

## **Goal 2: Higher education will join elementary and secondary education to improve teaching and learning at all levels.**

### **What is Joliet Junior College now doing that advances this goal and related actions?**

The Tech Prep program continues to forge relationships with local high schools and career centers. JJC now has expanded the program to over ten sites and has developed over fifty transfer of credit agreements with these sites. Occupational students in the local high schools and career centers can earn college credit upon presentation of certificates which indicate that they successfully completed a year of study through a Tech Prep initiative. One of the most successful areas has been in Cisco training where the high school or career center and the College have been able to offer state-of-the-art networking training and certification at four sites (JJC North Campus, WILCO Career Center, Reed-Custer HS, and Grundy County Career Center). Specifically, students who complete the core sequence are eligible to take the Cisco Certified Networking Associate Exam. The program has experienced rapid growth and there are still more students who wish to enroll than spaces for those students.

One of the important initiatives taken during the past academic year concerned JJC's involvement with the new requirements for Paraprofessional training. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and a retired education faculty member served on a state-wide task force organized by ICCB/IBHE/ISBE. The work of the task force has helped to define the methods and actions that should be taken to assist paraprofessionals meet the new training requirements define under the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. JJC began in earnest in October to meet with District 525 schools and help to initiate training programs for paraprofessionals. The retired adjunct faculty member was employed on a part-time basis to serve as the liaison with local schools. Several courses have been offered at various schools which meet the time and place requirements of this population.

The Academic Skills Center in conjunction with the Information Technology Center has worked over the last three years and has initiated ACT COMPASS Test sites at 17 high schools. College resources were shifted to allow a test facilitator to visit each high school and coordinate "on-site" testing. This provides immediate feedback on course placement for students. Some 600 students took advantage of this option during the past year.

Joliet Junior College has been a leading player in the Fairmont Partnership, which provides assistance to one of the local schools which has been on the ISBE "watch list". The Fairmont Partnership consists of JJC grant writers, the local housing authority, health care providers, business and industry partners, and the local Park District. The group helped the school district secure a 21<sup>st</sup> Century

federal grant and is currently developing strategies for future funding raising initiatives.

Joliet Junior College sponsors a district-wide college fair every October with area high schools. Classes at the main campus are cancelled for the evening as more than a thousand prospective college students and parents descend on the college to meet with 100-125 college admissions representatives.

One of the goals from last year's report involved expanding the High School Counselor's Summer Institute. This goal was accomplished as twelve new counselors received training in a week-long series of sessions organized by Joliet Junior College's Counseling Department.

**What specific actions does Joliet Junior College intend to undertake in the coming year (or two) to advance this goal and related actions?**

JJC has undertaken two initiatives which have been defined as new important steps for the college in its role as a provider of training for prospective and current educators. The first initiative involves the continuing work on paraprofessional training. JJC will continue to provide courses and workshop training for paraprofessionals at times and places that are convenient. The second initiative involves the establishment of an "educational training center" at a site jointly supported by Joliet Junior College, Governor's State University, and Lincoln Way High School. Begun in the Fall of 2002, JJC and GSU offered a series of courses designed to allow prospective education majors to start their undergraduate degrees, work on upper division requirements for the BSEd, or take graduate courses. The joint venture occurred through the collaborative relationships of the three levels of education to promote "educational training" in one of the most densely populated sections of District 525. JJC has committed resources, including staff, to this venture and is well positioned to expand this initiative in the coming years.