

**Yavapai College District Governing Board
Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning
August 9, 2016**

Focus Forum Outcomes

Background

At the direction of the Board, the President submitted a proposal at the November 9, 2015 Board meeting to conduct five Focus Forums across Yavapai County. The Forums were held from February through April of 2016 and led by facilitator, Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning. The purpose of the Forums was to provide ownership connection, seek perspective, identify missing voices, and gather long term, greater good expectations and values of the College from across the County.

Locations

With Board approval and direction, sessions were conducted in a municipality within each Governing Board member's district and based on College student enrollment populations (Cottonwood, Dewey, Chino Valley, Prescott, Prescott Valley).

Participants

In order to insure a wide range of interested and knowledgeable participants, each forum invited the following key participants: students, superintendents, mayors, town managers, business leaders, Chamber of Commerce representatives, and Economic Development representatives. In addition, Board members were invited to attend the forum in their District.

Process

The Focus Forums engaged 32 participants, across the region with an average group size of 6.4 participants, for 90 minute sessions. Ensuring a comfortable, relaxed environment was an important part of these forums. The following questions, approved by the Board were at the core of the contacts. Additional questions and topics were generated by group participants as the sessions progressed.

- What do you value about YC?
- How does YC meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of our communities?
- What do you believe will be the most significant challenges facing YC (higher education) in the next 5 years?
- Are there particular needs/issues you would like YC to address?

**Yavapai College District Governing Board
Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning
August 9, 2016**

Focus Forums Outcomes (continued)

Outcomes

Attached are summaries of participant comments. In order to promote full communication, participants were assured that individual comments would not be attributable to any participant.

The following challenges were identified:

- Political climate (State and County funding)
- Rapid change of expectations regarding program mix and delivery
- Desire for YC to address variety of community needs

The following needs/issues were expressed:

- Make system whole – settle east side issues and move forward
- Help students to come back to work in their community
- Encourage citizens of their communities to better themselves through education

Participants were very supportive of programming and embraced the role of Yavapai College in our communities.

- YC is an economic driver in the region
- Programming is flexible and responds to community needs (e.g. REDC, CTEC, SWC)
- YC supports and enhances the cultural enrichment in the area
- Programming across all ages is appreciated, from Family Enrichment Center to Osher Lifelong Learning

Attendees:

Dr. Bogner, Assistant Superintendent, Humboldt Unified School District
Marnie Uhl, President, Prescott Valley Chamber of Commerce
Harvey Skoog, Mayor, Prescott Valley
Larry Tarkowski - Town Manager, Prescott Valley
Mike Paredes - Executive Director, Prescott Valley Economic Development
Bhreigha Paul, Student, Yavapai College
Zara Glidden, Student, Yavapai College
Karen Jones, Executive Assistant, District Governing Board and President, Yavapai College
Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning, Yavapai College - Facilitator

Discussion:

What do you value about Yavapai College?

- Quality – this quality is recognized throughout the state
- Human capital – human talent
- Economic driver for the county - recruiting business/industry
- Academic programs – flexibility to address needs - continued growth
- Locations - convenience and quality of campuses
- Point of pride - serving all comers – employees provide outstanding service and assistance – great mentors
- Willingness to serve evolving needs – workforce or special needs – YC has offered to develop curriculum and/or programs that respond to the needs of new industry
- Provides a place for students to discover education or work opportunities
- Student support through faculty, residence life, advising, student services
- Environment that values students
- Dual enrollment – to familiarize students with post-secondary education
- Lifelong Learning
- Raises the community intellect, dialogue and level of awareness
- Attracts an educated population that will form our democratic processes
- Cultural enrichment
- Diverse population in and out of the classroom (i.e. all ages)
- Destination for students – weather, rural, personal, and residence life
- Outstanding academic programs (i.e. criminal justice, nursing)

How does Yavapai College meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of our communities?

- Education - technical programs, specifically CTEC - scary good!
- Economic
 - o Contribute to the economic drivers
 - o Retains the human talent by providing programs that fill or create local workforce
 - o Catalyst of economic workforce and attracts employers
- Cultural
 - o Outstanding facilities
 - o Diverse performances to include local and national
 - o Addresses the wants of many retired citizens moving to a smaller community but still expecting a cultural experience

What do you believe will be the most significant challenges facing Yavapai College (higher education) in the next 5 years?

- Politics within the community wanting to split the community/budgets/programs – lessening the impact of true and good programming
- Declining enrollment - YC must stay academically relevant
- Competition from global competitors – online – YC must be fluid
- Ever changing demographic – YC should be flexible to needs and wants of students
- Accessibility – students will go where their needs are met
- Learning and teaching methods are changing quickly –YC must adapt and set a standard
- Availability of classes – YC must be sensitive the student needs - 7 or 8 week terms
- Students know that learning is available 24/7 and will find resources to fit their needs

Are there particular needs/issues you would like YC to address?

