

Welcoming Remarks

GCC Board of Trustees and Foundation Board of Governors Chairs

Convocation

August 13, 2012

GCC Multipurpose Auditorium

6:00 P.M.

Debbie:

Hafa adai, I'm Deborah Belanger, the new chair of the Guam Community College Board of Trustees,

Lori:

And I'm Lorraine Okada, chair of the Foundation Board of Governors. We are here tonight to welcome you back to what promises to be another great academic year at GCC,

Debbie:

And to tell you all how proud we are of all your successful efforts in securing reaffirmation of accreditation at GCC for another six years. It is our job on the Board of Trustees to set the policies,

Lori:

And our job on the Foundation Board to recruit the donors, but all of you are on the front line of workforce development. You are the educators,

Debbie:

The support staff, the administrators – the people who make GCC the successful, vibrant institution that it is today.

Lori:

We are here to support your efforts,

Debbie:

To strengthen your efforts,

Lori:

And tonight, to applaud your efforts. It is an honor to serve with you,

Debbie:

And to support the GCC mission:

Both:

To be a leader in workforce development by providing the highest quality education and job training in Micronesia.

Debbie:

Welcome back, everyone. Have a great evening,

Lori:

And a shining academic year!

A TIME TO SHINE

Buenas, everyone. The pin I am wearing tonight boldly declares *Taking Teaching and Learning by the Horns* ~that's what we all do here at Guam Community College. I picked up this pin in Texas about two years ago when I was presenting our GCC story in a national assessment conference. If we did not take teaching and learning seriously, we would not have impressed our accreditors in their campus visit last March. It is therefore appropriate that "A Time to Shine" is our theme for this convocation and for Academic Year 2012-2013. And shining we are, having earned reaffirmation of our accreditation for six more years. Can you please all stand, and shake the hand of the person to your right or left, and say "congratulations, you deserved it!" Now extend your right arm in front of you and tap your back for a job well done. Biba, GCC!

As in past Convocations, it is with great honor and intense pride that I open tonight's event signaling the start of another academic year of service to our students. Unlike previous Convocations, however, I have no new acronyms tonight (beyond those that you are already familiar with) so there is no need to take down notes. Remember, A+DATA (A+ D-A-T-A) two years ago, and SUN (S-U-N) last year. None of that this year. There will also be no quiz at the end, and no incentives for reciting back to me what my acronyms stand for. Instead, all I ask is for all of us to be reflective about what we do, why we are here, and who benefits from the work we do as we go through our festivities tonight.

In fact, I will depart from tradition with this year's Convocation address by telling you a joke at the outset. I will however try to put this in the context of our institutional evaluation process and hence I will call this a Performance-Based Evaluation joke.

Two individuals stood before the gates of St. Peter – a church minister (either a pastor or a priest) and a taxi driver. After they completed their registration, St. Peter assigned a big mansion to the taxi driver and a small cottage to the church minister.

“But, your Holiness, the minister said, “I led a whole church congregation on earth, why is the taxi driver’s heavenly home bigger than mine?”

“Oh, yes, “ St. Peter answered at once, “here in heaven, my son, we go by performance-based evaluation.” Because the minister looked puzzled, he continued, “I did assess both of your performance in terms of outcomes.” He then turned to the minister and said, “When you gave your sermons in church,

many people fell asleep, but when people got into this man's taxi, they prayed like they've never prayed before."

(Wait till LAUGHTER subsides)

And I've never prayed harder myself than in the days prior to the announcement regarding the decision about our reaffirmation of accreditation. Since I knew that the ACCJC website usually publishes the results between July 1 and 4, I became quite concerned when July 1 came and went, then July 2, then July 3, and still nada, nothing. I tossed and turned in bed several times during those nights. I was restless. Finally on July 3, in the middle of the night, I was roused from my troubled sleep and I emailed the President and asked if she has heard anything. I became more concerned when she said NONE so far; I thought then that something must be wrong, that somehow, the decision will not be favorable. I was not in any vacation mood at all, though I was in fact, at that time, in

Seoul, KOREA along with my wife for a brief vacation. Those days in Seoul, while anxiously waiting for the ACCJC decision, *kimchee* did not taste spicy at all, neither was *kalbi tang* soupy enough for me.

There is a behind-the-scenes story in all of this, and I would like to tell you this story because it teaches us some insights that will make us mindful of how we will plan and strategize for the next visit in another six years.

