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I don't know if you're as tired of numbers and data and facts and figures as I am, so there is only one set of numbers I want you to focus on right now...that is the 63/9 stickers that we are all wearing today.

Remember it by  $6 + 3 = 9$ .....63/9.....and by now maybe you know what it stand for....63% of all college students in TEXAS are in COMMUNITY COLLEGES. AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES GET ONLY 9% OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING PIE. And we're getting hungrier by the moment.

*We are  
frustrated*

We support funding for all higher ed programs, but when you take a hard look at the workhorse/workforce programs we are offering at the Community College level, we think we have some important things to share with YOU. Although I'm going to give you some facts about Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, believe me when I tell you that all the 50 community colleges in Texas follow the same path and have numbers at about the same rate.

We're edging toward the 81<sup>st</sup> legislative session... We in community colleges are standing strong and it is our mission to give you the facts and numbers that are important to all of Texas. Since the close of the

80<sup>th</sup> Legislative session, We in community colleges have produced 6300 office professionals, 11,000 health care professionals, 1300 firefighters, 2700 mechanics and repair technicians....in less than two years!

This past year alone...2007, community colleges trained 62% of registered nurses, and 84% of all first Responders.

Following the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative session, coming up, Texas will need 47,000 more childcare workers, 61,000 computer specialists, 18,000 paralegals and legal assistants...to meet the state needs.

Community Colleges are expected to provide the education that leads to greater ECONOMIC opportunities and improved quality of life for all citizens. Ninety per cent of the jobs in the new economy require post secondary education. 2/3 of these jobs require a certificate or associates degree. Successful Community Colleges are necessary to provide these educational opportunities. We serve a huge number and range of students, including those who are mostly likely to have academic, financial, and personal challenges.

Community colleges are expected to educate this diverse mix of students. We happily accept and serve these students who may not have any other opportunity for a higher education.

We accept our responsibilities...we in Community Colleges are prepared to train and supply the workforce that you need in Texas...In just the past year, Del Mar College delivered 425 contract training courses for 13 South Texas Companies. We provide training in workplace Spanish, computer technology and specialized programming . We at Del Mar college in Corpus Christi also provide training for police, fire, emergency medical and OSHA personnel for a 12 county area of South Texas. Each community college in Texas does the very same thing...we provide the workforce, the training, and the skills for you and for all of Texas  
Remember  $6+3=9$ ....63%/9%

The success or failure of the state higher education plan, CLOSING THE GAPS, rests squarely on the shoulders of the state's fifty community college districts. The state portion of the partnership is to fund the operations while the local commitment lies in the construction and maintenance of the physical plant. Clearly this partnership creates a return on our investment that benefits enormously both the state

economy in the aggregate and all our local communities as well.

*give examples of student success initiatives*

Texas stands at a crossroads. We can achieve the benefits of investing in community colleges or we can face serious negative consequences if we do not meet the goals of CLOSING THE GAPS. Steve Murdock, our former state demographer detailed three population trends for Texas:

- 1) the population will show continuing and extensive growth,
- 2) Texas will have an increasingly diverse population
- 3) Texas will have an aging and age –stratified population.

Dr. Murdock concludes that unless socioeconomic and education differences among ethnic groups change, TEXAS will be poorer and less competitive in the future than it is today.

Community colleges are accessible, affordable, and attract the very students that are needed in Texas right now.

We CAN provide the education that leads to greater economic opportunity. WE CAN DO...AND YOU CAN HELP. The 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature has an opportunity

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to build a legacy for the state. We urge your  
support....

**WE CAN DO IT...BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**