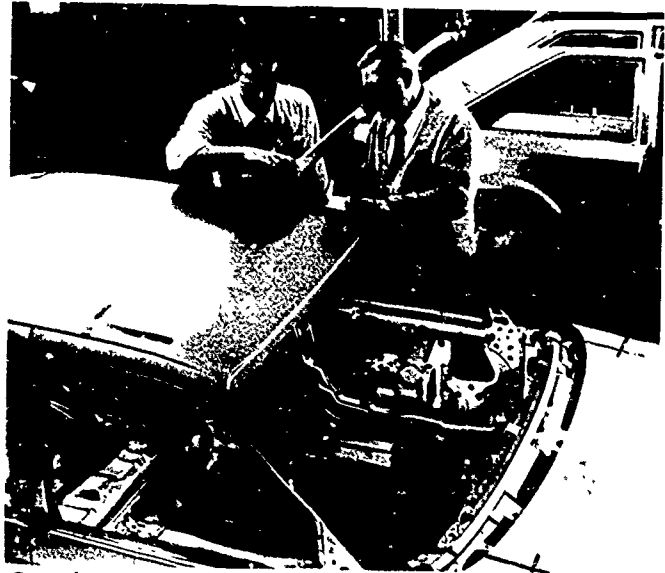
**Jacksonville:** Students enrolled in an extensive adult high school and GED program represent 20 percent of the entire enrollment at the Florida Community College at Jacksonville. The adult high school has been a part of the Jacksonville



*Wayne County Community College*



*Community College of Denver*



*Cuyahoga Community College*

program since 1968; head count for the high school and GED program has risen to 6,254. The biggest increase has been in the older age groups of non-traditional students.

**Pittsburgh:** A formal working relationship with the Pittsburgh Public Schools was established with the Community College of Allegheny County in 1984 and included a written articulation agreement. The college has annually identified six public school graduates to receive renewable scholarships. A joint school-college conference on "The Year 2000" has been designed to link the training resources of both systems for the coming decade and beyond. The Allegheny Campus offers a Saturday College experience for school youth up to age 18 that includes classes ranging from algebra to body building.



*Cuyahoga Community College*

### Partnerships with Business and Industry

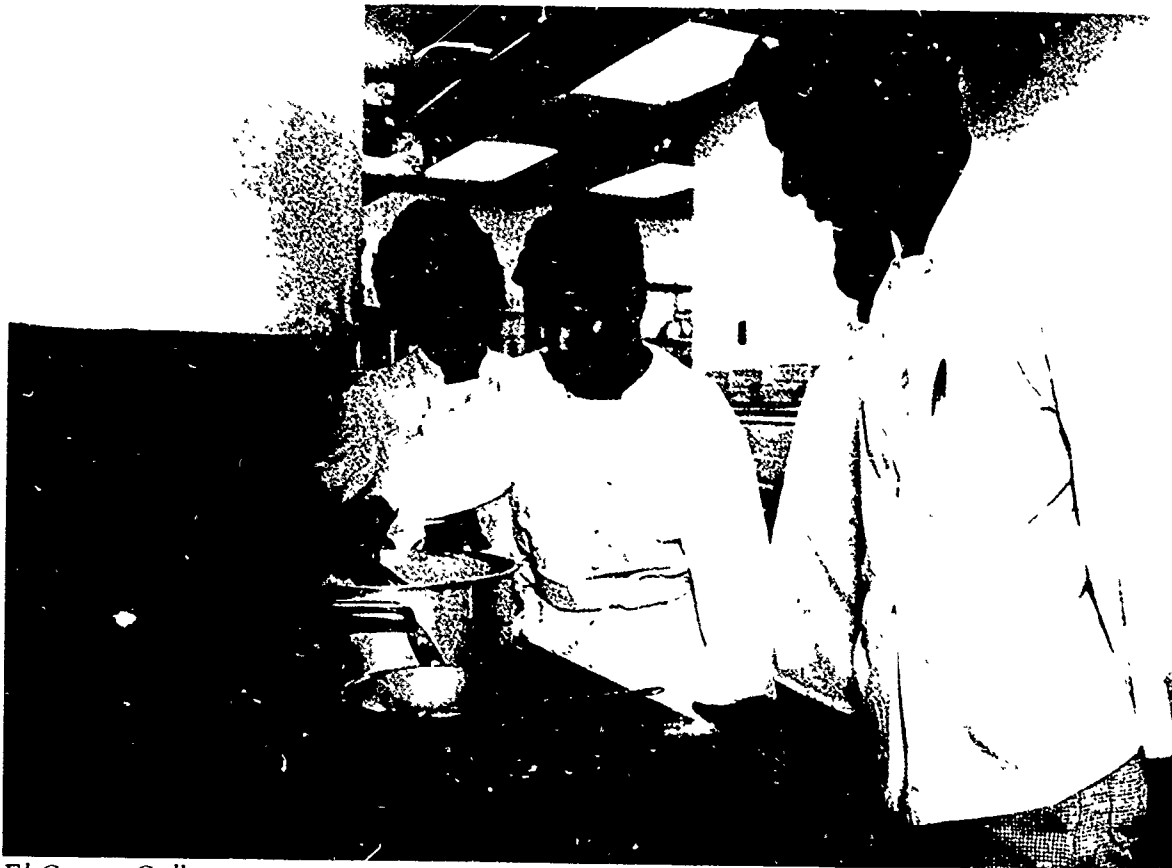
**Denver:** The Technical Education Center of the Community College of Denver was recently cited by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education as one of five Centers of Excellence