I bet not too many of you know that the President went before the Commission to do a 3-minute testimony before the 19-member Commission on June 3. It was a last-ditch effort on our part to impress upon the Commission that we took the team's recommendations seriously. The President and I of course had a sneak peek of the Evaluation Report before it was finalized, so we had cause for concern. We decided her

testimony before the Commission was the best course of action because we heard some bit of hesitation in Dr. Chip's voice (he was our team chair) when we insisted on some reassurance from him about the possibility of our reaffirmation just before the exit meeting. He was blunt and honest when he said, "It will be up to the Commission to decide; at the very least you can get a warning, or reaffirmation," he confided to the president, who later shared this with me. The almost celebratory mood created during that exit meeting was a bit dampened by this nagging thought, since we knew that the team had initial concerns about the little DE we had, and later, about our staff governance component. So we acted quickly: in response to those recommendations, two immediate actions were necessary. AS AVP, I sent out a memo directing the college community to hold off on expansion plans for Distance Education until, as the team recommended, we can get a DE strategic plan discussed and developed institutionally.

Secondly, we met quickly with a handful of staff leaders on campus and discussed the team's recommendations with them. They immediately stepped up to the plate and formed a Staff Governance component, complete with bylaws and officers in a matter of, believe it or not, several days. The President, in turn, took that list of officers and the relevant documents and used those as evidence of our seriousness of purpose when she testified before the Commission. As we would learn of course much later, we were commended by Dr. Beno for taking these actions even before the Commission meeting to discuss our specific report. [Although I learned later that ACCJC received an email from one GCC constituent regarding my memo on DE, but that's another story.]

When ACCJC, in the early morning of July 4, finally sent a message to the President, she texted me quickly to relay the news. Needless to say, I was jumping gleefully on my hotel bed

in Seoul, and suddenly later that day, kimchee tasted spicy again, and I had a craving for more kalbi tang. The world never seemed so bright and beautiful!

When the official list was finally released, there was even more cause for celebration. Of the 45 institutions that ACCJC reviewed during their June 2012 meeting, GCC was in a special league of only 3 institutions that received very favorable marks from the Commission. The rest of the institutions, 42 of them, were under different levels of sanctions or various stages of submissions of progress report, follow up visit, acceptance or rejection of reports, or similar actions. In fact, of the 9 ACCJC institutions that hosted comprehensive visits, like us, only 3 were given reaffirmation of accreditation, and 6 institutions received various levels of sanctions: 3 received Warning, 2 received Probation, and 1 received Show Cause.

So the question is: Why did we not receive some level of sanction from the Commission? Because the final outcome – that is, the reaffirmation of our accreditation, is based on Performance Evaluation. BUT unlike the taxi driver, our re-accreditation was not the product of a comedy of errors ~ instead, it was the result of a commitment to our institutional goals and to our students, and a single-minded sense of purpose which united us all. We earned our accreditation not by pure chance but through a thoughtful process of building incremental evidence through six years of careful and systematic preparation. It was precisely this collective effort and understanding that promoted a collaborative spirit among us and guided our successful journey towards reaccreditation.

I am particularly grateful to my close allies in this endeavor (they are also my “partners in crime,” if you will.) I refer to the Standard Chairs and their members ~please stand and be

recognized~ who worked tirelessly with me in putting together a massive effort in presenting the story of Guam Community College to the team. Producing the ISER or the Institutional Self Evaluation Report was no mean feat~ it took us all of two years to put it together, section by section. The blood, sweat, and tears poured into this undertaking is so worth it, when you now read what the team has to say about our ISER. And I quote, "The Institutional Self Evaluation Report was a well written, comprehensive report that detailed the processes used by the institution to fully meet the eligibility requirements and the Commission Standards. The report told the story of GCC from its inception to the present day. The presentation of the data and information on the ISER created an image of the College that was almost hard to imagine because the portrayal was so positive. On the site visit, the team confirmed that what was written was indeed the

College culture ~one of caring and nurturing so that students achieve success.” End of quote.

