Connections

LFCC

June 2008

Dr. Ski

Sygielski knows how to work hard and have fun!

Energetic, charismatic, enthusiastic, caring, hard working, dedicated, personable, comedic — all of these words, and so many more, describe John J. ‘Ski’ Sygielski. His vision moved Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) forward in its mission of educating area residents and preparing them for further education or the workforce. LFCC was fortunate to have Sygielski serve as its president for almost five years.

Sygielski began his tenure at LFCC in August 2003. Under his leadership, the College instituted new academic programs and increased enrollment; constructed capital projects totaling more than $22 million; and reorganized the College’s Foundation and raised approximately $3.5 million to benefit students and employees. Furthermore, the president and his team served a greater percentage of businesses in the College’s service region than comparable workforce development programs at Virginia’s other community colleges and hosted numerous productive forums to address the changing demographics of the College’s service region.

All of those accomplishments were made possible because of Sygielski’s leadership, careful planning and successful interaction with students, employees, donors, alumni, economic development professionals, business leaders, elected officials and public school superintendents.

Sygielski’s impact on LFCC will be felt for years to come. As LFCC moves forward, its employees and College and Foundation Board members will continue to build on the foundation of quality instruction and commitment to excellent service that Sygielski valued.

Q: What is one of your favorite memories from your time at LFCC?

A: My bike ride last summer. I was really able to see our service region from a new perspective and learned, firsthand, about the real value of our College and how it has inspired and transformed lives and communities.

Q: What are the most important characteristics of an effective leader?

A: Among many characteristics, I think it is important to ensure the right attitude, encourage the dreams of others, listen with your heart, add value to people’s efforts, celebrate the accomplishments of others, make timely decisions and execute those decisions.

Q: As you look to the future, what matters most to you?

A: Regardless of ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural or academic background, EVERYONE should have access to higher education. As a first-generation college student, I know firsthand how teaching and learning can transform a life. It is community colleges, with their core mission of providing affordable, high-quality, accessible educational programs and services, that are in the vanguard of transforming lives through learning. There is no better higher educational enterprise to be associated with than community colleges — they create a magic that forever changes communities and people’s lives.

Q: Who has influenced you most in your career, and what have they taught you?

A: I have been fortunate to be surrounded and supported by many people throughout my life. However, I am influenced every day by at least one person who reminds me what is REALLY important in this life — helping individuals to think critically and respond accordingly, thus enhancing their lives and those they influence.

A Message from LFCC Board Chair Glenn Burdick

Without a doubt, Dr. Ski’s leadership at LFCC has been instrumental in moving the College forward in its service to the community. Additionally, thousands of individuals benefit from LFCC’s presence in the community, whether they are students taking classes to transfer to a four-year institution or enter the workforce, or employees hiring LFCC graduates or taking advantage of the College’s professional development and training programs.

Thanks to Dr. Ski’s involvement in the community, as well as the involvement of College employees, board members and other volunteers, more and more residents are aware of LFCC and are making the College their first choice for their educational needs. LFCC looks forward to building upon the foundation that Dr. Ski created — a foundation of quality education, open dialogue, exceptional service and commitment to meeting community needs.

As we look to the future, the College Board is excited about working with an interim president and a new president to move LFCC to the next level, including educating more area residents. Another exciting milestone in LFCC’s future is the opening of the Science and Health Professions Building. The facility’s extensive laboratory space will provide opportunities for hands-on learning, including patient simulations for the Emergency Medical Technology and Nursing Programs. In addition, LFCC is excited about the construction of the Corron Community Development Center, which is scheduled to begin within the next six months. This important facility will enable LFCC to better meet the professional development needs of the community.

The future is bright for LFCC as it moves forward and continues to serve the community!
Heroes of Philanthropy.” The event recognized LFCC’s donors and the impact they make on the College and its students. The dinner was sponsored, in part, by Valley Health.