in all of higher education in the state. More than 90 percent of its 1,000 students per year are sponsored by business, industry, and labor. Most of the training and retraining programs are so successful that there is an employer waiting list for graduates. Most recent figures show that 86 percent of those who start completed their program and 76 percent were placed in a job for which they were trained. Key to the success is close ties between government-sponsored programs such as JTPA, the county school district, the department of social services, and employers. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. Programs vary from life coping skills to word processing to lathe-mill operator.

**Kansas City:** More than 20,000 workers have been retrained for 200 companies by the Metropolitan Community Colleges High Technology Training Resources Center. The center has worked with every local and state agency involved in the recruitment of new industry and other economic development activities in the area. Representatives often make presentations to companies considering moving to the area. The Center for Business, Industry, and Agency Training provides customized training on site or on campus for clients such as Hallmark Cards, Xerox, the Internal Revenue Service, and the city of Kansas City. When a major General Motors assembly plant was closed in the area, the college provided retraining to hundreds of workers as part of the union contract. In order to better serve the business community, the "outreach" Pioneer College was merged with the Penn Valley Campus that is located near downtown.

**Jacksonville:** When American Express considered building its new Optima Card headquarters





*El Centro College*

in Jacksonville two years ago, it sought a guarantee that the 1,500 new employees would get appropriate computer training. FCCJ's Economic Development Center, based at the Downtown Campus, was able to meet and keep that commitment as a result of its long-standing partnership with the city's chamber of commerce. A similar pledge was provided for American Transtech of AT&T for the training of 1,200 new employees. Chamber officials credit the center for its key role in both cases and cite numerous other instances where college intervention brought new industry to the city or kept companies from leaving. The center, which works on a contract basis with area companies, has three major roles: to help

recruit new industries; to upgrade worker training; and to retrain laid-off workers. The unit is headed by an associate vice president for economic development and has two full-time and four part-time industry development officers. They are expected to generate FTE revenue equal to six times their annual salaries. In its first three years, the center has grown from 121 to more than 500 FTEs.

*Los Angeles:* A partnership between City College and Pacific Bell is providing accelerated associate of arts degrees in business at eight Pac Bell sites throughout the city. The college is the basic skills provider for the Los Angeles Business Labor Council for Displaced Workers.



*Los Angeles City College*



*Community College of Allegheny County*



*Florida Community College at Jacksonville*

**New York City:** Bronx Community College has created the Entrepreneurship Support Center aimed at helping small businesses overcome the odds against success. In this troubled section of New York City, the center provides a free or low-cost 60-hour business training program either on the campus or at the business site. A 30-hour individual consulting program is also offered to provide help in the areas of law, business finance, marketing and advertising, government contracts, and taxes. The Bronx Community College Business and Professional Development Institute provides high quality consultation and services to Bronx businesses at modest cost.

