

Two-Year College Presidents' Perceptions of Leader Attributes that Contribute to  
Successfully Securing Alternative Revenue

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## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the memory of Doris Crowe and Donna Purintun. These two beautiful, intelligent, and independent women were my grandmothers. If there is a time whereupon I was asked to pinpoint the beginning of my academic success, I would state with complete confidence that it started with the role modeling, guidance, and love that the two of them contributed to my life from the day I was born until the day they each died. They repeatedly told me that I could be anything in this world that I wanted to be, that they were proud of me, and that they loved me. Every little girl deserves to hear all of these things. It makes a difference.

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While completing this dissertation is a significant accomplishment for me and has been a goal since I was a teenager, my purpose for completing forever changed on August 9, 1999 (and was affirmed on July 28, 2001). My purpose has since been and will continue to be to demonstrate to my daughters that my grandmothers were right. Whitley and Alexia—you can do anything, accomplish anything, and be anything you want to be.

## **Abstract**

Community college leaders today face many existing and emerging leadership challenges. Of particular concern for the current and next generation of community college leaders are the institutional budget and the impending changes in the traditional model of higher education funding. The purpose of this study is to explore the congruence between the traditional academic preparation, work experience, and leadership characteristics of community college presidents and the contemporary president's role in and ability to secure alternative sources of funding for their institutions. The research in this study adds to the understanding of the leadership characteristics, competencies, work experiences, and academic preparation that contribute to community college presidents' success in securing alternative revenue.

The research question for this study was: What are the educational, work-related experiences, and leadership characteristics and competencies of WTC Presidents that contribute to success in seeking alternative sources of revenue for their institutions?

The research for this bound cases study was qualitative in nature and relied on data collected primarily through interviews with college presidents in the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) and document review. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine college presidents who had served for more than one year in the role.

This study includes within-case and cross-case analysis. Data was coded and organized according to recurring themes. Within-case themes related to leadership competencies include: internal focus, relationship building, community involvement, telling the college story (advocacy), active fundraising, resource allocation, and entrepreneurial focus. Within-case themes examined similarities in themes that emerged from other case studies of two-year college presidents with respect to alternative revenue generation.

The key findings and conclusions for this case study are presented in three sections: community college leadership, preparation for the community college presidency, and the advancement role of the community college president. Findings suggest that there is incongruence between preparation for the presidency and

expectations for the advancement role of the presidency. WTCS president agree that fundraising is a necessary skill, yet most presidents continue to state that they felt ill-prepared to fundraise for their colleges when they assumed the presidency. More direct efforts to prepare presidents are necessary.

Successful alternative revenue generation is a function of successful interaction of the college president and the college in the ecosystem in which the college operates. Leadership competencies and characteristics of WTCS presidents described as within-case themes in this study align with the American Association of Community College leadership competencies (AACC, 2013). This study suggests that successful alternative revenue generation is a function of successful interaction of the college president and the college in the ecosystem in which the college operates.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

The overall historical collection of higher education leadership research has focused on the four-year institution, but more recently, an emphasis on community college leadership has appeared in the literature. This shift in focus is timely due to the many emerging leadership challenges that community colleges face. External pressures regarding the age-old question of the public good versus the private good of higher education, rising tuition costs, concerns about access to higher education, increased demand for skilled workers, and new accountability measures for student success force community college leaders to focus attention to and respond to the external environment (Boggs, 2003). Numerous studies suggest a future leadership challenge on the horizon due to aging population of college presidents and the large percentage of community college presidents who indicate intentions to retire within the next few years (Cook, 2012; Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005; Plinske, 2008; Weisman & Vaughn, 2001).

A community college is “any institution regionally accredited to award the associate degree in arts or the associate degree in sciences as its highest degree” (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Community Colleges, while relatively young in comparison to other higher education institutions, enroll almost 50 percent of all students in higher education (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (2012) there are 1,132 community colleges in the United States with 12.8 million students enrolled.

Community colleges are traditionally considered to provide access to postsecondary education for skill development, college transfer, and vocational

preparation (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). “Without community colleges, millions of students and adult learners would not be able to access the education they need to be prepared for further education or the workplace. Community colleges often are the access point for education in a town and a real catalyst for economic development” (Community College, n.d.). Community colleges are distinct from baccalaureate institutions most notably due to their mission of providing open access, affordability, career preparation, industry-recognized credentials, incumbent worker training, and economic development in communities.

Of particular concern for the current and next generation of community college leaders are the institutional budget and the impending changes in the traditional model of higher education funding. The decline in traditional support from state and federal sources coupled with increasing demands on campus budgets is challenging long-established college funding models (Croteau & Smith, 2012). Increased accountability coupled with decreased revenues from local, state, and federal funding sources have put pressure on college presidents to either cut programs and services or seek alternative sources of funding to ensure institutional financial sustainability. Increasingly, the role of the president has focused on finding creative ways to generate the needed revenue for their institutions to remain viable (Gentile, 2009; McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebbers, 1999; Miller, 2013). The development of mutually beneficial relationships with local business, industry, government, and community members may help colleges increase public-private partnerships as well as generate alternative revenue sources which may help ensure economic sustainability of colleges and universities (Gentile, 2009).

While the leadership challenges that community colleges face with respect to budget are discussed often in the literature, there is a lack of research on the academic preparation, work experiences, and leadership characteristics that community college presidents need to succeed in securing alternative revenue sources for their institutions the help address the budget challenge. The purpose of this study is to explore the congruence between the traditional academic preparation, work experience, and leadership characteristics of community college presidents and the contemporary president's role in and ability to secure alternative sources of funding for their institutions.

### **Specific Problem**

The community colleges in the Wisconsin system provide an interesting case for studying president's perceptions of the leader attributes that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation..... According to the American Association of Community Colleges, all sixteen Wisconsin Technical Colleges are members of the AACC (Community College, 2013). The sixteen WTCS colleges have a one-hundred-year history of providing education to the people of the state. First founded in 1911 to provide vocational, technical, and adult education that would prepare people age 16 and older for the workforce, technical colleges have evolved into higher education institutions that provide certificates, technical diplomas, and associate degree programs that remain focused on providing education and credentials leading directly to employment (Snider, 1999). Today, Wisconsin technical colleges meet the needs of business and industry by providing skilled employees for the local workforce. Approximately 370,000 students are

enrolled in the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) (Wisconsin Technical, n.d.) in associate degree, technical diploma, certificate, and continuing education programs. The technical college system is also well-known for incumbent worker training that serves the needs of business and industry and contributes to economic development.

Wisconsin Technical Colleges have not been unlike other states' community colleges with respect to traditional sources of operational funding (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). In carrying out the mission of providing skilled employees for local employers, Wisconsin technical colleges have historically depended on federal, state, and local funding as well as student tuition for the majority of operational revenues. In addition, Wisconsin technical college district boards have local taxing authority. However, the issue of securing alternative sources of funding has been especially acute in the Wisconsin Technical College System where recent changes in Wisconsin state legislation and the 2011 state biennial budget resulted in significant cuts in state aid to WTCS districts. In 2011 technical colleges in Wisconsin reported receiving an average of 17.3 percent of total operational revenue from state and federal funding sources and another 20.5 percent from student tuition ("Actual Operational Revenues," 2011) In 2011, WTCS colleges reported an average of 55.2 percent of operational revenues coming from local sources ("Actual Operational Revenues," 2011). In 2012, WTCS colleges reported an average of 14.2 percent of operational revenues coming from the state, and in 2013, 10.4 percent. A comparison with the 2011 report reveals a 10.8 percent decrease in state funding in one fiscal biennium. The 2013 state budget introduced a new outcomes-based

funding model and an additional budget challenge. To maintain or to expand current programs, technical college leaders must find other sources of funding.

As technical college leaders seek alternative sources of funding, they look to their local communities for capital campaigns, alumni support, and public-private partnerships. With a long history of meeting local needs, the sixteen Wisconsin Technical Colleges ought to be well-positioned to reap any potential fiscal benefits of the college-community relationship. Wisconsin technical college presidents play an important role in developing and maintaining these relationships and in securing funding for the institution.

### **Significance of the study**

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of studies focused on the leadership role—and more specifically the fundraising role — of the community or 2-year college president. There remains limited research in comparison to a more robust number of studies of 4-year university leadership (see Hodson, 2010; Cook, 1997; Neuman & Bensimmon, 1990).

Overall, much of the research has been conducted via case study of college presidents currently serving in the role (see Miller, 2013; Gentile, 2009). Yet, there is limited research that has analyzed and compared the leadership role of presidents across multiple institutions. The proposed research study seeks to investigate the characteristics that presidents across the WTCS campuses possess that contribute to success in securing alternative sources of revenue possess. The study also seeks to assess the ways in which these presidents have developed those characteristics and have prepared for the advancement leadership role. The study of WTCS presidents across these campuses will

add to the body of literature about preparation for the contemporary community college presidency and specifically, the role of a Wisconsin Technical College President.

### **Scope of the Study**

The Wisconsin Technical College System provides a compelling bounded case for this qualitative study. A bounded case study is defined by “common sense obviousness” of the boundaries of the case (Merriam, 2009). Using the WTCS system--composed of 16 districts located throughout the state of Wisconsin—allows for a multi-site case study of individual colleges. Each district, while part of the WTCS system, operates independently with its own president, local governing board, and independent operating authority. The districts have differences in FTEs, operational costs, local government, and presidential leadership philosophies providing an opportunity to select an information-rich sample. Yet, all of the colleges are beholden to the same statewide funding regulations, policies, and opportunities. Recent changes in Wisconsin state legislation and the 2011 Wisconsin state biennial budget resulted in significant cuts in state aid to WTCS districts. The 2013 Wisconsin state biennial budget introduced a new requirement for outcome-based funding for a portion of state aid and further changed funding levels for WTCS districts. The role of fundraising in replacing these budget sources is a timely topic for study.

The research methodology for this study will be qualitative in nature and will rely on data collected primarily through interviews and document review. This study will make use of similar methodology from another case study that also explored the perceptions of community college presidents. Gentile (2009) used a bounded case study to explore how presidents in New Jersey were handling declining public funding and

their perceptions of using fundraising as a revenue source. To conduct the study Gentile interviewed nine community college presidents using open-ended questions that focused on the current financial state of the respective institution, the strategies employed to diversify revenue sources, and the presidents' role in fundraising. The data gathered from these interviews was used to "make sense or meaning" of the community college situation in New Jersey. This approach was consistent with case study methodology as described by Merriam (2009). Gentile suggested further research is needed regarding the specific traits, experiences, training, and leadership styles that contribute to success in the external relations role of the presidency. This study seeks to further that research by using a similar case study approach to expand Gentile's research to another state to describe the specific traits of two-year college presidents that contribute to success in the external relations role, specifically fundraising, of the college presidency.

### **Research question and objectives**

The research question for this study is: What are the educational, work-related experiences, and leadership characteristics and competencies of WTC Presidents that contribute to success in seeking alternative sources of revenue for their institutions?

Sub-questions for this study include:

- What are the WTC Presidents' perceptions of their role in seeking alternative sources of revenue for their institutions through external relations activities?
- What are the characteristics and competencies that WTC Presidents perceive as contributing to their success in advancement activities such as alternative revenue generation?

- What educational and work-related experiences do WTC Presidents perceive as developing the characteristics and competencies that contribute to success in securing alternative funding for their institutions?
- What is the congruence between the presidents' perceptions of desired leader attributes that contribute to fundraising success and the desired leader attributes described in the literature?

Similar to the three bodies of research that inform this study, the sub-questions for this study establish three frames of inquiry of the problem: academic preparation, work experiences, and leadership characteristics.

Understanding the three frames and how each contributes to successful revenue generation could help ensure future executive level leaders possess the skills necessary to lead in the Wisconsin Technical College System.