By the way, a copy of the Evaluation Report is in the flash drive which you received earlier, the one that’s marked “2012 –Our Time to Shine.” The Fact Book is also there so you can have all the important information about your college at your fingertips. If you have not done so already, I trust that you will find time to do a DEAR moment. DEAR~ Drop Everything and Read~ read the ACCJC Evaluation Report in its entirety because I will continue to count on your active participation in the process of continuous accreditation. I draw inspiration from one of the many congratulatory notes I received soon after our exit meeting with the team, and I quote, “employees have for the very first time felt a part of the process and feel the little bit that they do in their day to day work makes a big difference in the overall success of GCC.” This is what our

team chair Dr. Chapdelaine meant when, in one of the open forums, he described what we do at the college as “transformational.”

It is indeed transformational when, for the first time in our college’s history, we have involved our faculty, staff, administrators, students, and Board members in three accreditation assemblies and a mock visit prior to the actual arrival of the team on campus. Knowledge about accreditation, I believe, was the key to a real understanding of why we do what we do. And the team has indeed spoken: we did do what we said we should be doing. As stated in the report’s summary of the visit, and I quote, “The team found that the College was fully prepared for the site visit. The team also confirmed that there was widespread understanding by the College of the accreditation process,” end of quote. As a result, we have 8 commendations and 4 recommendations in

the report. The commendations included the following: (1) a genuine sense of family spirit on campus, (2) the highest level of achievement when it comes to SLO assessment, (3) faculty engagement in student advisement and career pathways, (4) commitment to sustainability and for attaining LEED gold certification for LRC, (5) resilience and flexibility in financial resources management by the Board of Trustees, (6) institutional support for student civic engagement, (7) unmatched level of cooperative efforts between our Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board of Governors, and (8) the rapid construction program that has resulted in three (3) buildings in three (3) years. I have been asked, which one of the 8 commendations do you like best? This is the same question that Jayne Flores asked the President and I when we guested in her TV show called “ A Higher Degree” several weeks ago. The President said she liked the commendation that praises the college for its “collegiality” and “team spirit”

that pervades the campus because all the other commendations, she says, could not have happened without collaboration and collegiality in the first place. As for me, I like the one with the SLO assessment commendation because the team rated us at Level 4 level in the ACCJC Rubric for Institutional Effectiveness. That puts us in the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement category when it comes to SLO attainment, when in fact, this fall 2012, the Commission has only set Level 3 as the standard that all ACCJC colleges must meet. I know for sure that we are the first in our region to earn this Level 4 distinction. On the other hand, our sister institutions in the PPEC region still need to do a lot of work to get out of sanction. Our nearest neighbor to the north of us is still on Probation; it was on Show Cause not too long ago. Likewise our sister institution to the southeast of us is also on Probation , which is a downgrade from its previous rating of Warning. So we have good reason to be proud of this most

recent validation of our efforts to live up to highest levels of quality as reflected in our compliance with ACCJC eligibility requirements and Standards of Accreditation.

In addition to our 8 commendations, the team also provided us with these four recommendations, which now become our major actionable improvement plans: (1) an expansion of our comprehensive assessment process inclusive of our non-credit and other CE-offered courses and activities; (2) a plan for Distance Education and its eventual delivery and implementation; (3) a review of resource allocation that would support the execution of the institutional technology plan; and (4) an evaluation of the effectiveness of participatory governance processes that would include student, faculty, and most specially, staff participation, in this structure.

The first recommendation in our report ~that is, the inclusion of non-credit courses in our institutional assessment process~ is already being addressed, soon after the team left. I have already seen a plan drafted by the Continuing Education and Workforce Development office, in consultation with AIER, in order to set this into motion. The plan will see its initial implementation this fall.

The next recommendation, that is, the development of a DE plan that will initially tackle infrastructure, platform, training, and other related issues, will be under the oversight of the Vice President for Finance and Administration. The third recommendation which deals with the dialogue about technology resources and the eventual implementation of the ITSP or our *Information Technology Strategic Plan* will be integrated with this recommendation as well.

The last recommendation will require the active participation of the three participatory governance bodies on campus, that of faculty, staff, and students. I intend to meet at least once or twice every semester with the heads of these governance bodies to develop and implement a comprehensive evaluation process that will examine the overall effectiveness of participatory governance policies and processes on campus.