**Cleveland:** A commitment of more than \$12 million in capital funds by the state of Ohio permitted Cuyahoga Community College to construct the new Unified Technologies Center (UTC) on its downtown Metropolitan Campus. The center was dedicated by the governor in 1986 with considerable fanfare, during which he linked the center to the future success of the state's economic development program. All the space in the building is devoted to contract training and skills upgrading for area industry. A major tenant is the Cleveland Advance Manufacturing Program, a state-funded program that links Cuyahoga, Cleveland State University, and Case Western Reserve University in automated manufacturing programs that aid Cleveland industry. The National Bureau of Standards and Technology has designated the UTC as one of three centers in the nation for the development of automated manufacturing techniques. Seminars and workshops on quality control have brought hundreds to the center from a five-state area. The Ohio Bell Telephone Company has designated the center as a skills upgrading site for all its



*Miami-Dade Community College*

employees. The focus is on self-paced computer-programmed training in skills upgrading. The center is expected to be self-supporting within five years.

**Detroit:** Wayne County Community College has played a key role in the industrial revival of the Detroit area, particularly its automobile industry. Both Ford and General Motors executives have highly praised the college's Business and Industry Retraining Program. The technical training coordinator of GM's Buick, Oldsmobile, and Cadillac division had this to say: "General Motors has launched its greatest training program in the history of the company. Wayne County Community College's role has been very helpful. . . and we are pleased to have their expertise available to us." Added a Ford UAW official, "You can't imagine how life-saving it has been to have a college in the area willing to accommodate the needs of our program." A major program of skills upgrading for Chrysler workers is under way at the Eastern Campus near one of the world's largest auto plants.

**Pittsburgh:** The Dislocated Workers Education and Training Program of the Community College of Allegheny County was launched at the nadir of the Rust Belt recession of the early 1980s, when city and county unemployment rates soared beyond 15 percent. More than 7,237 students have enrolled in college-level courses, and the average participant took 25 credit hours of studies. Latest figures show that nearly 80 percent have been re-employed in the county. The program has been succeeded by a Workers in Transition Project offering most of the same training opportunities. Classes are offered at all campuses, but the largest enrollment continues to be at the downtown Allegheny Campus.

### **The Challenge of Enrollment: Old Campuses for the New Era— Fulfilling a Vision for a New Century**

An examination of central city campus enrollment statistics can be misleading. A cursory



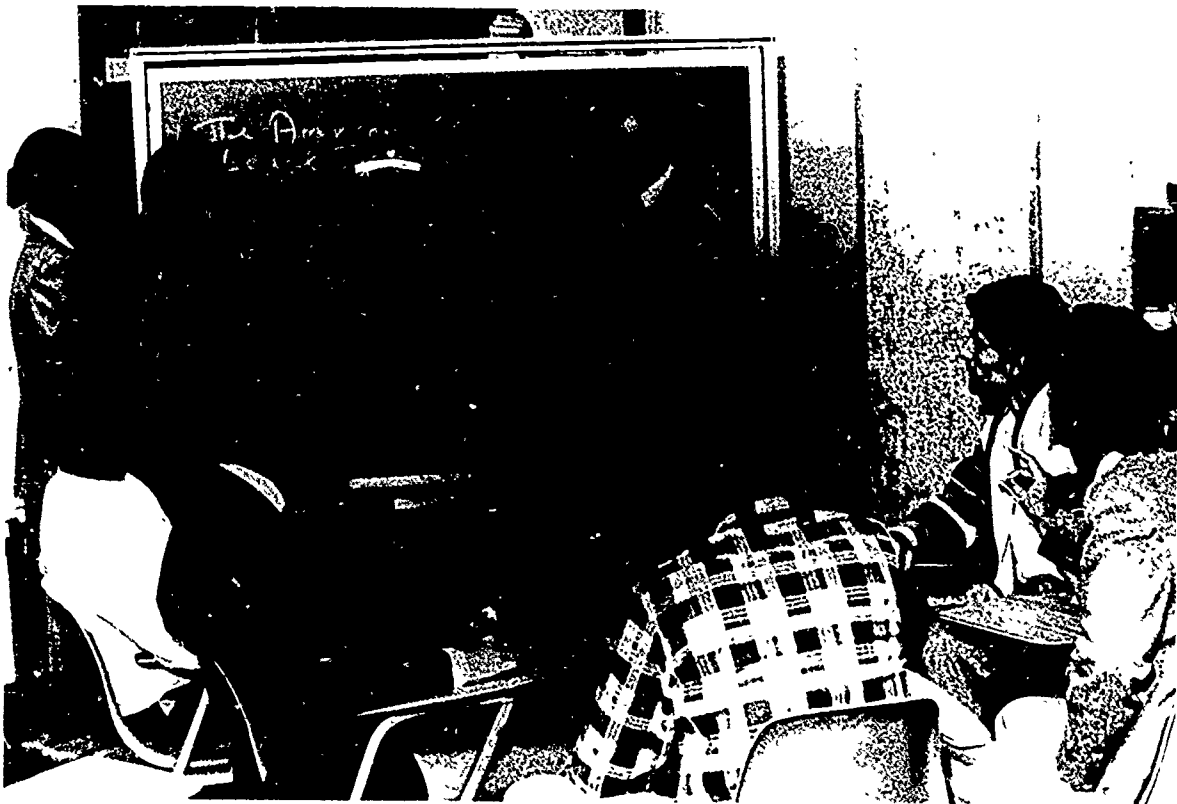
*Florida Community College at Jacksonville*