### **Definition of terms**

*Advancement*-The multiple aspects of college development including external relations and fundraising (Croteau & Smith, 2012).

*Community College*-A community college is an open access, community-based higher education institution that provides a comprehensive educational program that may include associate degree, technical diploma, and certificate programs in a service region (AACC, web).

*Competency*-A competency is an underlying characteristic (i.e., a motive, trait, skill, aspects of one's self-made social role, or a body of knowledge) which results in effective and/or superior performance. This definition, commonly cited in human resource

management literature, incorporates both behavior and skill as explained by Boyatzis (Yeung, 2009).

*Competency Framework*- A 'competency framework' is a structure that sets out and defines each individual competency (such as problem-solving or people management) required by individuals working in an organization or part of an organization (Competency and Competency Framework, 2014).

*External Relations Activities*- External relations activities include fundraising, building relationships with community leaders, and legislative activities, and are commonly accepted roles of college and university presidents (Cook, 2012).

## **Chapter Two: Review of Literature**

There are three perspectives in the literature that inform the topic of the leadership role of the contemporary community college president in securing alternative sources of revenue. The intent of this review is to first explore each perspective and then draw linkages between each of the perspectives to compose a complete picture of leader attributes that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation.

The first perspective is focused on leadership within the community college context. This review of the literature explores literature body of scholarship that is focused on the leadership theories that explain the styles, characteristics, and competencies of community college presidents.

The second perspective in the literature involves preparation for the community college presidency, which is often centered on academic preparation and prior work experience. This review explores the profile of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century community college president that includes specific training, experiences, and characteristics that legitimize leadership capacity and ability to lead the community college as an organization and higher education institution. The first two perspectives are closely related and provide insight into the comprehensive leadership profile of the president.

The final perspective that informs this topic is research that is focused on the advancement role of the community college president. The advancement role of the president includes external relations activities with fundraising often being the primary avenue for alternative revenue generation (Glass & Jackson, 1998).

## **Leadership Legitimacy in the Community College Presidency**

Leadership theory has been studied extensively throughout history. Myriad perspectives and theories exist regarding organizational leadership. Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century leadership theories applied to the higher education context included: trait theory, power and influence theory, behavioral theory, contingency theory, cultural and symbolic theory, and cognitive theory to name a few (Bensimmon et al, 1989). There are two prevailing frameworks of pre-21<sup>st</sup> Century leadership theory that appear in community college leadership literature--trait theory and behavior theory. Trait theory defines leadership by a set of traits, and behavior theory defines leadership as possessing a set of skills (Kezar, 2004).

Research conducted within the past two decades has focused on leadership within the context of higher education, and more recently within the community college context, focusing on 21<sup>st</sup> Century theoretical approaches to community college leadership that often integrate trait and behavior theories. Bodies of literature anchored in 21<sup>st</sup> Century frameworks containing both trait and behavior theory inform this study. The intent of this review is to explore leadership theory specific to the community college context.

**Profiles of the college president as leader.** One common method of studying the characteristics that legitimize the individual president involves president self-reporting. Using qualitative analysis, Neuman and Bensimon (1990) reviewed the transcripts of interviews with twenty-four college and university presidents and four community college presidents who were purposively selected to represent the diversity of college presidential roles. The analysis elicited four presidential types based on self-reported

characteristics and perceptions of the leadership roles of the participants. The interviewees self-reported their leadership actions and philosophies. The presidents' responses regarding what they said, did, why they did what they did, and their feelings about their actions were clustered and common themes emerged resulting in four clusters. The researchers established four presidential types, each employing certain characteristics and perceptions. The four types (types A-D) are based on three dimensions of the presidents' lived experience: target of attention; mode of action; and relatedness to the institution. Type A presidents focus their attention externally while maintaining a connection to the internal institution and people within it and are known to initiate action rather than to react. Type B presidents focus their attention internally while maintaining a connection to the external environment and are known to initiate action rather than to react. Type C and D presidents are distinguished from Type A and B in their connections to the institution as they tend to be distant with (respect to the human intellectual and emotional perspective) from the institution rather than connected. Type C presidents are similar to Type A presidents with respect to focus of intention to the external institution but tend to react. Type D focus of attention is similar to Type B but tend to focus on organizational process and structures rather than people.

Neuman and Bensimon (1990) warn against using the types to categorize presidents, suggesting instead that no president fits into any single type but rather, the types portray commonalities in experiences of presidents in the leadership role. Neuman and Bensimon's research also suggests that different leadership characteristics may be necessary depending on type of institution, internal institution environment, and external

institution environment. This study, conducted at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, appears to be one of the first to explain the complexity of the community college presidency and the situational context of leadership. This suggestion parallels 21<sup>st</sup> Century leadership theories such as Bornstein's (2003) theory of legitimized leaders and Kezar's (2004) conceptualization of leadership theory. Both theories are explored later in this chapter.

Similar to establishing types of presidents, some studies suggest a variety of characteristics, competencies, or skills that presidents need to be successful leaders. Based on a review of the literature, McFarlin et al. (1999) suggested the following nine characteristics of community college presidents that contribute to the development of "exemplary community college leaders":

- possession of an earned doctorate
- the specific study of community college leadership as an academic major
- an active personal research and publication agenda
- preparation as a change agent
- previous career position
- relationship with a mentor
- development of a peer network
- previous participation in a leadership preparation activity
- knowledge of technology

After reviewing the literature, McFarlin et al. (1999) conducted a survey of 718 community college presidents that included a peer-selection process to determine common background factors of outstanding community college presidents. The survey results yielded two groups of presidents: one group of *outstanding-leading presidents* and one group of what the researchers termed *normative presidents*. Characteristics of the outstanding-leading presidents were compared against the characteristics of the normative presidents. McFarlin et al. found a positive relationship between being

identified by other community college presidents as an “outstanding-leading community college president” and the president having the following attributes: earned a terminal degree, studied higher education and community college leadership, published and presented scholarly work, took a non-traditional path to the presidency, held status as a community college “insider”, participated as a protégé in a mentor-protégé relationship, used peer networks, and possessed knowledge of contemporary technology. The attributes of outstanding community colleges are a combination of what presidents do and what presidents know. The results of this study appear to parallel trait (what leaders know) and behavior (what leaders do) theories used to identify successful leaders.

The studies of community college presidents mentioned above involve inquiry into the presidents’ perspective of leadership qualities, but another avenue of inquiry involves investigating others’ perceptions of the desired composite profile of a community college president. For example, the boards of trustees that hire and oversee presidents create position descriptions for the president role that require specific skills, competencies, and characteristics that the board deems important for its own institution. Plinske and Packard (2010) conducted a three-phase Delphi study of Illinois community colleges trustees to determine trustees’ perceptions of characteristics and experience critical for future community college presidents to possess. Seventeen trustees were interviewed in phase 1. The interviews were coded and identified sixty-six attributes, competencies, experiences, skills, and education backgrounds. In phase 2 and 3 forty-one trustees were surveyed. Using a Likert-type scale, trustees were asked to indicate the level of importance of each item. The results of this study identified fifteen personal

attributes, thirteen competencies, eight communication skills, and twelve leadership skills that trustees perceive as important for community college presidents to possess. The top three characteristics for each aspect are as follows:

- Personal Attributes
  1. Passionate about education
  2. Dependable
  3. Energetic
- General Competencies
  - Has:
    1. The ability to maintain trust
    2. An understanding of community college funding
    3. An understanding of the different communities in the district and their respective needs
- Communication Skills
  1. Articulate
  2. Good listener
  3. Media savvy
- Leadership Skills
  1. Good moral character
  2. Team-player
  3. Vision—articulates a vision and obtains buy-in

The results of this study imply that multiple leadership theories apply when defining the successful community college president profile. One critique of inquiry involving other's perceptions of the president role is that others may view the role of the president through a limited or even one-dimensional lens.

The final body of literature reviewed contains research that establishes a profile of the competencies of an effective community college president. This type of research examines specific competencies that presidents must possess for success in the presidency. In an effort to ensure the future preparation of successful community college leaders, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (2005) established a list of six leadership competencies essential to community college president

effectiveness. A competency framework containing the six competencies was developed from the qualitative analysis of multiple input sessions known as leadership summits that included leaders from AACC member councils, colleges, and university programs. A survey was then sent to 125 participants of the summits and to an additional leadership panel to confirm that the critical competencies needed for successful presidential leadership were addressed in the framework. One hundred percent of the participants identified the six competencies that comprise the framework as essential to presidential success (“The Development Process”, 2005). The six competencies are:

- **Organizational strategy**  
*An effective community college leader strategically improves the quality of the institution, protects the long term health of the organization, promotes the success of all students, and sustains the community college mission, based on knowledge of the organization, its environment, and future trends” (American Association of Community College, 2005, p.4).*
- **Resource management**  
*An effective community college leader equitably and ethically sustains people, processes, and information as well as physical and financial assets to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of the community college (American Association of Community College, 2005, p.4).*
- **Communication**  
*An effective community college leader uses clear listening, speaking, and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community, to promote the success of all students, and to sustain the community college mission (American Association of Community College, 2005, p. 5).*
- **Collaboration**  
*An effective community college leader develops and maintains responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships that nurture diversity, promote the success of all students, and sustain the community college mission (American Association of Community College, 2005, p. 5).*
- **Community College Advocacy**  
*An effective community college leader understands, commits to, and advocates for the mission, vision, and goals of the community college (American Association of Community College, 2005, p. 6).*

- Professionalism  
*An effective community college leader works ethically to set high standards for self and others, continuously improve self and surroundings, demonstrate accountability to and for the institution, and ensure the long-term viability of the college and community*  
(American Association of Community College, 2005, p. 6).

This contextual approach to defining the successful community college presidency aligns with other research already cited above. The competency framework approach also aligns with community college culture and language which ensures relevance to the specific leadership challenges of community college leaders. Studies conducted since the inception of the six leadership competencies demonstrate the application of the competencies in various community college settings and contexts and validate the competencies as essential elements of the community college president profile (Duree & Ebbers, 2012; McNair, Duree, & Ebbers, 2011).

The literature reviewed suggests that the profile of the successful college leader is multi-faceted containing both elements of behaviors and traits that impact success. The complexity of the leadership profile combined with the different perspectives on desired leadership characteristics requires a multi-frame approach to understand the profile of the community college president. Neither the traits that a leader possesses nor the actions the leader employs completely define the ability to successfully lead in the community college presidency.

This study uses Bornstein's (2003) analytical construct of multilayered factors influencing presidential legitimacy and specifically "individual legitimacy" to explore the leadership profile of successful community college presidents. Individual legitimacy refers to the president's "background, career, and identity characteristics, and how they

mesh with the institution's needs" (Bornstein, 2003). This 21<sup>st</sup> Century construct of leadership is consistent with Kezar's suggestion (2004) that neither trait theory nor behavior theory adequately explain leadership. But, viewing leadership through a different lens that combines aspects of both theories may serve as the appropriate leadership conceptualization.

### **Preparing for the Presidency**

How does one develop the characteristics and competencies needed for the community college presidency? Preparation for the leadership role of the community college president occurs in many ways. This review of the literature found five primary opportunities for development of the traditional legitimized leadership profile: academic preparation, prior leadership experience, mentor relationships, leadership development experiences, and on the job training.

**Academic preparation.** Traditional career preparation and educational experiences of higher education presidents are typically derived through earning a doctoral degree in an academic discipline (Duree & Ebbers, 2012; McFarlin, Crittenden & Ebbers, 1999; Weisman & Vaughan, 2006).