Every accreditation visit always yields invaluable lessons and insights, both for the visitor and the visited. We were the visited this time, and our take-aways from this visit are numerous. From all the intel I gathered about our team visitors prior to their arrival on campus to the statements we made to each one of them during the visit itself~ all of these are in fact crucial information that will help us prepare better next time. If you remember, I asked some of you to give me a self-report about your particular experience with the team

when they were here on campus. There is a plastic bin now sitting on my office with about 8 or 10 binders with transcriptions of interviews during the week of the visit~ your self reports. There is a wealth of information in these binders that will be useful in two meaningful ways: (1) in the long term, it will help us anticipate the kinds of questions that we will be asked in the next comprehensive visit, and hence, will serve as convenient markers of our milestones and gaps; and (2) in the short term, it will help me, as your AVP and ALO, to sort and identify the kinds of critical, challenging issues we need to put on the table for continuous dialogue to occur.

In the coming months, I will convene the Standard Chairs and their members again so we can plan how to streamline our annual self evaluation process. During the 12 months prior to the arrival of the team, we learned many valuable lessons about the benefits and pitfalls of an annual self study process. I

will sit down with the leadership of the participatory governance bodies, as well as the President's management team, to discuss the restructuring of this process so that it becomes more effective and meaningful. We have a progress report to submit in March of 2015 ~that's 3 years away~ and the next comprehensive visit will occur in October 2018. The big question, is: Will you still be here at that time? In light of Gov. Calvo's early out retirement program, we will probably need to work expeditiously in order to avail of the critical expertise of our retirables or soon-to-be-retirees.

Streamlining our accreditation processes at this time is in fact timely because ACCJC has scheduled public hearings in Hawaii on September 24 regarding the Accreditation Standards. Held approximately every six years, the Commission conducts a comprehensive study of the utility, effectiveness, relevance and consistency of its Standards by consulting with all its

constituent colleges. This will allow GCC to participate in this public hearing actively, particularly after a visit that is still so vivid and fresh in our memory.

With the accreditation preparations now behind us, the road ahead of us in the coming academic year is NO LONGER a long and winding road but a paved, concrete walkway that now allows us to maintain balance and stability in leading our students toward their career destinations. In guiding them along the way, we have developed tools like the Dual Credit Articulated Programs of Study or DCAPS, the Dual Enrollment Accelerated Learning or DEAL, the new ACALOG or e-catalog, our GCC website with a newer, friendlier look and other tools that will help make our students' college experience with us relatively stress-free. In everything we do at the college, students come first since, as we all know, they are the lifeblood of our institution.

Speaking of students, let me re-tell another joke for you. Since I began this address with a joke, I'd like to go full circle and end it with another joke, one that I heard initially from one of the Deans~ I can't remember now whether it was a former Dean or a sitting Dean, a retired Dean, or a retirable Dean. (Wait for laughter to subside.)

One day, a mother had trouble waking up her son. "I don't want to go to school," said the boy. "My teachers hate me, and I hate them."

"But son," said the mom, "you need to go to school. Pay attention to your teachers. Education is the only way to success."

"I am tired of going to school," countered the son, not stirring in his bed.

"Com'n, my son", the mom said, her voice a little softer now.

"Go to school, " she insisted. The boy did not stir. "You have to GO TO SCHOOL," her voice became a bit firmer now. She continued, "You HAVE TO LIKE school. You HAVE TO LIKE your teachers. Besides, YOU ARE THE DEAN!" (Wait for laughter to subside)

So always remember our students and this feeling of accomplishment we have tonight. The reality is, there will be some days when we won't always be in the mood for school or celebration. Even on such days, we must still have to keep the spirit of accreditation alive, for it highlights our collective understanding of what **performance evaluation** means to us: accountability and improvement.

Olympic champions always speak of the feeling of the moment when they receive the gold medal and their country's National Anthem is played. At GCC, this is our accreditation winning moment. Cherish the feeling and whatever you do for our students in the months and years ahead, remember this shining moment and be inspired.

Welcome to another great and exciting academic year. Truly, 2012 is our time to shine! Si yu'us maase.

GCC Convocation 2012
August 13, 6:00 P.M.
Multipurpose Auditorium

Dr. Mary A.Y. Okada
President

Our Time to Shine

Hafa Adai to all of you this evening. Welcome to the start of another academic year...one that I know that many of us have been looking forward to. For some of you, coming back to the campus is a refreshing event, having spent a few months away enjoying your vacation. For others, like many of the staff and administrators, it's another day on campus. Still, the beginning of the academic year is always an exhilarating time for us, and we are gearing up for next series of exciting events happening at Guam Community College. Thanks to all of you, I am here to report that, for the next six years, the state of Guam Community College looks very bright! As a matter of fact, please take a moment right now to open the little package you received at your table, so we can all shine like Dr. Ray did during his speech! As we put on our buttons, let's take a look at some things that make us shine.

