

Response from Herkimer County Community College
for March 22, 2011 Field Hearing
of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce
with Congressmen Kline and Hanna

Background on Herkimer County Community College:

Founded in 1966, Herkimer County Community College (HCCC) is a unit of the State University of New York system. The College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, which recently reaffirmed the College's accreditation for an additional 10 year period. We are a residential campus with housing for up to 629 students. According to the Integrated Post-Secondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), enrollment at HCCC in the fall 2010 semester was 3,774 students. Students come to us from throughout New York State and the rest of the nation, as well as from 29 other countries around the world.

HCCC offers more than 40 degree and certificate programs, including a strong online offering of over 100 courses, 19 degree and four certificate programs. Key programs at HCCC include: Criminal Justice, Radio/Television Broadcasting and Physical Therapy Assistant. Newer programs include Music Industry, Digital Filmmaking and Gender Studies.

HCCC excels in athletics and has earned its reputation as the "home of the champions," as is reflected by our 32 national championships, 83 regional championships, and 119 conference championships. With 28 national academic team of the year awards, we are also extremely proud of the success of our student athletes in the classroom. Our athletic department also has an outstanding record of community service projects, including the highly successful "Adopt a School Program."

HCCC maintains vital partnerships with businesses and organizations in the community in order to fulfill its mission of "*providing high quality, accessible educational opportunities and services in response to the needs of the local and regional communities.*" Collaborative initiatives include joint grant proposals for providing needed programming in the community and cooperative program implementation through shared resources.

A recent economic impact study completed by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI) of Moscow, Idaho demonstrated that "*the total economic impact attributable to Herkimer County Community College amounts to \$74.9 million each year or roughly 6.3% of the entire county economy.*"

Initiatives to help current students and graduates find employment in the local area:

HCCC Career Services helps prepare students to enter the workforce in a variety of ways including:

- paid internship experiences on campus for vocational majors that allow them to obtain practical experience in their fields;

- no-charge access to Optimal Resume, an on-line resume builder, and to the College Central Network, an on-line resource that allows students to research employment and internship opportunities locally and nationally;
- an annual Part-Time Job Fair and a Career Fair that provide opportunities for regional businesses to meet directly with students to discuss employment opportunities;
- individual sessions with the Career Counselor or Employer Relations Specialist to obtain guidance with job searches; and
- presentations and workshops to help students gain strength in such professional areas as cover letter and resume development, networking and interview skills, as well as in soft skill sets such as conflict resolution and business etiquette.

HCCC Career Services is also a founding member of the Central New York Recruiting Consortium, which was formed by local colleges (HCCC, MVCC, SUNY IT and Utica College) to allow employers to recruit students with improved access to all four campuses.

These initiatives are capped by a Graduate Follow-up Study to track our graduates' progress after they complete their studies at HCCC and to obtain data that will inform how we develop our programs and services in the future.

Partnerships with local businesses, workforce development offices, and/or other institutions of higher education:

HCCC maintains productive partnerships with regional businesses. We maintain active advisory committees for connecting academic programming to the business community, and our grant-funded Employer Relations Specialist meets with regional businesses regularly to determine staffing needs and skills sets they are looking for in applicants. Additionally, a part-time Program Specialist at the regional Working Solutions office assists area job seekers interested in improving their professional qualifications or learning new careers.

The College partners with regional organizations by maintaining seats on boards including: Mohawk Valley EDGE, United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica Area and the Genesis Group. The College also maintains membership in the County Chamber of Commerce and has a seat on the board.

HCCC works with regional partners in higher education to bring in grant funding in support of regional training needs. Examples include such fields as cybersecurity, green technology and alternative energy, healthcare and manufacturing.

Current or future programs that the institution has developed to address the needs of the local community:

HCCC provides a comprehensive offering of credit-bearing degree and certificate programs that prepare students for careers in regional industries and helps fill the workforce needs of area employers. Examples of such programs not mentioned

previously include a broad range of business programs, Computer Network Technician and Support Specialist programs, Travel and Tourism, Human Services, Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedic, Medical Coding/Transcriptionist and Teaching Assistant certificates.

HCCC's Community Education Office provides a full range of non-credit professional development training opportunities and collaborates with Herkimer BOCES on delivery of programming to best meet the needs of community members.

The College provides a variety of venues for local businesses and non-profit organizations for trainings, meetings, workshops, press conferences, and special events. The Hummel Corporate Education and Training Center features meeting/conference rooms with internet access and full AV capabilities, as well as a 150-seat amphitheater and a computer lab. The Robert McLaughlin College Center provides ample lobby space for job fairs and other events, as well as a 350-seat theater. These facilities are also available for community forums, such as a recent agricultural summit organized by several county legislators or an upcoming forum on a regional site for development of a Nanotech Center.

The College hosts a series of "Executive Breakfast" presentations featuring speakers on topics of importance to the local and regional business community. The series provides opportunities for regional business, government, non-profit and educational leaders to come together to explore current issues. In May, HCCC will host an Executive Breakfast featuring SUNY Chancellor Dr. Nancy Zimpher as guest speaker. Dr. Zimpher will speak on economic development in New York State and the role of SUNY in that process.