Since 1986, the American Council on Education has conducted five studies and produced seven reports profiling the American college president. The comprehensive, longitudinal studies aggregate colleges and universities into five categories, including a category for associate degree granting institutions. The most recent report is based on a 2011 survey of over 1600 college and university presidents including twenty-seven presidents of community colleges (The American College President, 2012). According to

The American College President (2012), 76.8 percent of the community college presidents had earned a doctoral degree, and 63.4 percent of presidents reported their highest degree earned was in the field of education or higher education.

The high percentage of community college presidents holding doctoral degrees and the common expectation of an earned doctorate in the hiring process of presidents is supported by studies of presidents' perceptions of their preparation as an essential element of the presidential profile. McFarlin, Crittenden, and Ebbers (1999) suggest that there is a positive relationship between being defined an exemplary community college president and the attainment of a doctoral degree. The study, explained previously in this review, found that more outstanding-leading group presidents had earned a doctoral degree than normative group presidents. A positive relationship also exists with respect to having studied community college leadership as the academic major of the doctoral degree (McFarlin et al., 1999).

There is clearly support in the literature for the doctoral degree requirement, but there is little discussion about the doctoral degree field of study. Unlike the study conducted by McFarlin et al. (1999), few studies consider the discipline or the curriculum content of the doctoral program. The legitimacy appears to be in the long-standing tradition of an earned doctorate as a pre-requisite for attaining the presidency, or for some colleges in scholarship valued by faculty and others, rather than any leadership characteristics or competencies gained from completing the academic program of a doctoral degree.

**Previous leadership experience.** Traditional career preparation experiences of college presidents include having substantial prior leadership roles as academicians or student affairs professionals (Duree & Ebbers, 2012; McFarlin, Crittenden, & Ebbers, 1999). Weisman and Vaughn (2006) indicate, “The most traveled pathway to the presidency is through the academic pipeline.”

In 2006, Weisman and Vaughn conducted the Career and Lifestyle (CLS) of 545 community college presidents from 46 states. This survey represented 61 percent of the total population of public community college presidents. Presidents were asked about the position they held before assuming their first presidency. The results of this survey indicate that the traditional pathway has changed very little since the mid-1980s with 55 percent reporting a position in academic leadership immediately prior to becoming the president (Weisman & Vaughn, 2006).

According to the American Council on Education (ACE) American College President study (2012), thirty-eight percent of community college presidents served as the Chief Academic Officer or Provost immediately prior to becoming the college president. Twenty-three percent had served as President/CEO at another community college. Often the start of the academic pipeline is in a faculty position. The American College President report states that 70.1 percent of presidents had served as faculty member sometime in their career prior to becoming a president

A study conducted by Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) found that 37 percent of presidents surveyed held the position of Provost immediately prior to attaining the community college presidency. Other, also traditional, career pathway positions including

roles as president at another college or senior academic affairs/instruction officer accounted for an additional 40 percent of the respondents' immediate prior positions.

Contrary to the other literature reviewed for this study, McFarlin et al. (1999) suggest that there is a positive relationship between exemplary community college leadership and a non-traditional career pathway to the presidency. In this study, less than 50 percent of the presidents who were described as outstanding had served in an academic leadership position prior to attaining the college presidency. Further studies are needed to determine what types of non-traditional career pathways provide preparation that helps to ensure leadership success.

**Mentoring.** Mentor relationships are commonly cited by Presidents as contributing to their preparation for the presidency. Weisman and Vaughn (2006) found that 54 percent of current presidents report mentoring a potential future leader as part of their on-campus leader preparation program. McFarlin et al. (1999) found that presidents who were identified as being outstanding leaders had participated as a mentee in a mentor-mentee relationship.

Amey and VanDerLinden (2000) surveyed a stratified random sample of 1700 community college administrators (54% response rate) to examine career paths, backgrounds, and method of continuous training and development used to add to existing knowledge. Approximately 50 percent of respondents, including college presidents reported having been mentored in their own leadership preparation (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002).

The role of mentoring in preparing community college presidents remains in question. In a dissertation study of 415 community college presidents, Rabey (2011) used *The Community College Presidency: Demographics and Leadership Preparation Survey* to examine the effect of mentor/mentee relationships in preparing leaders for the college presidency. Rabey found no statistically significant difference in perception of preparation for the presidency of mentored presidents compared to non-mentored presidents.

**Leadership development.** In addition to appropriate preparation prior to attaining the presidency, continued leadership development appears to be essential for success. Many of the self-reporting presidents who participated in the studies recognize the need to participate in leadership development experiences while serving in presidency (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002; Weisman & Vaughn, 2006). According to Wallin (2002):

With the demands, expectations, and complexities that are a part of the contemporary community college presidency, there is little doubt that opportunities for meaningful and appropriate professional development are much needed and appreciated by today's presidents (p. 28).

Common options for leadership development opportunities include: terminal degree programs, in-house/on-campus leadership development programs, association and other leadership institutes, conferences, or workshops (Watts & Hammons, 2002). In a survey of 76 community and technical college presidents Wallin (2002) found that 87 percent of the presidents believe that statewide meetings with other presidents provide the most valuable professional development.

Grow your own leaders (GYOL) programs can be found on campuses and in state organizations as community colleges invest in succession planning for future presidents (Weisman & Vaughan, 2006). Watts and Hammons (2002) suggest that GYOL programs vary in quality and also do not provide credits toward a credential for aspiring college presidents. Reille and Kezar (2010) caution that GYOL leadership programs may be misguided in the preparation of new leaders if the program content is based on the program developer's agenda for what is important instead of on priorities derived from an institutional needs assessment. This could be particularly problematic for development of advancement-related competencies if existing leaders in the organization do not value or understand the importance of advancement-related skills for future leaders.

Like GYOL leadership preparation programs, conferences and other non-credit bearing leadership training opportunities may not be preparing the next generation of leaders adequately if these programs do not include training for advancement related activities.

**On the job training.** On the job training is one other method of preparation of community college presidents. Presidents and Chief Academic Officers in one study of rural Midwestern community colleges reported that on the job training was the method in which they learned the skills and gained the experience needed for their role (Eddy, 2013).

The five commonly accepted avenues of preparation for the college presidency: (a) academic preparation, (b) prior leadership experience, (c) mentor relationships, (d) leadership development experiences, and (e) on the job training are not without gaps,

and while limited in number, there are studies that challenge the legitimacy of these avenues of preparation (Rabey, 2011; Reille & Kezar, 2010). The question of whether these accepted practices adequately prepare future presidents will be addressed later.

### **Advancement Role for Alternative Revenue Generation**

It is commonly accepted that fundraising has long been an essential component of the 4-year public and private university president. Only recently has fundraising become a priority for community college presidents as public funding of higher education continues to decline and budgets continue to tighten. This section of the literature review examines the advancement element of the community college presidency.

In discussing the role of advancement professionals in higher education, Croteau and Smith (2012) suggest an operational definition of advancement that involves multiple aspects of college development including external relations and fundraising. These aspects exist under the collective umbrella of the advancement role that is responsible for promoting the college. For the purposes of this study, the Croteau and Smith (2012) “all-encompassing” definition that includes fundraising, internal and external communications, government relations, and public relations activities is applied to the topic of the advancement role of the community college president. According to Croteau and Smith (2012), “all advancement functions lead to or relate to fundraising in some way, shape, or form.” (p. 15). The role of the president in the generation of alternative sources of revenue often mirrors or is complementary to the role of the advancement professionals in Croteau and Smith’s case study research.

The president is viewed as the face of the institution by internal and external stakeholders alike and is the chief advancement officer of the college. Wenrich and Ried (2003) suggest that the president is the “media spokesperson and chief public relations figure.” This is because in comparison to their counterparts at most four-year colleges and universities, community college presidents often have substantially fewer resources dedicated to advancement activities (Bass, 2003).

Assuming the advancement role by developing mutually beneficial relationships with local business, industry, government, and community members is one way that college and university leaders approach the impending funding challenge (Boggs, 2003). These external relationships can help those outside of the academy see the value of investing in higher education and help leverage and maximize existing resources in the community. Studies suggest that because community colleges have a history and tradition of establishing relationships with external constituencies that they should be well-positioned to increase private funding support (Hall, 2002).

External relations activities demand much of the president’s time. One study of 545 community college presidents found that presidents reported 34 percent of their work time involves external relations with 11.5 percent of their time spent fundraising (Weisman & Vaughan, 2006). According to the American College President (2012) community college presidents report that community relations activities are second only to budget/financial management in the top three uses of their time.

The primary alternative revenue source suggested in the literature is fundraising. Some argue that fundraising is a “new” endeavor for community colleges with little

consistency in implementation and utilization as a source of alternative revenues (Akin, 2005). In a series of essays, Lombardi (1992) suggested that fundraising was in the “gestation” stage for community colleges. “Community college educators are well advised to seek donations from private sources” (*Perspectives on the Community College*, 1992, p32). Fifteen years ago, Glass and Jackson (1998) suggested that private fundraising was becoming important not only for the perceived success of the president but for institutional sustainability. The dates of earlier studies suggest that fundraising has been—or at least should have been—a long-standing activity of community colleges. More recently, examples of community colleges that have successfully implemented fundraising strategies have begun to appear in the literature but Klingaman (2012) argues that the majority of community colleges have yet to implement successful, sustained fundraising programs.

**Fundraising.** The role of community college presidents in seeking new revenue sources through fundraising has been the topic of multiple studies. Wallin (2002) found that technical college presidents in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia listed fundraising as a critical skill for a technical college president to be successful. Hodson (2006) suggests that the “ultimate responsibility” for fundraising rests in the role of the college president. Strong presidential leadership for fundraising is suggested by presidents themselves as well as others who have studied effective presidents as being crucial for fundraising success and institutional sustainability (Akin, 2005; Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Duree, 2007; Jackson & Glass, 2010).

The vital role community (and technical) college presidents play in seeking new revenue sources has been the topic of multiple dissertation studies. Beard (2008) interviewed community college presidents to examine the types of revenue, other than tax-based and tuition, raised by public community colleges and suggested that alternative revenue sources fit into one of four quadrants of a revenue opportunity matrix based on funding potential and sustainability. Beard suggests that capital campaigns, individual donor contributions, and foundation endowments—all common fundraising activities—have the potential for high revenue generation. Beard indicated that capital campaigns and individual donor contributions have low sustainability.

In a qualitative case study of Michigan community colleges, Miller (2013) examined presidents' perspectives of the fundraising role at their respective colleges. Miller used interviews to determine president's perceptions of the role, the relationship to others involved in fundraising efforts at the college, and the leadership attributes, skills, or abilities need to be an effective fundraiser. Consistent with other literature reviewed for this study, Miller suggests that presidents are responsible for setting the strategic direction, developing and maintaining relationships with external constituencies, and serving as the face of the college. Miller states that the role the president plays in fundraising is different at smaller community colleges than larger community colleges. As one might expect, the president from the smaller community college has fewer development staff to assist with fundraising responsibilities.

Presidents who incorporate fundraising into their external relations activities may use specific strategies to ensure success. In a review of the literature on community

college fundraising, Akin (2005) found four strategies for successful fund development that reflect aspects of the AACCC leadership competencies. Specifically, the strategies relate to resource management, communication, organizational strategy, and community college advocacy. Another strategy presidents employ is to provide resources to institutional fundraising capacity development. For example, establishing a foundation (if one does not already exist) and the hiring of a foundation leader who will serve as the chief fundraising officer and who will work with the president on fundraising endeavors is cited as an important priority of the fundraising president (Wenrich & Reid, 2003).