As of today, our fall semester 2012 enrollment stands at a little over 2,350 students. While this is a little bit lower than the previous year, there is still time. In addition, we have instituted new payment procedures that may have contributed to this. When these students start classes in two days, they will be attending a fully accredited institution with outstanding faculty, and many state-of-the-art facilities. I have attributed tThree things that have brought us to this point: planning, hard work, and partnerships.

All of you know that I am a planner. Over the past three years, we've been guided by Our Institutional Strategic Master Plan, which has been designed to bring us from 2009 to 2014. This plan, which we started developing shortly after I became president in 2007, has guided us through program and course additions that have strengthened our academic offerings. It enabled us to construct our Anthony A. Leon Guerrero Allied Health Center in 2009, our LEED-certified Learning Resource Center in 2010, our Student Center in 2011, and our fully renovated Foundation Building – with its awesome café – later this year. The I-S-M-P is also allowing-guiding us to start renovations on the other side of campus toward the end of the year. The first to get a major face and foundation lift will be Building 200, which will look like this when it is finished, most likely toward the end of 2013 or in early 2014. Also, we will be expanding the adding classrooms onto the crime lab, which will also include a lab and classroom for enable our Criminal Justice program to offer more courses in forensic science concentrations.

But with 2012 more than halfway over, it is now time to once again revisit the I-S-M-P. We need to update it based on what our economy has been doing, based on the adjustments that have been made in the buildup, and on the economic opportunities

that are arising with the move to make Guam more sustainable. Our planning process is a dynamic one. We are always adjusting, changing and tweaking it to adapt to the times. But without a plan, we would not be where we are today.

Revisiting the plan will take a lot of work. But what else is new, right? I've heard it said that working at GCC is not like working for other GgovGuam agencies – that we work harder. We do, but I consider that something we can all be proud of because we not only work harder, we work smarter. We don't just sit around and wait for students to come to us, or someone to walk up and offer to give us or lend us money to build a building. We go out and get what our students need. Yes, it's more work, but look at where ~~more work~~ all of these efforts ~~haves~~ gotten us.

At this point I'd like to recognize some people who work very hard for the College behind the scenes. Our Board of Trustees, headed for the past five years by Chairperson Gina Ramos, and now by new chair Deborah Belanger, ~~and -our~~ Foundation Board of Governors, headed by Ms. Lorraine Okada. Our boards ~~s~~ plays an integral role in the College's planning process. Its members are our lifeline to the business community. They advocate for us, and all of our institutional decisions and fundraising efforts are supported and have to be approved by them. They, in turn, have to provide evidence of their decision-making processes to the accreditors (just like we all do), and that they did during the March accreditation visit, and quite successfully, too. One of the recommendations from our previous accreditation visit was that the Board of Trustees needed to undergo more training, to assist them in fulfilling their commitment to the development of the college. The board members stepped up, so to speak, attending the training and learning more about their duties. They earned a commendation this time around, as opposed to a recommendation, which shows a level of commitment to GCC that is humbling.

Also, with regard to governance, I want to give kudos tonight to our Faculty Senate, for their diligence and commitment to the assessment process. You know how important it is to document that we actually do what we say we are doing with regard to what happens in the classroom. Your commitment to your assessment tasks, which were daunting, is also humbling and greatly appreciated.

And to the newest governance kid on the block, the Staff Senate, another kudos, for organizing, holding elections, and documenting your progress so quickly after our accreditation visit. This immediate action ~~You~~ played an important role in our reaffirmation of accreditation, so be very proud. I know we are very proud of you!

Your individual roles as Board members, Faculty Senate members, or Staff Senate members may often seem to mire you in paperwork, but it is important to note that your individual efforts combine to make GCC a model of the postsecondary education institutional governance process. Believe me, the accreditors noticed your efforts, and the College, our students, and Guam's workforce are the ultimate beneficiaries.

Last week, we reached a milestone at the College that some of you may not be aware of. Western Partitions, Incorporated, the contractor that is building the new Naval Hospital, became the one hundredth company to join GCC's apprenticeship program. That's right. 100 companies have confidence in our ability to train their employees, and give them not only the skills, but also the education they will need to excel in the workforce. And that number does not include the companies that work with our programs to provide our students with practicum opportunities, or work experience in the case of our secondary programs. This milestone is important because it signals that all these companies have confidence in our ability to educate and train their employees, or in the case of practicums and work experience, future employees. They know and trust the caliber of the graduates we present to the community.