- PV need YC's commitment to address the growth and educational needs. PV is the youngest population in Yavapai County, largest and fastest growing community in Arizona, and the workforce of Yavapai County.
- YC's challenge is to implement programs in PV (i.e. Allied Health Center). An Allied Health Center will recruit students to Yavapai County and will benefit the county with employment, educated population, and outstanding economic benefits.
- Large center in PV to be the economic engine for the County, not limited to Nursing or Allied Health.
- YC should provide specialized campuses/sites to programs and not duplicate programs on all campuses.
- Make the YC system whole and address the East side needs so YC can move forward to address the needs of PV. 2/3 of Yavapai County population is located on the West side of county. YC is an economic engine and is invited to build a destination in PV.
- If there is a demand for a program – YC must address or private providers will supply the need.
- Requesting Gen Ed courses in PV. Bradshaw High School has a population of 1700, total HUSD of 5800 students (largest in the county).
- Student concerned that YC will promote online or fast pace completion, and finds value in the traditional liberal arts experience.

DGB Focus Forum - District #2 - Dewey/Humboldt

March 3, 2016

Attendees:

Howard Moody, Finance Director, Mountain Institute, JTED

Yvonne Kimball, Town Manager, Dewey-Humboldt

Dennis Repan, Council Member, Dewey-Humboldt

Chuck Leon, Community Leader

Jerry Schultz, Community Leader

Karen Jones, Executive Assistant, District Governing Board and President, Yavapai College

Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning, Yavapai College – Facilitator

Discussion:

What do you value about Yavapai College?

- Commitment to continuous evaluation of community industry/economic needs and developing programs to fill these educational needs
- Vocational programs - CTEC
- Proactive in discovering the educational needs of the community – in touch with community leaders and economic development
- Lifelong learning
- Support of JTED
- Performing Arts Center and cultural enrichment
- President Wills' forward vision

How does Yavapai College meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of our communities?

- Collaboration with Prescott Valley growth and economic plans – support of the rapid growth in PV will directly affect the success of the county
- Providing opportunity for post-secondary and vocational education

What do you believe will be the most significant challenges facing Yavapai College (higher education) in the next 5 years?

- Continuing to stay proactive in economic development
- Demographics of zip code 86333 - challenge to promote students to continue on to post-secondary or vocational education
- Marketing – advertise programs
- Tuition and fees staying economically feasible
- Education that provides a living wage
- Continuing dual enrollment
- Face to face – personal contact with students
- Social challenges of Yavapai County
- Partnerships - stream line and combine resources
- Maintaining and improving verbal and written communication skills

Are there particular needs/issues you would like YC to address?

- Keep our students in Yavapai County (e.g. nurses, machinist, mechanics, etc.)
- Community's need for skilled workers
- Support economic development within the quad cities

- Dual enrollment fees- may be harmful
- Build upon current successes of the College and the County
- District #2 students need more information, encouragement, and opportunity regarding post-secondary or vocational education
- Approach students at the high school – promote the opportunities available at YC – day tours
- Engage students as early and often as possible - start with middle school
- Mentoring programs with community leaders
- Educate the public (Yavapai County) on services, programs, and events available at the College - YRMC recently engaged in a public education program and gained significant public support
- Keep education affordable
- Collaborate YC resources with other community resources

DGB Focus Forum - District #3 - Cottonwood

March 16, 2016

Attendees:

Barbara U'Ren, School Superintendent
Diane Joens, Mayor of Cottonwood
Lana Tolleson, Chamber Representative
Casey Rooney, Economic Development Representative
Scott Steffen, Business Leader - Precision laboratories, Inc.
Thomas Dunbar, Student, Yavapai College
Al Filardo, DGB Member
Barbara Robinson, Coordinator, Yavapai College
Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning, Yavapai College – Facilitator

What do you value about Yavapai College?

- It is right here in Verde Valley and helps economic development
- Dual enrollment
- Life Long Learning Programs
- Close to home, convenient
- Affordable, live your life while getting an education
- Southwest Wine Center
- Comfortable and safe
- Reach and work with families

How does Yavapai College meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of our communities?

- Quick to respond to business needs
- Training people so they can support their families
- YC provides timely business data related to needed training
- YC creates success stories by providing what is needed in the community for jobs
- Diversity is encouraged

What do you believe will be the most significant challenges facing Yavapai College (higher education) in the next 5 years?

- State funding
- Enrollment decline
- Build “roots” – grow community
- Leadership needs to gain trust and turn community negativity to a positive position
- Promote college for all ages (include parents)
- Tax distribution equity and fairness
- More personalization at Verde Valley, i.e. marketing and community

Are there particular needs/issues you would like YC to address?