In addition to fundraising strategy, the individual legitimacy of the president contributes to successful alternative revenue generation via fundraising. The effective president appears to possess competencies, skills, and leadership characteristics that contribute to the ability to generate revenue from non-traditional sources. Nicholson (2007) interviewed four four-year college presidents who were identified as successful fundraisers by qualitative method of nomination and voting by Vice Presidents of Institutional Advancement to determine the leadership behaviors that contribute to successful fundraising. Nicholson created the Transformative Leadership Fundraising Model which suggests nine transformational leadership behaviors that contribute to fundraising success:

- Trust,
- Risk taking,
- Values—the values of the president relate to and are also valued by donors,
- Vision—the president has a vision for the future of the college,
- Story—the president knows the college story,
- Communication of the vision/story,
- Institutional ego—the president puts the institution ahead of personal ego,

- Listening—the president has the ability to listen to donor’s story, interpret, and understand the donor’s interests, and
- Thinking in new ways—the president questions the status quo and being innovative in approaching problems and finding solutions with donors.

In a study of Michigan community college presidents’ perceptions of the fundraising role, Duree (2007) found that presidents who were successful at fundraising were competent at strategic planning, creating a vision for fundraising efforts, providing adequate resources towards fundraising efforts, and were able to become actively involved in the community. The ability to “friend-raise” by sharing the community college story to connect with potential donors is considered one of the most important roles of the president (Duree, 2007; Akin, 2005).

A comparison of the different approaches to defining fundraising abilities shows that the Transformative Leadership Fundraising Model list of effective fundraising skills and competencies (Nicholson, 2007) parallels some of the six AACC competencies.

Studies of four-year institutions, while conducted in a context that is qualitatively different than community colleges, offer value insights into the nature of leadership legitimacy in higher education. Specifically, the Transformative Leadership Fundraising Model Competencies match having and sharing the community college vision, communication—including listening, and community college advocacy. The Transformative Leadership Fundraising Model appears to consider what presidents are capable of doing as well as on who they are. Both this model and the AACC competencies align with Kezar’s (2004) suggestion for a combined approach to leadership theory which appears to be most helpful in defining fundraising leadership abilities.

## **Gaps in Preparation**

As stated previously, the three primary bodies of higher education literature that inform the topic of the contemporary community college presidents' role in alternative revenue generation include research about leadership characteristics and competencies, leadership preparation, and the president's advancement role. From the review of these bodies of literature, there appears to be a lack of congruence between current leadership expectations for advancement and the prior academic preparation, prior work experiences, and leadership abilities of existing community college presidents. For example, the traditional path to the presidency that involves serving as faculty, then perhaps dean, then academic vice president might not necessarily provide needed experiences that contribute to the development of attributes (competencies) necessary for successful fundraising.

New college presidents are often not prepared for or do not understand the leadership expectations of 21<sup>st</sup> century community college presidents (Boggs, 2003; Hodson, 2006; McNair, Duree, & Ebbers, 2011; Wenrich & Reid, 2003). Specifically, the question of preparation to ensure one can successfully garner alternative funding sources to ensure the future economic stability of their institutions is in question. Duree's study (as cited in Duree & Ebbers, 2012), suggests that there is inadequate preparation for funding-related AACC competencies such as resource management.

In a study of community and technical college presidents, Wallin (2002) found that current presidents believe their primary roles to be "political and fiduciary." The presidents in Wallin's study indicated a need for further professional development to develop the skills they identify as critical to their success.

According to Boggs (2003):

Fundraising and financial management were two skills for which presidents reported a lack of preparation. Because community colleges are the most insufficiently financed institutions of American higher education, it is important for the presidents to understand increasingly complex fiscal principles. College leaders do not have the luxury of making financial mistakes. Community college leaders are not as experienced as their colleagues in other sectors of higher education in raising private funds. With projections of declining public revenues for colleges, these skills will be more important (p. 19).

The studies conducted by Boggs (2003) and Wallin (2002) demonstrate that there is incongruence between the legitimized characteristics—including academic and work preparation for the presidency—of successful community college presidents, and the characteristics needed for the advancement role of the presidency. One might question the extent to which the traditional academic, work, and professional development experiences are adequate in preparing college presidents for today's leadership challenges with respect to new models of funding.

The incongruence between preparation and the president role is demonstrated in studies about the AACC competencies. In a study of rural community college presidents, Eddy (2013) explored the methods by which presidents acquired the six AACC competencies and how the leadership development experiences of these presidents affected their job performance. The presidents reported that advocacy, collaboration, and communication were the competencies most often used in practice. In addition, the

resource management competency was mentioned as used often, but it was mostly noted as deriving from a need to “do more with less” in terms of fiscal management. This response to funding pressure may indicate that presidents do not perceive that seeking alternative funding is an appropriate element of resource management, or perhaps the presidents surveyed do not feel they possess the competencies necessary for seeking alternative revenue. Eddy’s study does not provide insight into why the presidents choose their method of resource management. Further research could help determine how presidents interpret their role in resource management through the development of alternative revenue sources instead of managing the budget with less.

The same studies that suggest traditional preparation pathways to the presidency also report those pathways do not adequately prepare presidents for the advancement role. Rabey (2010) found that mentor-mentee relationships do not contribute to the preparation of presidents for the resource management competency of the AACCC Competencies. According to Croteau & Smith (2012) few doctoral programs include coursework in advancement in the curriculum. The findings of these studies call into question the traditional pathway to the presidency as the pathway to a successful 21<sup>st</sup> century presidency.

### **Summary**

Overall, the body of research reviewed suggests that the academic training, previous work roles, and other preparation experiences appear to inadequately prepare future presidents for a role that presidents themselves report is one-third of their leadership position.

One limitation of the research on community college presidents' role in alternative revenue generation mentioned is the contextual nature of presidential leadership, alternative revenue generation strategies, and presidential success. As Bornstein's (2003) definition of legitimized leadership suggests, individual legitimacy is a product of both the president's characteristics as well as goodness of fit in the institution. In other words, what works at one institution for one president may not work for another president at the same institution or for any other president at any other institution. The purpose of qualitative research is not necessarily to generalize to a larger population (Merriam, 2009). More research conducted in context is needed to understand the characteristics (and competencies) of community college presidents who are successful in securing alternative sources of revenue. Therefore, while the existing studies provide insight into the fundraising role of the presidents at the colleges studied, various influential, contextual factors inhibit the extent to which the results of previous research are generalizable to the Wisconsin Technical College System or other community college systems.

The proposed study expects to find that the profile of WTCS presidents is similar to other community college presidents in terms of preparation for the advancement leadership role. A case study of the Wisconsin Technical College presidents' perceptions of their role in generating alternative revenue will contribute to the body of knowledge on community college advancement leadership in the context of the Wisconsin Technical College System. The results of this study could help inform leadership preparation

program development for WTCS's GYOL programs. In addition, this could help inform curriculum development for doctoral programs in community college leadership.

### **Chapter Three: Methods**

The research methodology for this study was qualitative in nature and relied on data collected primarily through interviews and document review. According to Merriam (2009) the qualitative case study seeks to understand meaning and is an “in-depth analysis of a bounded system” (p. 38). Qualitative methodology was appropriate for this study due to the desire to analyze the data within the context of existing leadership theory and with relation to existing knowledge of the community college president’s leadership role (Merriam, 2009). Quantitative metrics for this study would be difficult to assess due to the contextual nature of fundraising roles and responsibilities, preparation, and fundraising success.

This study made use of similar methodology of other case studies of community college presidents’ perceptions of their leadership role. As discussed in chapter one, my study builds on the work of Gentile (2009) who used a bounded case study to “describe how presidents were responding to declining public funding and how they perceived fundraising as an alternative funding strategy” (p. 3). To conduct the study Gentile interviewed nine community college presidents using open-ended questions that focused on the current financial state of the respective institution, the strategies employed to diversify revenue sources, and the presidents’ role in fundraising. The information gathered from these interviews was used to “make sense or meaning” of the community college situation. This approach was consistent with qualitative case study methodology as described by Merriam (2009). Additional data were collected via non-participant observation and reviews of public document relevant to the community colleges and the

study (Gentile, 2009). Gentile established the validity of the study by adopting recommendations from Creswell (2007) including “prolonged and persistent engagement in the field, triangulation of data, peer review, and member checking.” Gentile suggested further research is needed regarding the specific traits, experiences, training, and leadership styles that contribute to success in the external relations role of the presidency. This study sought to further that research by using a similar case study approach to describe the specific traits of two-year college presidents that contribute to success in the external relations roles, specifically fundraising, of the college presidency.

This case study of WTC Presidents adds to the understanding of the leadership characteristics and competencies, work experiences, and academic preparation that contribute to the presidents’ success in securing alternative funding. The research question for this study is: What are the educational, work-related experiences, and leadership characteristics and competencies of WTC Presidents that contribute to their success in seeking alternative sources of revenue for their institutions?

Sub-questions for this study include:

- What are the WTC Presidents’ perceptions of their role in seeking alternative sources of revenue for their institutions through external relations activities?
- What educational and work-related experiences do WTC Presidents perceive as contributing to their success in securing alternative funding for their institutions?
- What are the characteristics and competencies that WTC Presidents perceive as contributing to their success in advancement activities such as alternative revenue generation?

- What is the congruence between the presidents' perceptions of desired leader attributes that contribute to fundraising success and the desired leader attributes described in the literature?

Similar to the three bodies of research that informed this study, the sub-questions for this study established three frames of inquiry of the problem: academic preparation, work experiences, and leadership characteristics. Understanding the three frames and how each contributes to successful revenue generation could help ensure future executive level leaders possess the skills necessary to lead in the Wisconsin Technical College System.

### **The Case**

The Wisconsin Technical College System provided a compelling bounded case to address these research questions. A bounded case study is defined by “common sense obviousness” of the boundaries of the case (Merriam, 2009). The sixteen technical colleges in Wisconsin exist as part of a state-wide system while operating independently in districts with local board control. Recent changes in Wisconsin state legislation and the 2011 Wisconsin state biennial budget resulted in significant cuts in state aid to WTCS districts. The 2013 state biennial budget introduced performance-based funding to the WTCS system funding structure. This new structure established a competitive funding process that requires each college to achieve and demonstrate positive outcomes for seven of nine performance criteria. Ten percent of the general aid funding is allocated based on these performance indicators with incremental increases in percentage planned

for succeeding years. The role of fundraising in replacing previously established/guaranteed budget sources is a timely topic for study.

The WTCS system—with its 16 districts located throughout the state of Wisconsin—allowed for a multi-site case study of individual college presidents. Each district, while part of the WTCS system, operates independently with its own president and local governing board. The districts have differences in FTEs, operational costs, local government, and presidential leadership philosophies providing an opportunity to select an information-rich sample.

### **Sample**

The population for this study consists of sixteen college presidents who all serve in the Wisconsin Technical College System. From this population, all of the WTCS presidents who had served in the presidency for at least one year were asked to participate in a one-hour interview for the purpose of determining their own perceptions of their preparation for the alternative revenue generation role in their presidency. Presidents serving in an interim role were not selected for the study. Nine WTCS presidents agreed to participate in the study. This sample provided sufficient data regarding the alternative revenue generation role of the presidents and allowed for comparison of individual leaders working within the same system.

### **Data Collection**

The data for this study were gathered via semi-structured interviews of nine WTCS presidents. Interviewees were recruited via email request that explained the purpose of the study, the time commitment involved, and the timeline for the study. An

initial email was sent to each WTCS college president who had served in the president role for at least one year (See Appendix A). A follow-up email was sent to the presidents who did not respond to the initial request. All nine presidents who responded to the email request were interviewed. Informed consent for participation in the study was obtained via email or in-person prior to beginning the interview.

One semi-structured interview with each president was conducted in person, via telephone, or WebEx web-conferencing (see Appendix C). Interviews using computer technology have become more popular and are recognized as similar to in-person interviews as two-way, synchronous dialogue is achievable (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). Semi-structured interviews have a list of suggested questions with flexibility to add questions to further explore meaning and themes (Merriam, 2009). Additional questions were asked of most participants to obtain clarification or to further explore meaning and themes.