glance at the credit count for traditional students reveals that in most cases numbers peaked in the mid-'70s, then began a rather steady decline through the mid-'80s. Now most are experiencing a rebound in credit enrollment.

The hidden and often untold story about the central city campuses is their growing use as an instrument in the training and educating of non-traditional students, for community service programs, and as a home for community-based organizations and activities.

For example, at Kansas City's Penn Valley Campus credit enrollment peaked in 1975 with the onrush of Vietnam veterans, sagged to a low in 1985, and has now rebounded by 9 percent, but is still well below 1975 levels. But soaring non-credit and community service enrollment has pushed campus headcount to an all-time high. At Pittsburgh's Allegheny Community College non-credit enrollment has outpaced credit. In the period from 1975 to 1988, non-credit enrollment increased from 10,555 to 15,405. During the past year Miami-Dade's Wolfson Campus enrolled over 19,000 non-credit students while the North Campus served 14,558. In Cleveland, while the Metro Campus showed a steady decline in credit students funded by the state of Ohio, non-credit enrollment rose from 1,001 in 1982 to 3,223 in the fall of 1987.

City campuses are crowded and cramped for space in many hours of the day and evening because of the dramatic move to non-traditional programming and community use. The dramatic change in the mission and nature of central city campuses has created facilities problems that cannot be overlooked as we tell our story and plan for the future. In Los Angeles



*Bronx Community College*

permanent “temporary” structures at City College built in the 1960s are now bulging with programs for recent immigrants, including amnesty courses and English as a Second Language. This turn of events, often not reported publicly, leaves the misleading impression that central city campuses are in trouble because of declining enrollment.

Indeed, the visiting team of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, in responding to the concern of declining enrollment at Cuyahoga Community College’s Metro Campus, had this to say:

“...the Metropolitan Campus has evolved with a unique, highly specialized mission. . . .

this clearly suggests a redefinition of the role of this campus and the scope of services offered there. Much concern was expressed for the enrollment decline at the campus, and considerable energy appears to have been extended in restoring the campus to its original preeminent status. But, what if this is an incorrect premise—that in attempting to recapture the past the institution fails to claim the future? In other words, the viability of the Metropolitan Campus should not be measured solely or even largely in terms of FTEs.”

At Cuyahoga’s Metropolitan Campus nearly 100 community organizations used campus facilities in the single month of October 1988 for the benefit of approximately 10,000 individuals



*Miami-Dade Community College*

not enrolled for coursework at the college. This community service function is not widely publicized or understood. Many of these organizations use the campus free of charge. Indeed, such broad community use of facilities has become the hallmark of central city campuses across the nation.