**Teaching and Learning**

During the spring 2008 semester, LFCC dental hygiene students and faculty participated in two community events. The first event was the Children’s Dental Health Fair at Thomas Harrison Middle School in Harrisonburg, Va. At the event, approximately 200 children received dental goodie bags, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss, and instruction about oral hygiene from LFCC’s dental hygiene students. The second event took place in Winchester at the Apple Blossom Mall. Under the supervision of Dr. Willard Lutz, LFCC’s dental hygiene students performed 78 oral cancer screenings at the 14th annual Community Wellness Festival. In addition to handing out dental goodies, LFCC’s dental hygiene students and community residents in search of employment.

**Student Success**

LFCC faculty member Dr. Brent Kendrick (pictuured on cover) was named as a recipient of the main’s 2008 Outstanding Faculty Award. Kendrick was one of 12 faculty members selected from public and private colleges and universities throughout Virginia for their excellence in teaching, research, knowledge integration and public service. The Outstanding Faculty Award program is administered by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and is funded by a grant from the Dominion Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Dominion, one of the nation’s largest producers of energy.

This spring, LFCC hosted job fairs at all three of its locations — the Fauquier and Middlesex Campuses and the Luray-Lee County Center. Students received multiple awards during the 2008 academic year, including multiple awards from LFCC’s Dental Hygiene program.

**Partnerships and Outreach**

In March, LFCC employees, students and donors attended the College’s Appreciation Dinner — “Celebrating the Heroes of Philanthropy.” The event recognized LFCC’s donors and the impact they make on the College and its students. The dinner was sponsored, in part, by Valley Health.

**Resource Development and Public Relations**

On April 27, 2008, LFCC foreign language instructor Beth Padden ran the 26.2-mile Marine Marathon to raise money for book and travel scholarships. The event also featured a 5K race.

Did you know that there are more than 25 ways you can support the College and make a difference in students’ lives and your community? For more information on how to improve the Foundation Web site, we heard you loud and clear and revamped the Foundation Web site to reflect your feedback: http://www.lfcc.edu/foundation. We hope you like it! Please share your thoughts with us: lcarter@lfcc.edu. Thank you!

**A Note from LFCC Educational Foundation Board Chair Charles Day**

The future of the LFCC Educational Foundation Inc. is brighter than ever thanks to the leadership of Dr. Ski, the Office of College Advancement team and Foundation Board members. During the past five years, this dream team reorganized the College’s Foundation and raised more than $3.5 million to benefit students and employees. LFCC is very appreciative of Dr. Ski’s commitment to philanthropy, especially in light of the fact that state funds provided as a result of the College’s budget in 2005-06 and only 50 percent in 2006-07. Private investment is essential to the future of the College and the community.

Because of our generous donors and the efforts of Dr. Ski, the Office of College Advancement team and Foundation Board members, last year, the Foundation received more than $21 million in contributions. These contributions were made possible by 439 generous donors, resulting in a 156-percent increase in giving compared to 2006. The Foundation is thrilled with last year’s fundraising efforts and hopes to build upon the success of 2007 and raise even more in 2008. The Foundation looks forward to working with its interim president and a new president to continue educating the community about the College’s financial situation and show the contributions to the College is a sound investment.

Every contribution — no matter the size — makes a difference at the College. There is no greater investment than in people, and LFCC exemplifies that. LFCC is a vital asset to our community and must receive our complete support in order to continue providing an excellent and accessible education.

As the Foundation Board moves forward with its work, we bid Dr. Ski a fond farewell and wish him success in his new position. The future holds many exciting possibilities for the Foundation, and we invite its many donors who choose to invest in the College’s future to impact the community and inspiring LFCC students. Thank you!

**2008 Calendar Items**

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LEARN MORE

For information about the LFCC Educational Foundation Inc. and Office of College Advancement, please contact Linnie Carter at lcarter@lfcc.edu or 540-888-4077.

On May 3 and 10, LFCC awarded degrees and certificates to more than 725 graduates at the College’s Commencement ceremonies.

June 2008

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Lord Fairfax Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, political affiliation or disability in its programs or activities.

Lord Fairfax Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Lord Fairfax Community College.

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