Interviews were recorded via note-taking and recorded using the Rev recording application that also offered a transcription service. Transcription of the interviews was completed using the Rev transcribing service. The recordings of each interview were played while reading the transcripts and editing of each transcript was completed to ensure transcription accuracy.

Transcripts were sent to the participants for additional comments. According to Merriam (2009) this step is known as member-checking and helps to ensure accuracy and validity of the data.

## **Data Analysis**

Merriam (2009) suggests that beginning data analysis during data collection and continuing data analysis throughout data collection will result in succinct and enlightening data. Data analysis techniques suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2007) that were employed during data collection include: writing observer comments, writing memos about what was learned from each interview, using visual devices to group themes, and testing themes on key informants (as cited in Merriam, 2009).

Data analysis for qualitative interviews involves making sense of the data by categorizing units of data (Merriam, 2009). A unit of data is defined as “any meaningful or potentially meaningful segment of data (Merriam, 2009). A coding system was developed to organize units of data for comparison and analysis of recurring themes. To determine categories a progression of coding techniques was used. First, open coding of transcripts was used to identify segments of data that may be meaningful. Segments of participant responses and other comments were recorded in the margins of the transcripts. Meaningful data included comments that appeared relevant to the research question and sub-questions. Once all transcripts were coded, related words were grouped together and analytical coding was used to establish categories of data.

The above-described method of analysis prepared the data for the constant comparison method of analysis. This method of analysis involved constantly comparing units of data within the case which supported development of categories or themes (Merriam, 2009). Of particular importance to case studies is the focus on understanding and making sense of the range of data collected from multiple samples within the case.

This study includes within-case and cross-case analysis. Within-case analysis involves in-depth exploration of themes within the sample studied while cross-case analysis involves comparing case study themes with other studies of similar nature (Merriam, 2009). The within-case analysis includes narrative and content analysis to understand contextual themes for each college president as well as case-wide themes. As stated above, meaningful data was grouped into categories after each interview to establish themes. For example, the first president interviewed mentioned building relationships. Each subsequent interviewee also mentioned building relationships. Relationship-building is both an individual and within-case theme. Cross-case analysis compares themes of this study to case studies cited in the literature review. This analysis included looking for similarities in case-wide themes. Using coded data that appeared relevant to the research question and sub-questions, data analysis included continual referral to the research question and the three bodies of literature that informed the study.

### **Ethical Considerations and Researcher Bias**

The ethical considerations for this study included informed consent, confidentiality, risks associated with participation, and researcher bias. These considerations are consistent with Kvale and Brinkman's (2009) qualitative study/ethical framework that includes informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and researcher's role (bias).

Informed consent was obtained from the participants during the recruiting process (See Appendix B). Uncertainty was addressed via the informed consent document and included explanation of time commitment, statement of confidentiality, potential risks—

including limits of confidentiality, potential benefits, and ability to withdraw from participation. Additionally, briefing and debriefing of the participants, as recommended in the literature, occurred (Kvale, 2009). There were limited risks and consequences associated with this study. Merriam (2009) states that participation in interviews can positively affect the interviewee. Participants self-reported successes, which could be beneficial to the participant. The potential benefits of this study outweighed the potential negative consequences.

With only nine technical college presidents in the population, extra care was taken to protect the identity of the participants. Steps to protect the identity of participants included assigning a unique name (pseudonym) for reporting data and results and not identifying institutions. Whole or partial statements from the interviews are included in reporting and participants were made aware of this potential during the informed consent process. Participant quotations that imply the source of the comment were not used.

Interviewer bias is often noted as a potential bias found in case study research (Merriam, 2009). I am currently an employee in the Wisconsin Technical College System and have a leadership role in college advancement including primary duties involved in fundraising. I am keenly aware of the president's external relations/fundraising role at my institution and am regularly involved in fundraising activities with the president. The president of the college of my employment was not interviewed to mitigate bias. To mitigate the potential for interviewer bias, interviews were electronically recorded and transcribed. Additionally, interviewees were asked to review and comment on the main points from their interview after the interviews had been transcribed.

Selection bias is a potential bias for case study research (Merriam, 2009). The selection criteria of including all WTCS presidents who have served for more than one year eliminated risks for bias in sample selection. Selection of participants was based exclusively on length of tenure greater than one year and response to request to participate.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study are related to geography, methodology, and sample. Since the population for the study is within the Wisconsin Technical College System, the data gathered are relevant to Wisconsin and may not be generalizable to other publicly funded community colleges, tribal colleges, or independent colleges. The case study does not provide empirical, quantitative measures of fundraising success or preparation. A study of WTCS presidents adds to a similar study done by Gentile (2009) and provides a unique context for extending the literature. The study broadens the understanding of two-year college presidents' role in alternative revenue generation. The particular funding issues of the Wisconsin system may not be applicable to community college systems in other states.

Presidents were selected for interview based on availability and willingness to participate. This sample was manageable for a multi-site study as the colleges are all located in the state of Wisconsin. However, the results apply to the perceptions of the particular individuals who currently occupy the positions. Because participants self-reported via semi-structured interviews these self-reported data may be under- or over-

exaggerated. For example, presidents may tend to portray their abilities in a more positive light with respect to individual abilities and success (Berry, 2002).

### **Summary**

This case study of the Wisconsin Technical College presidents' perceptions of their role in generating alternative revenue adds to the body of knowledge on community college advancement leadership in the context of the Wisconsin Technical College System. The results of this study could help inform leadership preparation program development for WTCS Grow Your Own Leader (GYOL) programs. In addition, this could help inform curriculum development for doctoral programs in community college leadership.

## **Chapter Four: Findings**

To report the findings of this case study, descriptions of each president's academic preparation and work experiences as well as the president's involvement in advancement are presented. Individual descriptions using the pseudonym that was assigned to each president provide insight into the participants' preparation for the college presidency. Findings related to academic preparation and work experiences that prepare for the advancement role, perceptions of leadership for the advancement role, and leadership characteristics or competencies that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation in the context of case themes are shared. Within-case theme findings are aligned with the three bodies of literature that informed this study. Findings are reported primarily using direct quotes from the presidents to best represent the presidents' perceptions.

### **President Descriptions**

For each president who participated in the study, a description of years of service in the presidency, college classification as described by the Carnegie Classification system, presidential leadership preparation experiences, and a brief description of the president's advancement role is reported. Individual descriptions of the participants' academic and work experiences provide insight into preparation for the college presidency. Table 1 shows a summary of the demographic data for each president and college. The descriptions of each participant's participation in the advancement-related activities in the presidency provides insight into the president's perception of the

advancement role of the college president as well perceptions of successful revenue generation strategies employed by each president.

Table 1  
*President Demographics*

<b>President</b>	<b>Years in role</b>	<b>Previous Position</b>	<b>College Size</b>	<b>Advancement Role</b>	<b>Alternative Revenue</b>
Roy Bishop	>10	Vice President	Small	Yes	Yes
Michelle Lakeman	5-10	Vice President	Large	Yes	Yes
Roger Fish	5-10	Vice President	Small	Yes	Yes
Virginia Russell	>10	Vice President	Medium	Yes	Yes
Forest McCallister	<5	Chief Operating Officer	Small	Yes	Yes
Sandie Greenway	<5	Vice President	Large	Yes	Yes
Tom Thornton	>10	Commissioner	Large	Yes	Yes
Andrew Ferguson	>20	Senior Vice President	Medium	Yes	Yes
Roger Simon	>10	Associate Vice President	Medium	Yes	Yes

**President Roy Bishop.** I interviewed President Roy Bishop using the WebEx web-conferencing service. Dr. Bishop has been in his position as president for more than ten years. The college that Dr. Bishop leads is classified by the Carnegie Classification system as an Associate’s, two-year, small college and serves a mostly rural district (“The Carnegie”, n.d.).

Dr. Bishop earned a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in an education-related subject, a Master of Science (M.S.) Degree in Education Administration, an Education

Specialist (Ed.S.) degree, and Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) with a higher-education concentration. Dr. Bishop indicated that there was little preparation for the advancement role of the presidency and no coursework regarding fundraising in his formal education.

Dr. Bishop has served in other leadership positions at the college including serving as an Administrative Vice President immediately preceding the presidency. He believes that he was prepared for and understood the “financial piece” of his role due to serving as a Chief Financial Officer and in various vice president positions that he held prior to the presidency. Dr. Bishop summarized his leadership experience at the college as starting with instructional leadership, transitioning to operational leadership, and then external relationships leadership.

Dr. Bishop recalled attending workshops for two-year college presidents at conferences sponsored by the Council for Resource Development (CRD) and AACC. He felt the workshops that he attended were beneficial because the presenters were presidents who shared their successful experiences so he could learn from others’ success. Dr. Bishop also believes that working with a development consulting firm was helpful in preparing for the advancement role. “I worked with a firm called [firm name], and they have been really helpful too.”

Dr. Bishop credits networking with other presidents, working with the college’s development person, and on-the-job experiences with providing the necessary learning experiences relevant to external relations and specifically fundraising. He shared, “I think most of that comes from watching other people—the experiences you learn from other

presidents. You pick up a lot too from just talking with your peers. . . . I think that more of it comes from my on the job experiences and also the networking with other presidents.”

Dr. Bishop was careful to distinguish between government relations and community relations when explaining the external relations role of his presidency while noting that the position required a lot of time spent doing both. His interpretation of government relations is having good relationships with local legislators, understanding local businesses leaders’ political leanings, and sharing the college story with legislators. His interpretation of community relations includes his own involvement, as well as the whole college’s, in community activities and boards for local organizations. Specifically, Dr. Bishop mentioned serving on the local United Way, Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development boards in service to the local community. By serving in these roles, he feels that the local community views him and the college as “giving back.” Upon reflecting about which aspect of the external relations role that he was not prepared for, Dr. Bishop stated that he was not comfortable with the political aspects of the position. Of particular concern for him was feeling that he was too trusting when dealing with political issues. He explained, “I tend to be a pretty trusting person. It just seems like there’s a lot of things you cannot trust about politics. . . .”

Recent reductions in state revenue have not impacted Dr. Bishop’s college as much as the legislation that changed the local taxing authority of the college. The lost ability to obtain increased revenue using the local tax levy affected the operating budget of the college. To mitigate this impact on the operational budget, Dr. Bishop explained

that the college increased grant writing effort for federal grants as well as to private foundations and a deliberate increase in providing contract training services.

Additionally, increased activity around fundraising has helped with the capital budget.

Dr. Bishop shared examples of his successful fundraising efforts for the college.

Probably our largest would be our focus on grants. We're a lot more active on the grant writing—federal and private foundations—things like that. We're a lot more active on the fundraising. The grants tend to help you with the operational parts. The fundraising tends to help you more with the capital and scholarship component.

Dr. Bishop sees his role in alternative revenue generation as “bringing forth the strategy” and allocating resources. Providing examples of successful fundraising campaigns to expand programs and build infrastructure, Dr. Bishop shared,

My role really starts with being involved with our internal team, getting the whole campaign planned, doing all the back office things, making sure we're set up internally to support [the campaign]. Then once we pull together our campaign cabinet, helping to the members on the cabinet, whether they're foundation board members or people onsite. Then [I'm] going through the relationship mapping with potential donors and the board.

He further explained that he meets with donors alone and with his advancement staff. Dr. Bishop shared examples of his direct role in making large gift asks. In addition, he commented about recent efforts in business and industry training. “We just recently expanded our assessment services in business and industry, so really working with [staff]

in that area, bringing on additional resources, setting the goals, and even talking with employers about those services that we're providing.”

When asked about the leadership skills that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation, Dr. Bishop stated, “Number one, just being able to build a personal relationship with the decision makers in most situations.” In addition, he emphasized the importance of knowing who the college serves and working with the community.