Our ability to plan our goals and work hard has also brought us another very important partner: the federal government. We would not have been able to accomplish all that we have accomplished without help from Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo's office, the Office of Undersecretary-Insular Affairs with Assistant Secretary Tony Babauta, and all of our other friends in Washington D.C., like USDA, EPA, USDOE, and others. They partner with us because they have the trust and confidence that when they hand us millions of dollars in grants or loans, the money is going to be spent on what we planned to spend it on, and in a way that is going to be unquestionable by auditors' standards. Our track record of fiscal responsibility and accountability, including our 11 clean audits, has brought us to this point.

Financially, as many of you know, GCC, like many agencies of the government of Guam, is not doing as well as we are doing planning or accreditation-wise. During our budget hearing discussions with the Legislature, special recognition was given to the College for seeking alternative funding to provide for our infrastructure requirements. What did this amount to after we compiled the numbers? Well, in the investments from the college over the past four years, we have "saved" the government \$ 22.3 million. That's money that is not provided by the general fund, meaning Guam's taxpayers. Although some of it is in the form of long-term, low interest loans to the college as opposed to grants, or "free money," we have the ability to seek these alternative sources of funding to support our mission because we are so fiscally responsible.

However, the state of the general fund is real; the deficit of the government of Guam is real; the cash allotment challenges are real. What does this mean to the College? Although we submitted a budget of \$20,294,740 for Fiscal Year 2013, we can only hope that, given the amount of funding we have saved the government over the past few years, they acknowledge our hard work and provide us with our full budget request. This may be a difficult request, but we will do what we can to ensure that we receive adequate funding.

What is next for us? Well, we have to start the Institutional Strategic Master Plan revision process, and decide, after Buildings 100, 200, and the Crime Lab, what we will tackle next. (Building renovation future plans)(??). I have some things in mind that are in line with the Campus Master Plan. I am working on a specific funding request to move on to the next phase of our construction. More information will be shared with you at a later date.

Our revised ISMP will also address a more comprehensive relationship with our business partners, and examination of our academic programs, and how we can best serve our students and those who hire our graduates by providing them with well-educated, well-trained employees.

Everything that we do has to support our mission: to be a leader in career and technical workforce development by providing the highest quality education and job training in Micronesia. All of you, as the faculty, support staff, and the administrators, are on the front lines of our mission. Your role is critical, and I know that this academic year, you will approach that role with as much dedication and commitment as you always have. Working at GCC is not without its challenges. But what we do here, collectively, is important. It's important to our students, to their families, to island businesses, and to our region.

One final note: This fall, we go from being the visited to being a visitor. The ACCJC was so impressed with all of your assessment efforts and the accreditation process that we just recently complete, that I have been asked to Chair an evaluation for a Hawaii community college in October. For this visit, that Dr. Ray and I have been appointed as will serve as my Special Assistant, and Team Chair, respectively, for an accreditation visit to a Hawaii community college this October. All of you made us look so good that the ACCJC rewarded us with more work. So for once, the tables are turned on me – I'm not the one handing out the work, I'm the one getting more work!

Seriously, though, all of you did such an amazing job this past year with our accreditation efforts. As you might have read in our June-July issue of Chachalani that is up on our beautiful new web site, for me, the most meaningful of our commendations was the one "for a genuine sense of family spirit on campus, which is evident in its commitment to student access and student success."

We are a family here at GCC. We may have our ups and downs, rough periods and smooth ones, but if we stick together, plan together, work hard at what we have to do and cultivate the partnerships we've made with the rest of the community, the difference we will be able to make in our community will be immeasurable. As Steve Jobs has said "The only way to do great work is to love what you do". We are GCC, and this is our time to shine. Welcome back everyone, and Biba!

2012 CONVOCATION SCRIPT-Dean Reilly Ridgell and Dean Gina Tudela

G - 2011-2012 was another busy year for GCC and we've barely had time to catch our breath before this next academic year begins. But let's take some time out to look back over the past year at the accomplishments, the awards, and the activities that occurred.

