August 9, 2011

John Morton, Vice President for Community Colleges
Peter Quigley, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
T. Kamuela Chun, Director
University of Hawaii Community College System
2444 Dole Street
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dear President and Team Leaders:

Thank you for the report on your Achieving the Dream activities and expenditures. ATD has completed a review of the report and approved it.

The report helped us better understand the challenges your institution faces and the progress you are making toward increasing student success. We are encouraged by several things, including:

**Committed Leadership**
- The commitment shown by the president, administrators, faculty, and staff to student success and closing achievement gaps.
- The designation of student success as a top priority at the institution.
- The clear commitment by the UHCC system to support the individual colleges’ interventions and associated professional development of staff to further ATD goals.

**Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services**
- The use of disaggregated, longitudinal data in institutional decision-making.
- The evidence-supported presentations at the ATD Strategy institute, AACC Convention, and League for Innovation.
- The implementation of the UHCC data tool to provide better and more accessible data to member colleges.

**Broad Engagement**
- The system’s support for broad representation of UHCC at the 2011 Strategy Institute
- The involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders in decision-making.
Systemic Institutional Improvement

- The growing culture of evidence at your institution.
- The increased capacity of the colleges’ institutional research offices, and their collaboration with counterparts in the system office.
- UHCC’s broad support and encouragement for Achieving the Dream activities at the college level.
- The increasing availability of data via the university’s data tool.
- The reallocation of resources to support student success interventions.
- The strengthening of individual colleges’ abilities to implement a broad spectrum of student success interventions.

Based on your report and our observations of your work over the past year, we urge you to pay special attention to the following issues in the coming year. Your data facilitator and coach can help you address these challenges.

Committed Leadership

- Increase opportunities for senior system and college leaders to meet periodically to discuss institutional data; achievement gaps; the piloting, implementation, and evaluation of interventions; and scaling across the system.
- Increase systematic, statewide communications about ATD principles, goals, and measures of success; how ATD is being implemented at the colleges; and the colleges’ results.
- Consider integrating accountability measures into performance evaluation processes for senior leaders.

Use of Evidence to Improve Policies, Programs, and Services

- Continue to strengthen the institution’s institutional research capacity so it can be responsive to requests for information and generate useful information for institutional decision-making.
- Assure that adequate IT systems are in place to allow for user-friendly retrieval and analysis of data.
- Continue to strengthen the systematic analysis and reporting of longitudinal data on student cohorts.
- Continue to address inconsistencies in individual college policies to assure that they are aligned with the student success agenda and UHCC’s goals.
- Continue to regularly disaggregate student data to identify achievement gaps.
• Reallocate resources based on college successes in implementing and scaling interventions that measurably improve student persistence, progress, and completion.
• Consider offering system-wide staff development in accessing and interpreting data and further college-level evaluation of interventions to boost the developing culture of evidence.

Broad Engagement
• Further strengthen plans for sustained community, staff, student, and faculty engagement.
• Further involve faculty and student services staff on committees concerned with student success.
• Further communicate the student success work, accomplishments, and challenges to internal and external stakeholders.
• Continue to encourage dialogue among different areas and stakeholders at the institution and in the greater community. Further encourage student participation in the ATD conversation across all colleges through communications, special events, and focus groups.
• Increase communication and collaboration with feeder schools to help increase the college readiness of those graduating from high school.
• Encourage and support all colleges to engage with the communities they serve.
• Establish opportunities for discussion of student progress data and the implications for community involvement in the work of ATD.

Systemic Institutional Improvement
• Increase the number of students impacted by the various ATD interventions, which the data show is increasing student success.
• Continue to support college plans to scale up and/or institutionalize successful interventions.
• Further reallocate institutional funds to continue student success interventions that are shown to be successful.
• Further imbed the culture of evidence and inquiry throughout the institution.
• Review system-wide policies to determine whether policy changes might further the student success agenda.
• Further implement plans to align and integrate Achieving the Dream work with the core activities, processes, and policies of the system.
• Continue to create a strategic planning process that relies on data to set goals, measure performance, and allocate resources.
• Recognize and publicly applaud initiatives that are consistently successful in narrowing performance gaps.
• Integrate ATD communications plans for each college into UHCC’s communications plans. Also, integrate system and college communications plans to inform a broader range of business, non-profit, social, ethnic, and religious communities about ATD goals and activities.
• When additional resources become available, restore positions whose loss resulted in failure to sustain potentially successful interventions.

Since University of Hawaii Community College System is moving into its 4th year of implementation, you should expect up to three days assistance from your coach and three days assistance from your data coach in the coming year. While you will receive fewer days of technical assistance from your data coach and coach, this does not reflect a reduction in their commitment, or ours, to support your Achieving the Dream work. Your data coach and coach will continue to participate in the annual Strategy Institute, providing another opportunity to lend support and advice.

In order to maintain uniformity in your budget format and line items, please use your 2011 financial report in all Achieving the Dream budgetary matters. If the college needs to revise any line item by more than 20 percent, and that line item is greater than $10,000, the college must seek advance approval from MDC. At the end of this fiscal year, any remaining funds may be carried over into the next year’s budget while staying in the same line item. Any deviation needs advance approval from MDC. Please contact info@achievingthedream.org for more information.
We look forward to another year of collaboration with you and to seeing you at the 2012 Strategy Institute.

Sincerely,

Carol A. Lincoln
Senior Vice President
Achieving the Dream

cc: Bernadine Fong, Coach
    Bill Piland, Data Coach