



# President's Report

September 2024

Dr. Brian Knetl, President



## Fall Semester Off to a Soaring Start

I'm happy to report that the fall semester is off to a successful start, with segments of enrollment increasing and students engaging!

As of the second week of September, we had almost 9,400 students enrolled across our programs -- a less than 1% decrease from last year. Still, our 5,740 students seeking a degree or certificate is 4% higher than last year, driven in part by an 8% increase in new students. And Adult Education enrollment is up 5.5% to just over 1,400 students.

But students are not just numbers here at Waubonsee -- they are valued individuals who are a part of our learning community. So I was excited to join many of the college's faculty and staff in welcoming students -- whether through the "Soaring to Success" welcome tents the first few days of class, the many New Student Orientation sessions, or just checking in on students to make sure they could find their way around or had answers to other questions.



## HSI Week and Latinx Heritage Month Activities

September 15 through October 15 marks [Latinx Heritage Month](#), and Waubonsee is proud to promote, celebrate, educate, and raise awareness about Latinx heritage and honor the impact and influence that Latinx culture has had on American society through a variety of activities. From September 9-15 we celebrated National Hispanic Serving Institutions week, and I was proud to be a part of [a video explaining our designation and the many resources available](#) through the Latinx Resource Center and Title V grant.

# HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTION



## Hispanic Pioneer Breakfast and Scholarship Winners

I'm excited to share that nine Waubonsee students from Aurora earned awards during the most recent Juany Garza, Aurora Alderman of Ward 2, Scholarship season, and I was honored to celebrate them at the annual Hispanic Pioneer Breakfast. Scholarship winners include: Alexander Contreras, Huitzi Del Real, Isaac Sebastian Del Toro, Melissa Flores, Jazmin Garcia Malagon, Evelyn Lopez, Ireri Miranda-Gonzalez (*WCC alum*), Gina Montes and Isabel Nino.

## Meetings with Elected Officials

In the last few weeks, Dr. Toya Webb and I have had many opportunities to visit with elected officials, including Representative Jed Davis, 75th District; Mayor Richard Irvin, City of Aurora; and Senator Karina Villa, 25th District. Senator Villa's tour of the Aurora Downtown Campus included a chance to meet students at the Latinx Resource Center and experience an English Language Acquisition class.



## Condolences on the Passing of a Waubonsee Trustee Emeritus

Mr. James K. Michels passed away on Sept. 9. First elected to the Waubonsee board in 1987, he went on to become the college's longest continuously-serving trustee, with a 36-year tenure. His passing is a loss for the community and for the college. My deepest condolences go out to the Michels family and the many members of the Waubonsee family who knew and worked with him.

## AROUND THE COLLEGE

### Happy 7th Birthday, Hope!

Waubonsee recently hosted a birthday bash for K-9 Hope, held in conjunction with Student Life's Back-to-School Picnic. Hope and her handler, Waubonsee Officer Danny Ramirez, have already interacted with over 200 students, faculty, and staff this semester. K-9 Hope now has a request form available online for the Waubonsee community to request a comfort visit or event appearance.



## What I'm Reading

- ♦ *Radical Reimagining for Student Success in Higher Education*, Edited by Jo Arney, Timothy Dale, Glenn Davis, and Jillian Kinzie
- ♦ *AI and the Future of Education: Teaching in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* by Priten Shah
- ♦ *The Agile College: How Institutions Successfully Navigate Demographic Change* by Nathan D. Grawe



## What I'm Following

- ♦ @waubonsee social media channels
- ♦ Jobs for the Future (JFF) on LinkedIn

# Coming Up

### September 20

Shauna Weatherspoon, Director of Community Development for Fox Valley Habitat for Humanity Partnership Opportunity

Laura Newman, Batavia City Administrator, and Gary Holm, Batavia Director of Public Works

### September 22

Bike the Burbs

### September 24

Annual State of the College

### September 25

Board of Trustees Retreat - Policy and Planning with Jim Reed, ICCTA Executive Director

### September 27

Strategic Planning Non-Profit Sector Meeting

Representative Barbara Hernandez, District 50 with Dr. Webb

### September 30

Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce 2024 Legislative Luncheon

### October 3

Congressman Bill Foster's Career and Job Fair, APC, Sugar Grove Campus