R - Now before doing that, however, we must begin on a somber note. We lost two of our own last year, both in March. On March 14 Facility Maintenance Coordinator Joe Quitugua passed away after an illness of several months. And, in a very disturbing event on March 23, Visual Communication Instructor Paul Parvin collapsed and died in his classroom while students were arriving for the next class. I have never seen that happen in my 40 years in education. We will miss them both.

G- For the 2011-2012 year the overriding emphasis was on accreditation. It seemed like we had been preparing for accreditation for years. Well, we had. Finally the time approached when we would turn in our self-evaluation study and wait for the visiting team.

R - In late October GCC brought to the campus Dr. Doug Houston. Dr. Houston had much experience with accreditation, had chaired teams before, and spent hours reading our report drafts. His recommendations were invaluable in helping our Standard Committees rewrite and polish the reports.

G- Then, in January, Dr. Chapdelaine, chair of the accreditation team that would visit in March, stopped by the College to meet with President Okada and Vice President Somera on logistical details of the impending accreditation team visit.

R - Finally March 19 arrived, and the 11 member team was here. For three days they held meetings with faculty, administration, staff, and students. And they poured over documents. We gave them lots and lots of documents.

G - Then, in June, our indefatigable President, Dr. Okada, flew off to appear for five whole minutes at a hearing of the ACCJC council which was meeting to determine the fate of GCC. The culmination came on July 4 for us here on Guam, as we were granted SIX MORE YEARS.

R - Kudos to our President. Kudos to Dr. Ray, Kudos to all the Standard committee members, Kudos to all who worked so hard for this accreditation. Now, of course, it's time to start getting ready for 2018.

G – Enrollment continued to grow last year. Fall 2011 saw 2,536 post secondary students enroll, third year in a row that it was an all-time high. It was a 2.34% increase over Fall 2010 and is the highest enrollment in College history. Then Spring 2012 saw an enrollment of 2,463 students, a five percent increase over Spring 2011.

R – We also had record enrollment in our secondary programs with a total of 2,416 students at the beginning of the school year last August. And, just last May, the College conferred 399 degrees, certificates, and diplomas upon 348 students. This included a record 72 apprentices.

G – The College also continued to rake in grants and donations. In August DOI Assistant Secretary Tony Babauta awarded GCC a \$331,870 grant for “green” furniture and equipment for the student center. Also, the CACGP grant came in at \$1.5 million – again; and Project AIM/Trio was funded for the second year of its \$1.5 million grant.

R – The GCC foundation raised \$6000 with its Parade of Shoes. More money was raised at the GCC Foundation 35th anniversary gala in May. The class of ’77 presented a Mace as a class gift to the College and Dr. Kimberly Bersamin received the 2012 Distinguished alumni award. Lastly, the College received \$500 from Peggy Denny, for its recycling efforts.

G - Construction and renovation continued unabated in 2011-2012. It’s becoming a GCC tradition. The new student center was opened in December. A new paint booth was installed in the auto body shop. Renovation continued on the Foundation Building. And in January Mike Makeo, prime architect for our new buildings, gave the campus an update on the GCC Physical Master Plan. More renovations are to come.

R – College faculty continued to develop new courses and programs. These included Introduction to Theater; Photovoltaics I & II; Introduction to Renewable Energy; Project HATSA – in partnership with Public Health, helping members of needy families gain skills to make them more employable; and with help from AHEC funding, the first steps have been taken to develop a paramedic program. We also will be offering TSA classes in the near future. The College is also working on developing short term courses that are for credit but can’t be used toward degrees or certificates.

G – Students were active too last year. Seven hundred attended Fall Festival in September. In January DECA held its Quiz Bowl in the MPA and it was Southern High that won. Simon Sanchez Pro-Start students won the cake decorating contest at the Micronesian Mall in February.

R - Three hundred high school seniors visited GCC in February for the College and Career Exploration day, sponsored by College Access. It was featured in the National College Access Network April newsletter. Okodo High School LMP team placed second nationally at the national competition in Orlando in March.

G - The Math Olympiad was sponsored by the math and science department. COPSA’s Spring Festival was a big success in March. Newly elected COPSA leaders are: Steven Alvarez was elected President and Ariane Nepomuceno was chosen as student representative to the Board of Trustees. A record 556 students cast ballots.

