

## **President's Report**

### **April, 2008**

At this past month's Oregon Presidents' Council (OPC) meeting, we reviewed and discussed a Draft Policy Statement on 40-40-20, as proposed by the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA). This same Draft Policy Statement is on our own April Board Meeting Agenda, so I thought it might be timely for me to write about it a bit in this month's President's Report.

As a "policy," 40-40-20 has gotten a somewhat mixed reception that, in my view, reflects a skepticism that we as Americans, Oregonians, and Clatsop County residents seem to have regarding just about anything coming out of "government." Suspicions of ulterior motives, disingenuousness, empty promises, and unfunded mandates "color" our view of such ambitious initiatives and, perhaps, lead us to take a "wait and see" attitude where we might otherwise jump in and work to "make it so." Some have suggested that our reference to 40-40-20 as an "aspirational" goal is a way of accommodating such skepticism, of "hedging our bets" on getting there, of backing off of the goal before we even get serious about getting started... I'd like to suggest otherwise.

The dictionary tells us that, to "aspire" means "to have a great ambition or ultimate goal; to desire strongly; to soar." I especially like this idea of "soaring," as it so aptly describes the lofty commitment that aspiration is. To aspire is to look forward with the kind of hope that makes things possible, and I believe that 40-40-20 represents an "aspirational" goal in this sense – It is about making things possible.

40-40-20 is about growing and sustaining economic vitality for the State of Oregon. It is about increasing our ability to meet tomorrow's workforce education needs and to "grow" and attract new high wage/high demand jobs. And, for us here at Clatsop Community College, it is about doing everything we can to ensure that the people of our community have every opportunity to participate in and benefit from this better future.

Sometimes I wonder how many times the Wright Brothers had to endure comments like "people can't fly", or the Kennedy Administration had to

field criticisms that putting an American on the moon was sheer “lunacy”? Or how many times the founders of our country were told that common people were not capable of governing themselves; that democracy was a pipedream? One of my favorite “truisms” goes something like “you get exactly what you settle for” and I would suggest that the goals that we set for ourselves, and the extent to which we truly aspire to reach them, are two of the most important determinants of our achievement... of what we “get.”

A better future... a future of possibility that the people of Clatsop County are prepared to participate in and benefit from. This is the goal of 40-40-20, and this is a goal truly deserving of our aspiration. Thank you for sharing with me in our determination to settle for nothing less.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Greg'. The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial 'G' and a trailing flourish.

Greg