**President Michelle Lakeman.** I interviewed President Michelle Lakeman on a telephone call. We attempted to conduct the interview using Web-Ex web-conferencing, and then changed to the telephone call only when the computer that Dr. Lakeman was using would not allow the president to access the web-conference. Dr. Lakeman has served at the current institution for more than 30 years with less than 10 years as president. Dr. Lakeman leads an Associate's large college, as classified by the Carnegie Classification system, that serves a mostly urban district (“The Carnegie”, n.d.).

Dr. Lakeman earned a B.S. degree in education, a M.S. degree in education, and a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in education. She explained that her doctoral program was “work-based.”

Everything that you did, your research project, your dissertation, was all centered around the kind of work that you were actually doing in your job at the time, which I really appreciated because I could make headway in both of those arenas; both work and the educational front.

She credits her educational experiences with preparing her for the many different aspects of community college leadership. She took coursework in career and technical education

because she was focused working and growing in this particular field of education. Dr. Lakeman acquired each degree as she sought the next level leadership position. In her explanation of her career progression she explained the need for acquiring the baseline credential required for each position she was seeking, including the doctorate as the credential foundational to the Chief Academic Officer (Vice President) position.

Rich and lengthy leadership experiences provided Dr. Lakeman with opportunities to develop a deep understanding of the college and the role of the college president.

I had spent so much time preparing to be a president over a fairly lengthy amount of time. Doing all the things to prepare for in terms of educational degree and seminars about preparing for the presidency and leadership kinds of experiences, as well as former presidents getting me many experiences to step in on their behalf. There wasn't a lot that I would say was surprising in any way.

Dr. Lakeman acknowledged that the majority of her previous leadership experience was focused on internal functions of the college. Throughout her career at the institution, she was provided opportunities and experiences that she considered "foundational" for the presidency. Specifically, developing an in-depth understanding of the entire organization and the existing internal cultural provide her with resources for dealing with challenges or necessary change.

After working in all of these arenas over a long period of time, you really have a good sense of what the place is about, what is capabilities are, what is culture fundamentally is, and I've had a wealth of experience all the way along those

lines that I really built on and could turn back to when I'm dealing with new challenges or, we've got things that need to be changing.

Dr. Lakeman attended conferences and seminar sessions for presidents through CRD and other associations early in the presidency to acquire a better understanding of the advancement role of the position.

Focusing attention on two external influences Dr. Lakeman recalled on the job training experiences that both occurred shortly after she assumed the presidency. First, the economic turmoil of fall 2008 resulted in significant demands for the college out of necessity in local communities. She shared, "the bottom completely dropped out of the national economy and local economy and we had issues that no one saw coming, no one was prepared for." Second, she mentioned the political environment in 2010 and specifically the legislation known as "Act 10" that effectively eliminated unions in public higher education in Wisconsin.

To mitigate loss in revenue from budget cuts and changes in cost due to legislation, Dr. Lakeman stated that the college is "absolutely and always" exploring alternative revenue sources. Revenue opportunities for both operational expenses and capital expenses are explored. Numerous methods of alternative revenue generation were referenced by Dr. Lakeman; grants, employer partnerships to support capital expenses, contracted services provided by the college, and community organization partnerships. Dr. Lakeman stated her belief that there is a need for college presidents to be more entrepreneurial in the future to generate more revenue.

Partnership development is the primary focus on Dr. Lakeman in the advancement role. An emphasis on partnership development supersedes most direct fundraising ask efforts for Dr. Lakeman. Donations from fundraising efforts are received primarily from individuals and local foundations. Direct involvement in fundraising is a small part of the Dr. Lakeman's role; however, allocating resources to fundraising and supporting others in the college to participate in fundraising efforts is significant part of the role. She referred to her focus for fundraising as not on trying to secure large donations but rather on positioning the college to "have 800 fundraisers all the time", implying that she not only views fundraising as a part of everyone's position at the college but as an integral college function.

Citing her previous leadership experiences, Dr. Lakeman shared examples of external relations activities that she continued in her role as president. She serves on local board and leads other community based organization (CBO) initiatives as a board member. She also explained that as she has spent more time in her role as president, she has increased the amount of time spent on external relations. "I, for instance, am serving on more community and state and national boards and things like that now than I certainly was in 2008." She further explained the depth and significance of her external efforts.

The other area that we're doing a lot in . . . certainly working with other community organizations in partnerships to solve problems or issues in our community. I'm talking about tapping financial and partner resources of organizations like our community foundations, The United Way, some other non-

profit entities out there. Where everybody's working together, bringing resources together to deal with issues like people in poverty who could really benefit from education and work opportunities. Or deal with issues like employers with huge demand for certain workers and we just can't seem to find these folks—tapping new markets, things like that. Working with others is certainly key to success today.

Dr. Lakeman explained her approach in these efforts is to seek the “triple-win situation.” She shared a specific example of the college's partnership with an agricultural equipment dealer that afforded the college the opportunity to make us of over a million dollars in equipment in program training. The partner benefits, the college benefits, and the students being trained on state-of-the art equipment benefit.

When asked specifically about the role she plays in alternative revenue generation, Dr. Lakeman explained a three-part role. First, she shared that her primary role as establishing culture.

I think first of all, my primary role as president is to make sure that we have an environment to innovate and go for these things, allowing people to have the freedom and flexibility to discuss partnership opportunities and discuss project opportunities, to look at new sources of funding. It's really setting a culture where everybody has the freedom to look for these opportunities. Not one person is going to secure these opportunities—not even a dozen people are going to do that. It really takes a whole organization.

Second, Dr. Lakeman allocates resources to advancement efforts.

The second way that I think I play a role is making sure that we have the right people on board that play more of a facilitator role in fundraising, in partnership development, things like that. For instance, having an executive director of our foundation who is positioned in the community in a way that can focus on that exclusively.”

The third aspect of her role is focusing on relationship-building externally. “I think I can help with all of this by maintaining positive relationships and knowing people in the community. Being well-networked and being well-respected and well-regarded in the community.” Dr. Lakeman further explained that she achieves this three-part advancement role by having good listening skills and making use of those skills both internally and externally. She emphasized her feelings by stating, “Listening skills are paramount in a position like this.”

When asked specifically about leadership characteristics that contributed to her success, Dr. Lakeman explained that being open to ideas and possibilities was key. She further explained that being entrepreneurial was beneficial. “I think another characteristic that’s been critical has been a bit of an entrepreneurial spirit, the opportunistic mindset about what could be, what’s possible.”

**President Roger Fish.** I interviewed President Roger Fish in person in his office on campus. Dr. Fish has been president in his current role for less than 10 years and had served as a president at a different two-year college. The college that Dr. Fish leads is

classified by Carnegie as an Associate's two-year, small college and serves a mostly rural district ("The Carnegie", n.d.).

Dr. Fish earned a Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in a non-education related field and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. He recalled that the doctoral program was "intense theory" on leadership with no coursework related to alternative revenue generation.

Dr. Fish's career in higher education spans 31 years with 12 years as a Vice President. Dr. Fish served in leadership roles in multiple higher education institutions and outside of higher education. He shared an experience learning from other leaders outside of higher education that shaped his personal leadership style and beliefs very early in his professional career. He recalled a situation from his first leadership role in which his team had the lowest ratings in a facilities inspection. He was younger than many on the team that he lead, and he quickly learned the importance of listening and asking questions. He asked his team to identify the challenges and issues then made a list of those issues to address. His team successfully addressed all the issues and at the next inspection, the team received the highest rating possible. "Those guys did that. All I did was just use their expertise and that's something that's followed me ever since." He further explained how his previous work experiences prepared him for the presidency.

I think you learn confidence over time--that you know what you're talking about. You get a broad-based understanding about everything. I think for the presidency, having to do administration and student services was a great prep. I know facilities. I know the business side.

With respect to specific preparation for the advancement role, Dr. Fish recalled attending conference workshops on fundraising. While he acknowledged these trainings as beneficial, the leadership development (training) related to advancement that was most beneficial was provided by what Dr. Fish referred to as a “mature” foundation board. He explained that the board members of the foundation at the institution of one of his previous roles were knowledgeable and skilled at fundraising and thus were able to secure large donations from local business partners to fund an initiative.

I just got lucky because they had what I call a mature foundation board. What I mean by that is, it was chaired by a gentleman who was an extraordinarily successful business person . . . one thing he was six foot nine and the other thing was, he was brilliant. He led the foundation board by simply saying, ‘I know these people in this community. I believe in what you’re doing here at this two-year school. I know I can go tell them they need to write a check for fifteen or twenty thousand, they won’t blink an eye.

He further explained that he learned from watching the members of this board successfully complete a multi-million-dollar campaign.

Dr. Fish mentioned specific experiences that provided on the job training in his first president role as well as his current role with respect to the advancement role of the presidency. “Well, I spent a lot more time lobbying in [my previous role] than I did here, simply because everything had to come from the legislature.” When reflecting on his first few years in the current role, he shared, “I think otherwise, the relationships within the community. When I got here this was a community trying to recover from a huge

plant closing, with a lot of people who were unemployed. This college was already neck deep in those students; the enrollment went up 54%.” Other examples included shrinking budgets due to state legislation, a sharp decline in the economy with many local jobs lost, and the Act 10 legislation that change the employment environment on campus.

Alternative revenue generation strategies including writing for grants and direct solicitation fundraising are employed at Dr. Fish’s college. Dr. Fish is directly involved in fundraising for the college, and works closely with his college advancement staff and Foundation board. He stated that with the current advancement leader on staff, his role in making the direct ask for fundraising has diminished; however, he does meet with donors.

Right now [the Foundation Executive Director] and I have the same philosophy.

It’s direct solicitation. It’s creating a relationship and sharing a vision then asking them to participate in that. . . . It’s direct relationship building with that business.

With that individual.

To achieve success in alternative revenue generation, Dr. Fish has focused on developing a vision and allocating resources to support that vision as well as relationship building.

Part of developing the vision included staffing the foundation with an executive director and establishing direction for the Foundation board of directors. “I came in, and I said this isn’t what a foundation board should be doing. We need to be more aggressive.”

Taking this approach with the board resulted in some members leaving, others staying on and embracing the new direction, and entirely new members joining the board. Dr. Fish

shared, “That’s what you need. You need movers and shakers.” He views board advocacy as an essential element to advancement success.

For Dr. Fish sharing the vision and building relationships go hand-in-hand, and he views these two as one of his core competencies. Recognizing that as an introvert, his strength is not “wandering around a cocktail party” but rather sharing the vision of the college while talking one-on-one with people or presenting to a large group. He provided numerous examples of the avenues he takes expand the opportunities to share the vision and build relationships.

One of the things that presidents need to do is get very much involved in Economic Development, with [non-profit] groups, and with boards—to be at the table at those things. . . . Every place that I could be that would influence economic development and the role of training in all of that, that’s really important for a president to do.

Dr. Fish emphasized the importance of knowing his own leadership strengths and involving other campus leaders and making use of their strengths in advancement efforts.

**President Virginia Russell.** I interviewed President Virginia Russell on the telephone.

Dr. Russell has served as the college president of an Associate’s medium-sized college--according to the Carnegie classification system--for almost ten years (“The Carnegie”, n.d.). The campus is located in an urban setting but serves mostly rural communities.

Completing a traditional academic pathway, Dr. Russell earned a Bachelor’s degree in education, a Master’s degree in a non-education related field, and a PhD in Educational Leadership. She reported having no coursework specific to fundraising in her

doctoral program. Dr. Russell felt that a significant part of the PhD program helped prepare her for external relations duties. She explained about the curriculum, “A lot on communication. Working with external partners, working with all your stakeholders. I think you can apply that. . . Talking a lot in my PhD program about establishing relationships, understanding your stakeholders, those kinds of things. A lot of work on that which was helpful for me as I assumed the role here.”