R - Simon Sanchez’s Pro Start team won the Guam contest and went to the national competition in Baltimore in April. The SLO video contest was won by Liberal Studies Students Nicolas Diaz, E.J. Santo Domingo, and Micah Carols. The GW Autocad class won the Green Dream Home contest sponsored by the UOG Center for Island Sustainability. The Electronics Skills Challenge was held in April with participants from all five high schools. Southern High won Rack and Jack, Okkodo won NIC Card Installation, and GW won the Router Configuration Challenge.

G - The Beta Xi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society inducted 27 new members in May. These numbers mean the chapter will retain its Five Star Chapter status. And College Access helped sponsor a College and Career Readiness Summit in May, bringing students ranging from fifth grade through high school to GCC to learn about many of our program career areas.

R – The College received numerous awards and recognition. The U.S. Green Building Council certified our Learning Resource Center as “gold.” And the College was invited as an honorary member of the Sustainable Energy Industry Association of the Pacific Islands.

G – The GCC Finance and Administration Division was noted in the Association of Government Accountants November Newsletter as being the reason GCC is one of the best financially managed organizations in Gov Guam. As if to underscore that, the College had its 11th consecutive clean audit.

R – For the third year in a row, thanks to our students’ community service projects, GCC is on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. And, thanks to everyone who played and L& K corporation who sponsored them, the GCC softball team won the best sportsmanship trophy in the Parks and Rec softball league.

G – Our students were also busy acquiring scholarships. In February GCC Accounting students Floregine Dela Cruz and Guoying Murday received \$1000 each from the Associate of Government Accountants.

R – GCC sophomore Jacob Fathal became one of 50 nationwide community college students to be named 2012 new century scholars. This includes a \$2000 scholarship.

G – GCC student Alexis DeGracia received a \$500 scholarship from the American Association of University Women. Patricia Fae Ho, Vice President of the AAUW, had visited the campus in January.

R – Ha’ane Joy C. San Nicolas was awarded a 1st Hawaiian Bank Businesswoman of the Year Scholarship in March. And student James Pangelinan was the first ever recipient of the \$1,500 First Hawaiian Bank John Lee Scholarship.

G – GCC employees have also been busy winning awards and recognition or accomplishments. Dr. Lisa Baza-Cruz was confirmed as a member of the Guam Commission for Educator Certification. This is something that is of special interest to the College.

R – Electronics faculty members Terry Kuper and Adrian Atalig received training from Bruce Best in teaching photovoltaic installation. They will now be able to take the national certification test.

G – Eric Chong received Professional Educator Certification in CTE from the Guam Commission for Educator Certification. He is the first to receive certification in CTE.

R – Frank Camacho won the Biggest Loser contest, dropping 35 pounds.

G – Rose Loveridge was named Emergency Medical Services Advocate of the Year by the EMS commission for her work in organizing the EMT certifications and spearheading efforts toward a paramedic program.

R – Jeff Fabro passed his Windows 7 Operating System certification test. And Joel Ridgell passed his Cisco Certified Network Professional exam. (I know him.)

G – A number of faculty received promotions. They are.....

R – GCC faculty and administration have also been busy with various outreach efforts. Last August, Victor Rodgers began providing the use of the Key Train Program at the one-stop center in the GCIC building. Then in the Spring, 16 GW students passed the National Career Readiness Certificate test administered by GCC and DOL as part of WorkKeys.

G – Adult Education and College Access held their annual conference “Promoting Literacy through Diversity”. The conference promoted adult literacy and education opportunities. A total of 259 people attended.

R – In January Weipat Jr. High School on the island of Onoun in the Naminuito group of outer islands in Chuuk received a fully functioning computer lab using a grant from US DOI. GCC managed the grant.

G – In December medical assistant students did voluntary health screenings on campus to show what MA training entails.

R – A new staff senate has been created. The officers are: President – Liz Duenas; VP – Johanna Camacho; Secretary/Treasurer – Ava Garcia; Representatives at Large: Donnie Lizama, Latisha Leon Guerrero, Vivian Guerrero, Tamara Hiura, and Cathy Anderson.

G – GCC certified Microsoft trainer Elaine Fejerang offered free training sessions to GCC employees to help them navigate Windows 7 and various Office programs.

R - And finally, as we start a new year, we have new faculty to welcome. Some have already worked for us for part of last year, but none were aboard at the last convocation. So here we go. In TPS....

G – In TSS....

R – We’d like to thank Jayne for her work in putting together Chechilani, from which most of this information came. So if you did something that wasn’t mentioned by us, it’s because you never told Jayne.

G- Good night

R – And thank you very much.