Across the country mature, city-based community colleges have become a haven for new kinds of activities and new kinds of students. By reaching out to their communities, colleges fulfill the far-sighted vision of an urban community college "claiming the future" for a new century.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

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- The commitment to the central city in the face of extremely challenging odds is firm. There is a deep involvement, from central Los Angeles to the Bronx, from Dallas to Detroit, from Cleveland to Kansas City, in the issues that inflame, puzzle, and trouble the nation's cities. In spite of difficulties that appear to dwarf the issues of the 1960s, the resources and resourcefulness of big city community colleges are dedicated, as never before, to dealing with the crisis in the city into the 1990s and beyond.
  - The campuses in the central cities continue to be vibrant, exciting, committed centers of education and training, and, in some cases, instruments of social change.
  - Because of the enormous burdens and responsibilities assumed by central city campuses, they have become different kinds of institutions with missions different from and, in a sense, greater than sister campuses serving suburban areas and other populations.
  - The additional responsibilities assumed by central city campuses bring with them sizeable additional financial burdens that must be recognized and dealt with. In some cases heroic efforts to train and educate our central city citizens are being hampered by lack of funds, particularly in states where funding is limited to traditional credit programming.
  - In the face of growing demands for non-traditional services, the leaders of central city campuses are firm in their intention to continue to provide high quality traditional higher education programs as well as programs designed to deal creatively with the social and economic issues of the people and the city. *Urban community college leaders are firm in their belief that quality education is not and should not be sacrificed in the name of programs related to meeting social needs. The academic program continues to rest at the very highest priority of our central city campuses as they struggle to respond to the urgent needs of the communities they serve.*
- Indeed, on many urban campuses very intense efforts are under way to identify promising students at the junior and senior high school level and assure, in creative ways, that they complete their secondary education and enroll in a community college with the objective of eventually transferring to a four-year college.
- Enrollment declines that have plagued central city campuses in the early and mid-1980s appear to have been reversed as the result of aggressive efforts at student recruitment and retention and some very creative programs designed to serve the central city population.
  - The decline in black student enrollment, particularly black males, continues to puzzle and

frustrate the leadership of city campuses throughout the nation. New efforts, launched within the past year or two to increase enrollment of black students, are beginning to show encouraging results.

- The emerging mission and role of central city campuses continues to be misunderstood in their own communities. There is a sense of frustration concerning public understanding and acceptance of the social and educational roles of these colleges. Indeed, negative image and perception consistently plague central city campuses. Because their emerging role in city-based problems has not been fully told, these campuses are subject to misinterpretation by the media and misunderstanding by the general public.

- Central city campuses are staffed with men and women who have a sense of mission, who want to be there, who gain special satisfaction from the challenges of the city and its residents.

- *But so enormous are the issues and challenges of our central cities that campus leadership throughout the nation continues to struggle with the issues of social change and higher*

*education.* There is much to be done, and resources are limited. Much still needs to be understood about how central city community colleges function best: what programs work; where they should concentrate their efforts; how they can continue to maintain their multiple roles without losing sight of long-standing educational priorities.

- *There appears to be no national consensus on the multiple missions and roles of the central city campus and its special programs that reach out to the community.* It appears that each campus and each district is dealing with urban issues in its own fashion, drawing on its unique strengths as it deals with special urban problems that vary from city to city.

It is appropriate to reiterate here, as we look ahead to the awesome and complex role of the urban community college, the words of the AACJC Futures Commission: "The danger is that, in attempting to respond to every need, community colleges may be distracted from the transcendent, integrative goals. Survival without a sense of mission can indeed be the forerunner of extinction."



## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

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1. This report of the AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges should be published, released, and distributed in a manner that will bring it broad national attention.
2. National, regional, and local private philanthropic foundations should be encouraged to finance continued innovation by urban community colleges in addressing the problems associated with the central cities of America.
3. Because the special urban college mission is a costly one, it is urged that this report be used to begin a dialogue with government decision makers so that they can better understand the funding implications of our commitment to the central cities of America.
4. The AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges should appoint a special subcommittee responsible for ongoing collection of programmatic and statistical information on urban districts across the country. This information could be used by the commission and its members to plot trends in urban areas and for comparison purposes between those colleges.
5. A national conference or seminar on urban community colleges should be sponsored by the AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges in order to promote the exchange of activities and programs that are "working" in those institutions.
6. The AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges should articulate an urban strategy for addressing the problems of our nation's central cities and encourage the passage of a *National Urban Extension Act* wherein city governments and urban community colleges will form partnerships similarly as the Rural Extension Act made partners of county governments and universities. Further, the act should be designed to bring a comprehensive and coordinated approach to resolving the problems of urban America.
7. The AACJC Commission on Urban Community Colleges should develop a coalition of the urban institutions to acquire the funding necessary to give full-time staff assistance to the AACJC Federal Relations Office to facilitate the above activities.

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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