- Foster cultural and art program tied to community
- Performance center in Verde Valley
- Study separate college – strong sentiment to settle the issue
- Business incubator to bring in younger people
- Create challenge or desire for young people to want to build something bigger at Verde Valley
- Outreach at young age to create awareness about what YC can do for them
- Build “roots” in the community

DGB Focus Forum - District #4 - Chino Valley

April 7, 2016

Attendees:

John Scholl, Director of Support Services, Chino Valley School District
Chris Marley, Mayor of Chino Valley
Robert Smith, Town Manager of Chino Valley
Kimberly Bowen, Bowen Chiropractic, Business leader
Ruth Mayday, Development Services Director, Economic Development
Stephen "Major" Wopershall, Student, Yavapai College
Michelle Ward, Student, Yavapai College
Barbara Robinson, Coordinator, Yavapai College
Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning, Yavapai College - Facilitator

What do you value about Yavapai College?

- REDC is a great resource (provides tremendous information and assistance)
- The Performing Arts Center
- Supportive and flexible teachers
- Great staff
- Accessibility
- Breadth of classes – opportunities for young and old (Kid's College to OLLI)
- Dual Enrollment, even for a small fee
- Partnership with school district
- CTE Programs
- JTED
- Multiple campuses a plus
- Good financial value for education
- Provide educated employees for local industry
- Workforce development to transform local unemployment

How does Yavapai College meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of our communities?

- Ability to be agile and responsive and answer community's needs
- Diversity
- Special events (sponsor or provide location)
- Horticulture programs assist Farmer's Market
- Performing Arts Center (even though 15 miles away)
- OLLI Program
- Economic, cultural, and educational partnerships with businesses, senior citizens, and school district

What do you believe will be the most significant challenges facing Yavapai College (higher education) in the next 5 years?

- Cost of tuition
- Retention
- Narrowing the broad offerings and remaining flexible
- Staffing as economy improves – faculty and staff will go elsewhere for higher pay
- Being able to continue dual enrollment

- How quickly instruction is changing (on-line is not the only way to learn)
- Variety of instructional support
- Predicting community needs and meeting them

Are there particular needs/issues you would like YC to address?

- Broaden cultural activities within the community
- More non-credit activities
- Lease classrooms to clubs/groups/business development meetings
- Wayfinding – more daily presence so people know the College is way out there
- Aquaponics (fish and plants) project for whole family, intergenerational, teach sustainability.
- Partner with town to launch training for needed skill sets for industries in future industrial park prior to industry arrival

DGB Focus Forum - District #1 - Prescott

April 20, 2016

Attendees:

Joe Howard, Superintendent, Prescott Unified School District
Billie Orr, Council Member
Gillian Haley, Business Leader, Haley Construction
Jeff Burt, Economic Development
Dave Mauer, CEO, Chamber Representative
Remington Stoddard, Student, Yavapai College
Mishael Umlor, Student, Yavapai College
Barbara Robinson, Coordinator, Yavapai College
Dennis Garvey, Dean for Lifelong Learning, Yavapai College - Facilitator

What do you value about Yavapai College?

- Enology program – helps some people follow their dreams and has a national impact
- Verde Valley Campus is beautiful
- REDC knows what they are doing; great resource for area and all over AZ
- Flexibility to meet changing needs in state and community; creates stability within community
- Partnerships across the community
- Life Long Learning Programs
- YC covers span of generations in the community
- Performing Arts Center
- Kids know Yavapai College is a great option for them
- Sports teams great for central and northern AZ (and even outside AZ)
- High success rates with continuation to universities (“pathways” flows into NAU)
- Students are employable when they leave
- We value that the College values the community
- Yavapai College responds, grows and changes with needs of community

How does Yavapai College meet the educational, economic, and cultural needs of our communities?

- Dual Enrollment keeps getting better
- CTEC fills a void; provides usable skills
- Employers are reassured they are getting teachable employees if they went to Yavapai College
- Nursing program meets area needs and the end product (educated student) can stay here (YRMC)
- Performing Arts Center is first class venue and comparable to other states
- Cultural events fill area hotel rooms and restaurants (boosts economy)
- Businesses value that a college is in their community or potential community

What do you believe will be the most significant challenges facing Yavapai College (higher education) in the next 5 years?

- Demographics (aging population)
- Addressing the variety of needs, you can't be everything for everyone. Tightening services for the best return on the dollar.
- Determining which programs are sustainable and of interest to local employers
- Continuing to grow enrollments and keeping competitive edge

- Increasing the number of completers
- Remaining in contact with students
- The difference of opinions of Board members keeps the college from moving forward (all boxed up)

Are there particular needs/issues you would like YC to address?

- Address the politics; get the entire Board to agree that the whole college is great
- Do long term projections on local employment needs and focus programming on that
- Teach more team development, communication, and motivational skills
- Create additional clear pathways like students CTEC
- Continue to facilitate economic development
- Create partnerships with business to attract them to the community
- Healthcare is a growing opportunity with the aging population
- Connect the talented retirees in the area to engage them to create a new updated model (like SCORE was) as an economic incubator
- Develop niche, such as technology and help people gain the needed skills (vineyards is example of niche)
- Help attract students to come back to work in the community