Dr. Russell served as a Vice President for learning prior to the presidency. In that role, Dr. Russell worked closely with local business and industry and interacted with external partners through advisory committees and listening sessions. Because of her experiences working with CEOs, advisory committee members, and other key people in partner organizations, Dr. Russell felt well-prepared for much of the external relations expectations of the presidency. In addition, she shared, “I worked all the time with business and industry—CEOs, advisory committees, key people in organizations, and I was very comfortable working with businesses.” In addition, Dr. Russell recalled her experience in previous leadership positions working with large budgets and the College Board as contributing to her preparation. She credited her previous supervisor with providing her opportunities. “My previous boss was very good at allowing me to be very much involved with the board activities, and he was very good at working with boards so I learned a lot.”

Even with the confidence she felt in her own development, Dr. Russell was quick to note that none of the experiences prepared her for “all of the external work” of the

presidency. She shared a story about making a comment in the context of working with legislators that made the front page of the local paper.

I just didn't realize that whatever I do, it's on the front page of the newspaper. . . That was a bit of an adjustment for me. I always know that it's a 24/7 job, and that I'm always the president of [the college] whether I'm at the grocery store or wherever I am at. That took a little bit of me getting us to that.

Specifically learning what the role is not was an element of on the job training mentioned by Dr. Russell. While reflecting on the transition from Vice President to President, Dr. Russell talked about being directly involved in the academics of the college and learning to leave the responsibilities of the Vice President role behind. She stated, "My biggest problem was that I was VP for Learning so I was always very active in learning. When you go to president, you have to back off on that a bit, and I struggled with that for a while."

In addition to explaining the challenges of the transition to president, Dr. Russell shared, "I was not prepared for fundraising when I took the job. I knew I had to do it, but I had not done it before." She continued with an explanation of how she focused on the internal aspects of her role to prepare.

I did feel that the president coming in had a role in fundraising, and that probably I would tell you when I interviewed I was honest that I had not done very much fundraising. I felt that I could get up to speed, but it was not something I had. I've turned out to be a good fundraiser, but what I did do is that I did not go out and do fundraising in my first two years. I felt that I had to focus internally to make sure

that if I went out and asked for something that I wasn't going to get a surprise that we weren't doing the job we were supposed to do. I wanted to build my relationships with businesses to follow through on things that needed to be done before I went out.

As part of her own development, Dr. Russell hired a coach to help her work through changes at the college that precipitated from the Act 10 legislation. "I actually brought in a coach to help me work through Act 10 and being sensitive to our faculty with the changes. I have to say it worked beautifully." Additionally, Dr. Russell shared, "I have formed a mentoring relationship with this gentleman who is extremely successful and really likes [the college]. [He] respects me and likes me and that has helped me a lot as well."

With experience and time on her side, Dr. Russell has fully embraced the external relations role of her position, and she shared with exuberance examples of her efforts outside of the walls of the campus serving on boards, working with legislators, and fundraising. Dr. Russell shared a multi-focus approach to advancement efforts. First, she provided multiple examples of her ability to develop partnerships that resulted in financial support for college initiatives including programs, capital infrastructure development, and entrepreneurial revenue. She explained her direct role as president:

My foundation director comes with, but I'm really the lead. I'm the one who they want to talk to, and I'm the one that seals the deal on everything fundraising. I'm the one out front, always. Our businesses wouldn't be giving if it wasn't me at the table talking with them.

Second she shared her belief in allocating resources to advancement efforts. She shared that when staff have an innovative idea that she tries to resource that idea to encourage innovation.

If they say they need some seed money, I have a pool of innovation dollars. . . I will put dollars into it to all them to try these things. . .Even in tight times we never cut professional development and we've continued to support innovation.

Lastly, she shared targeted efforts to support an entrepreneurial campus culture.

Referencing the rest of the college leadership team, Dr. Russell stated "Everybody has an entrepreneurial spirit."

**President Forest McCallister.** I interviewed President Forest McCallister in person in his office. President McCallister serves at an Associate's medium college that serves a mostly rural community as categorized by the Carnegie Classification System ("The Carnegie", n.d.).

Having no specific plan for a career in education, President McCallister earned a Bachelor's degree in a non-education related field. He obtained a master's degree in education when he found himself in a position in a K-12 school district. At the time of interview, President McCallister was enrolled in a doctoral program. He reported having no advancement-related coursework to date.

President McCallister self-described his previous leadership experiences as a "non-traditional" path to the presidency. He explained that much of the experience that prepared him for the presidency occurred while working outside of education and leading

in the non-profit sector. He talked about managing and leading change in the non-profit organization.

I was part of the leadership that came in that kind of transitioned to a new place for them. In the midst of working on a whole new area that I'd never worked in, like housing development, we put together economic development packages for companies. We brought in new markets, tax credits, worked with the WEDC and different places to put together financing. We also put in new IT systems and wrote the employee handbook. They didn't have any kind of personnel policies. Changed insurances, modified the compensation system, hired different people. All kinds of different things.

Working within the executive leadership ranks of the college that he currently serves, he gained a solid understanding of the internal operational aspects of the institution including the college budget and fiscal resource management. Experiences working a public school board of directors early in his professional career were particularly beneficial to President McCallister.

Being relatively young and dealing with those issues was a good kind of trial by fire, and I learned a lot about how to keep morale up when you have those kinds of challenges. Trying to keep a lot of those challenge away from staff so that they could focus on students, teaching and learning and all those things.

In his previous position at the institution President McCallister worked closely with the college board of directors. When he was appointed as President, he was well aware that there was a board's expectation for the external relations aspect of the role. He

mentioned; however, that he is more comfortable with the internal relations aspect of the position. He shared, “I’m not quite as external as [the previous president] . . . my compass zone is a little more internal so probably I’m a bit more inward-looking.”

While he feels he was well-prepared for the presidency, President McCallister stated that the time spent on public relations related to the political environment was unanticipated.

I would say that the public relations aspect of the job is different than what I did before. It was unexpected. . . . I’ve spent more time on than I would have anticipated, it’s probably dealing with policy at the state level and dealing with legislators and that kind of thing.

Throughout his leadership development experiences in education, President McCallister has benefitted from mentor/mentee relationships. He shared that in his first position working in education that he had a “really good mentor”.

President McCallister shared that the recent budget challenges that has affected his institution the most is the change in the ability to raise local revenue. While indicating that seeking grants was one strategy to mitigate loss of revenue, President McCallister also indicated that grants funds do not sustain programs since grants “go away.” Suggesting what he thought was a more sustainable approach to revenue generation, President McCallister shared that contract training for business & industry is the focus of his efforts to generate alternative revenue. He shared, “We’ve looked at contract revenue. That’s an area that we’re trying to emphasize. We’ve actually added a position at our [campus] to pursue contract revenue.”

Fundraising activities at President McCallister's college are primarily targeted at efforts to directly benefit students. The college Foundation conducts multiple events that raise funds for student scholarships, and President McCallister participates in these events. He is also involved in direct asks to individual donors. He shared that at this time, fundraising efforts for the college are mostly for scholarships and are not regarded as a strategy for addressing long-term financial challenges. "So I don't view that as necessarily—unless we could secure a significant endowment—I don't necessarily see that as a recurring way to solve our long-term financial problems." He cited the lack of major corporate employers in the district as a limiting factor for large fundraising initiatives. Referring to this challenge, "we don't have the one big General Motors-type employer. So we have not done as much in the way of asks, like for construction projects or for major gifts from business."

**President Sandie Greenway.** I interviewed President Sandie Greenway via telephone because she did not have access to a webcam for web-conferencing. Dr. Greenway has served as president for less than 5 years of an Associate's large college serving a mostly urban district ("The Carnegie", n.d.).

Dr. Greenway earned a bachelor's degree, two master's degrees, and a PhD. The focus of her studies for both of her master's degrees was on change theory and change management. She studied leadership in her doctoral program. Dr. Greenway made no mention of any coursework specific to external relations or fundraising, but she indicated that she believes that her coursework combined with her work experiences prepared her adequately for the college presidency. She summarized her academic training,

“Understanding culture, understanding change, understanding how to use data, I think for educational leadership that really worked. Then I think my work roles really just built upon the different positions that I have held.”

The traditional pathway to the presidency mirrors Dr. Greenway’s previous leadership experience. Having served in an Associate Vice President position, multiple Vice President positions and finally as a Provost immediately prior to becoming an interim president, Dr. Greenway had the opportunity to lead many change initiatives within the institution. After she explained her formal academic and career pathway she shared, “Now none of that prepared me for all of the external work.”

Being a relatively new president, it was easy for Dr. Greenway to recall her perceptions of the presidency versus the reality as well as the feelings she felt with respect to preparation. She shared that she had not anticipated the amount of time that she would spend in the community. Dr. Greenway explained that in addition to working in the community her approach to establishing herself as a collaborative leader included focusing on the internal culture and articulating the vision that she has for the college.

Facing a significant budget shortfall immediately upon assuming the presidency, Dr. Greenway was forced to quickly develop strategies to address the challenge. She explained that she focused on the revenue side and focused on securing additional revenue.

You know if there's no plan in place for next year budgets and if you're currently experiencing 19 million dollars. We--I have to tell you that was just really a rude awakening. A lot of fundraising at that point, everything we could think of. Any

way to bring in revenue. We had, of course, cut expenses, but at the same time I'm a firm believer you don't just cut. You also have to realign resources and you have to look for ways to increase revenue.

Embracing fundraising an alternative revenue generation strategy early in her presidency, Dr. Greenway has experienced success and received valuable on the job training. In addition to actively participating in fundraising visits and asks, Dr. Greenway has allocated college resources to advancement efforts. Of particular importance was establishing a goal for fundraising and hiring the staff and aligning the foundation board to achieve the goal.

I set a goal of [amount], and she did not want to reach that goal so we had to find somebody who understood that their job was to fundraise for the college. . . We need to get a foundation board that really understands the role of the board, in terms of what they're expected to do with fundraising. . . . We're trying to bring on more consultants to help, so that we understand the work. We're training our foundation board members so they understand what it's like to do an ask, what it's like to go out.

Dr. Greenway confirmed that she is committed to supporting the advancement team and college advancement efforts.

Strategies for increasing revenue also included increased grant-writing, increases in corporate training contracts, and fundraising.

**President Tom Thornton.** I interviewed President Tom Thornton using the Web-Ex web-conferencing service. Serving for almost 20 years, Dr. Thornton is president at an

Associate's medium-size college that serves a mostly urban district ("The Carnegie", n.d.).

Dr. Thornton earned a bachelor's degree at a small, private liberal arts college and completed a 4-year doctoral program, both of which in non-education related fields. Dr. Thornton had no formal academic curriculum related to fundraising in either program.

Citing a wealth of experiences prior to become college president, Dr. Thornton provided numerous examples of leadership opportunities that provided preparation opportunities for the presidency. He led a private, non-profit organization, taught at multiple colleges as an adjunct instructor, and served in a role similar to the chancellor of statewide technical college system prior to becoming president at his current college. He suggested that much of his experience involved budgeting.

Dr. Thornton did not attend any conferences or trainings that helped with developing advancement leadership skills. Rather, Dr. Thornton explained his membership in a "tech group" that is comprised of CEOs from a number of companies. He shared examples of having conversations with the members of that group that would help him better communicate with external audiences including having the group members review and provide feedback on materials that he intended to use for advancement efforts.

Throughout the years that he has served as president, Dr. Thornton has had many opportunities for on the job training to support his development as an advancement leader. In his words, "it's not like I have no advanced training, but I have no formal

training.” He has been involved in campaigns and gave examples of his understanding of advancement activities.

