



President's Report

March 2023

Dr. Brian Knetl, President



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

I'm proud to have represented the Two Rivers Head Start Agency of Aurora at the Kane County Farm Bureau's 22nd Annual Food Check-Out Challenge Shopping Spree. Illinois State Representative Matt Hanson, 83rd District, represented the Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry. We raced through the store gathering groceries in a friendly competition. Together, we raised nearly \$4,000 in groceries donated to our respective food pantry. A big thank you to Spiro Piperi, store manager, and his staff at my neighborhood Jewel-Osco store in Batavia for participating in this event that works to combat hunger in our community. Photos and video available at <https://www.facebook.com/KaneCountyFarmBureau>.



Dr. Brian Knetl and Representative Matt Hanson await the signal to begin shopping.

My immersion into everything Waubonsee has continued, and I was pleased to provide remarks and get some student feedback during the Student Life Leadership Summit. The key-note speaker for the event was Student Trustee Juan Chiu who shared some excellent advice for our returning and incoming student leaders and Gustafson Scholars. I also had the opportunity to welcome some of our high school partners during the VALEES Building Partnerships for America's Future: A CTE Development Conference. Several of our Waubonsee faculty and staff participated as presenters and I particularly enjoyed the panel of students and their industry hosts who spoke about the value of learning from experience in a work-based setting. I have also enjoyed connecting with my fellow Illinois presidents at the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents meetings. And, I attended my first Waubonsee Foundation Quarterly Board Meeting and provided a College update.



Student Life Leadership Summit



Dr. Brian Knetl, Dr. Alyson Gaspar, Student Panelists, Cassie Blickem, and Rodrigo Lopez at VALEES Building Partnerships for America's Future



Dr. Brian Knetl, City of Aurora Mayor Richard Irvin, Dr. Jamal Scott

My activity within the community has continued and included a meeting with the City of Aurora Mayor, Richard Irvin, the mayor's staff, and Dr. Jamal Scott. I was also able to attend Mayor Irvin's State of the City Address: Aurora Ascending, the Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce 2023 Regional Economic Pulse moderated by Dr. Scott, and provide welcome remarks at the Sugar Grove State of the Village meeting which was held in the Academic and Professional Center on our Sugar Grove Campus. Ne'Keisha Stepney served as emcee. On March 2, I attended the VNA Health Care's Growing for Tomorrow Campaign Launch.



Sugar Grove Village President Jennifer Konen and Dr. Brian Knetl



Trustee James Michels and Foundation Director Brian Dolan at the Sugar Grove State of the Village meeting

My wife, Amy, and I enjoyed attending the Aurora African American Heritage Advisory Board's 17th Annual Heritage Dinner along with several Waubonsee staff as well as the world premiere reading of *Brighter Futures/Daskalos*, a commission theatre for Young Audiences Production at the Copley Theatre.



Stages of Listening and Learning

I was excited to launch my listening tour, Tour de Waubonsee. My goal is to meet with as many students and employees as I can during March and April to learn more about student clubs, organizations and other groups as well as departments, programs, projects, or committees directly from students and employees. I will be listening for those things that are going well, how I can support them moving forward, and to identify common themes that can inform future planning. Several student and employee groups have already scheduled a listening session. Stay up to date with the latest news from the road at waubonsee.edu/ListeningTour.

AROUND THE COLLEGE

On February 25, the WCC Automotive Department hosted the 15th annual WCC/VALEES Automotive Skills Contest. Teams of five students from participating schools compete to diagnose and repair complex automotive problems during a three-hour competition. Six local high school and career center programs, Oswego East High School, Oswego High School, Indian Valley Vocational Center, East Aurora High School, West Aurora High School, and Fox Valley Career Center competed for the coveted WCC/VALEES Skills Traveling Trophy. This year, students from Oswego East High School were crowned the champions under their instructor Jake Evans.

On March 8, Dr. Melinda Tejada facilitated judging of the John J. Swalec, Jr. President's Achievement Awards. The distinguished panel of judges included Yonas Hagos, Entrepreneur Yorkville Dunkin Donuts/Baskin Robbins Franchisee; Julio A. Macias, Executive Director at Covenant Living Communities and Services in Batavia; Wamecca Rodriguez, Library Media Specialist at Yorkville CUSD #115; and Brian Schmidt, Chief Operator Officer at Deep Coat Industries LLC in Sugar Grove.

On March 9, Business, Technology and Workforce Education (BTWE) hosted the BTWE Open House and CTE Signing Day in Akerlow and Weigel Halls. This annual event organized by the Automotive Technology Faculty is an opportunity for prospective students to tour Waubonsee CTE lab spaces, meet program instructors, and connect with employers in the industry. CTE programs that participated include: Automotive Technology, Auto Body Repair, Automation Technology, Computer Aided Design and Drafting, Cybersecurity, HVAC, Machine Tool Technology, and Welding Technology. Attendees had an opportunity to "sign" signaling their commitment to enroll in the program for Fall 2023. More than 400 students and employer partners participated.

The Waubonsee Community College Foundation's 2022 Giving Tuesday appeal raised \$55,000. The Dr. Christine J. Sobek Endowed Scholarship Fund appeal raised \$34,600 together with the \$10,000 match from the Foundation, this \$44,600 will fund an endowed scholarship for students exploring leadership opportunities at Waubonsee.



Coming Up

What I'm Reading

- The Empowered University: Shared Leadership, Culture Change, and Academic Success by Freeman Hrabowski III
- Upward Transfers Down Again by Matthew Dembicki, *CC Daily*



What I'm Following

- #AFITHigherEd on LinkedIn
- The [EdUp Experience](#) podcast
- @waubonsee social media channels
- *Follow me on Twitter at @WCCPresident*

March 16

Meeting with Sugar Grove Village President, Jennifer Konen

March 22

No Small Matter event at Copley Theatre, sponsored by the Aurora Education Commission

Illinois Design Educators Association (IDEA) Regional Competition hosted by BTWE and Randy Hines, Associate Professor of Computer Aided Design and Drafting. High school students participate in a project-based competition, both individual and team categories, judged by industry professionals. The event will also include a panel of current CAD/Engineering students and industry professionals sharing insights and experiences.

March 23

Visits to Plano and Aurora Fox Valley campuses

March 25-27

Higher Learning Commission's 2023 Annual Conference in Chicago

March 29

Manager's Meeting with the President

April 5

Dunham Teaching Endorsement Initiative Strategy Session
Aurora Education Commission

April 15

Annual Sugar Grove Campus Open House