External relations duties consume approximately 75% of Dr. Thornton’s time. He stated that much of the time he spends on external relations is spent developing and maintaining relationships within the community that his college serves. While his work beyond the local and regional community is limited, Dr. Thornton provided an example of his work on global partnerships.

When asked about alternative revenue generation, Dr. Thornton replied, “I do believe that we have to look at other ways to fund education and diversify our funding sources.” A robust portfolio of contract training for business and corporate training, selling intellectual property, sale of service, and fundraising are the primary examples that Dr. Thornton has implemented at his college. In addition, he shared examples of other entrepreneurial pursuits that have potential to generate revenue.

**President Andrew Ferguson.** I interviewed President Andrew Ferguson in person in his office on campus. Dr. Ferguson has served as college president for more than 20 years. The college he leads is an Associate’s medium-sized, according to the Carnegie Classification (“The Carnegie”, n.d.). The largest campus is located in an urban setting and serves mostly an urban district with satellite campuses serving rural communities.

Dr. Ferguson attended and earned a degree from a community college. He then transitioned directly to a four-year institution to earn a Bachelor’s degree in education. He earned a Master’s degree in a non-education related field and a doctorate in higher

education administration. Dr. Ferguson stated that his doctoral program was “pretty traditional” and did not include curriculum related to external relations or fundraising.

Dr. Ferguson believes that his leadership experiences outside of higher education provided him insights that helped developed his ability to lead the college. “When I think about it, my career pathway kind of meandered, like many of our students and maybe that’s given me some appreciations for the challenges that our students face.”

Having served in leadership positions at multiple colleges, Dr. Ferguson had insight into the contextual nature of community college leadership.

I came from a large suburban community college. A lot of my thinking then was tied to the culture of that community. Of course, the [previous college] is much more ... it is a political environment, and it is just a different college and a different college culture. I came here with some thoughts and ideas, and I brought some things from my beliefs and practices from there to here. Then I found out that they didn't all fit in this bottle. I did a lot of rethinking about what it meant to be in this position.

Developing his own leadership skills to fit the college is important to Dr. Ferguson. Forming a learning community with CEOs from local organizations including hospitals and other higher education institutions is one example that Dr. Ferguson provided of investing in his own leadership development. “We’ve been meeting quarterly for ten years and some of the hosts bring a topic forward and we go around the table and talk about our own stories.”

Dr. Ferguson has also attended conference sessions developed specifically for college presidents to help develop his advancement-related skillset. While he acknowledged these sessions as valid learning opportunities, he was quick to state that he tries to learn from colleagues and peers as well.

With more than twenty years of experience, Dr. Ferguson draws on numerous on the job experiences that inform his leadership. He regards his college's efforts with fundraising to be mostly traditional as a priority source for funds for student scholarships or for equipment replacement; however, he is exploring new opportunities.

I think our foundation is key because that has that same potential to be a multiplier. We're still using it in a mostly traditional way, trying to raise money or scholarships or equipment replacement. Those are our two highest priorities. But, there are other things that other colleges and their foundations are doing and we are looking at that.

As he further explained alternative revenue generation he shared examples of contract training and major gifts that have supported capital infrastructure development. He shared that he "works in tandem" with the college's foundation director to secure major gifts.

**President Roger Simon.** I interviewed President Roger Simon via telephone. Dr. Simon has served for ten years as the president of an Associate's medium-sized college, according to the Carnegie Classification ("The Carnegie", n.d.). The college is located in a mostly urban district.

Dr. Simon's formal education included earning Bachelor's, Master's, Education Specialist, and Ed.D. degrees in education-related programs. Dr. Simon noted there was

coursework related to advisory committees and community engagement. He recalled projects focused on, “community engagement and how you go about and work with a community to build support for your programs.” He was quick to note that he felt there was some elements of fundraising in the curriculum.

I know there were some elements of it in there, but nothing that I would say would be formalized to the extent of what I do now in development and raising funds for our college. I think there’s a gap in there regarding how do you actually develop strategies around advancement. It could even be more marketing and promotional material. ‘What’s your messaging about around the college?’ I kind of had to learn that as I went along.

Dr. Simon provided multiple leadership experiences in previous positions that helped developed the skills necessary for success with the external relations aspect of the presidency. For example, he shared that he knew little about the technical college when he was hired, but that he brought the other experience about community with him to the technical college.

I did a lot of the community outreach and began to develop a greater appreciation for the role that the community played in successful educational programs. I did a lot of individual projects within our community. Some might today call it service-learning or special projects to help launch a campaign in the community. . . . [In another position], one of my responsibilities was to establish business partnerships . . . I learned an awful lot about how the technical college system

operates in its relationships, especially with business and industry and K-12 partners.

Dr. Simon credits being involved in organizations such as the AACC with helping him to develop as an effective college leader. Investing in his own leadership development provided insight into what he described as “the complexity of our college environment.” To illustrate this point, he explained that one of the “most outstanding” professional development opportunities was a new president forum that he attended early in his presidency where he learned all the different dynamics of the presidents’ role including academics, budget, governance, and community relations.

Dr. Simon exuded enthusiasm for external relations and fundraising duties during the interview. He provided lengthy examples of his leadership efforts and success in garnering support for the college. Alternative revenue generation and the other aspects of college advancement are an integral part of his leadership style and thus his daily activities.

I think that’s probably one of the biggest drivers for college presidents to now have to put more focus on sort of the entrepreneurial side of their job and really look for ways to develop private partnerships. That was sort of my mantra when I came in and when I interviewed for the job as president.

He was also quick to share that he made a “personal commitment to fundraising” when he assumed the presidency. One example of his continued commitment includes an established fundraising goal for college initiatives. “I commit to [the college] every year

to raise two million dollars. That's my base. Usually it's closer to four million. That's all through the Foundation. That money is used for special projects.”

Allocating resources to advancement has been a priority for Dr. Simon, and is part of a comprehensive advancement strategy.

When I took over, one of the first things we did was reorganize the foundation, move the office into the building that I'm located in, so I could bring partners in and introduce them to foundation members. We hired a new executive director. We organized it so that the position has a reporting authority directly to our executive leadership. We structured it in a way that it needed to be to target specifically the generation of funds—at the time, I would say for scholarships—to expand that whole arena. . . . In the last seven years or so, I've really drive it around the concept of public-private partnerships.

The comprehensive program includes public-private partnerships as the highest priority, securing federal, foundation, and other grants, direct fundraising asks and entrepreneurial ventures. He attributes much of the success of the advancement efforts to an extensive network that he has developed through active participation in efforts outside the college.

I would say . . . I have a pretty extensive national network of partners already. I've served on over 60 boards. I've very involved in the profession at a wide variety of levels. . . . I've got a good base of people I can draw upon. . . . So that network, I would say is probably number one.

## **Summary**

Croteau & Smith (2012) define advancement as the multiple aspects of college development including external relations and fundraising. Analysis of the statements made by the nine presidents confirms that all participants are actively engaged in advancement in their current role. While the presidents differ slightly in the level and types of alternative revenue generation used, all have incorporated alternative revenue generation as a part of institutional strategy. Additionally, all presidents recognize the need for the college president to be a fundraiser for the college, although the goals for fundraising vary. A contextual description of each president's perception of the role in seeking alternative revenue, or in other words as a successful fundraiser, provides affirmation of the existence of the advancement role in the WTCS presidency. In addition, the description of various pathways to the presidency provides insight into the preparation of each president for the role. Themes related to preparation are described in the next section.

### **Within-case Themes**

#### **Preparation**

The overall theme that emerged from analyses of academic and work experiences of the participating presidents is presidents perceive they were well-prepared for the presidency while recognizing a lack of preparation for seeking alternative revenue in the advancement role. Additional subthemes identified in this section characterize the experience of the presidents. First, the findings reveal that the leader's perception of the president's role and the actual role are often different. Second, the transition from

conducting the duties of the individual's previous position to assuming the duties of the presidency is fraught with challenges. Third, there is limited preparation for meeting the alternative revenue generation expectations and capturing the opportunities that may exist.

While all of the presidents felt that they were aware of the expectations of the presidency, and few admitted to surprises with respect to duties once they assumed the role, some of the presidents admit that there were aspects of the position for which they could have been better prepared. One president shared that when he assumed the position, "I thought it was primarily an academic role. That I'd be guiding programs, really working with faculty, and improvements of student experiences, student success." He shared that he learned very quickly that, not only were the responsibilities far more broad, but that there were skill sets he had that better aligned with other aspects of the role.

Presidents suggested that they struggled with the transition from their previous leadership position within the college to the new role. One president shared that she struggled to remove herself from her old role as an academic leader, and had to make a mindful decision to change her focus. Another president explained his struggle in terms of being more comfortable with the role of the presidency that related to his previous position so it was natural to focus on that part of the role.

When discussing previous leadership experiences, there were few examples of preparation for the advancement role of external relations. One president shared that there was no direction from the previous president's action nor board direction regarding advancement efforts. According to one president, "No one ever told me that this was

going to be ‘part of your responsibility’ or ‘here is how we went about working with our foundation.’” He shared that he knew his personal strength was in external relations, and he made a personal commitment to fundraising. Another shared that she would have like the opportunity to participate in fundraising prior to assuming the presidency.

I do think that if [the previous president] would have taken me out with him on calls that was out on--and maybe that’s part of the problem, he wasn’t really helping that much. If he would have done that, I think I would have felt more comfortable.

Many of the responses from presidents regarding alternative revenue generation, specifically fundraising, can be summarized by this quote from one president. “I was not prepared for fundraising when I took the job. I knew I had to do it, but I had not done it before.”

Although every president shared examples of duties related to the advancement role for which they could have been better-prepared, two of the presidents did mention work experiences afforded to them as vice presidents by the college president before them that provided exposure to the specific external relations duties of the president and the chance to practice these types of duties prior to assuming the presidency.

I really do think that the experience is the key driver of preparation versus the educational degrees that you get. Unless those degree preparation programs change dramatically, I think experience will continue to be the ultimate and most fundamental way that you can prepare for most of what you do in this job. . . . Credentials give you the key to the car, but it’s your experience that’s going to

drive you well down the road and cause you to know how to drive that vehicle ultimately.

### Leadership Competency Themes

This section contains themes related to the leadership competencies that the presidents described as contributing to their success in the advancement role of the presidency. There are seven main themes including; internal focus, relationship building, community involvement, telling the college story (advocacy), active fundraising, resource allocation, and entrepreneurial focus. The leadership competencies that each president associated with his or her success are presented in a matrix in Table 2.

Table 2

*Within-Case Leader Competencies Themes Matrix*

	Internal Focus	Relationship Building	Community Involvement	Tell the Story	Resource Allocation	Active Fundraising	Entrepreneurial
Roy Bishop	X	X			X	X	
Michelle Lakeman	X	X	X		X	X	X
Roger Fish	X	X		X	X	X	X
Virginia Russell	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Forest McCallister	X	X	X			X	
Sandie Greenway	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Tom Thornton	X	X		X	X	X	X
Andrew Ferguson	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Roger Simon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

The constant comparative method of analysis throughout the interview process established a pattern of progression of themes. This pattern of the progression will be

explained as part of this section. The order of presentation of the findings parallels the pattern of progression of leadership attributes.

**Internal focus.** Most of the presidents in this case seemed to describe themselves as having a significant external relations focus in their roles, yet all of them connected their external work either directly or indirectly to their internal responsibilities within the college. Most presidents' comments suggested that focusing on the internal aspects such as culture, faculty and staff, and the college's core competencies is of primary importance and essential prior to external success.

Building a vision and intentional culture early in the presidency appeared to be a priority and a contributor to success. As one president recalled her first year in the role, she talked about prioritizing her duties.

It took a year but we're in a much better place because of this. . . . Internally the kind of culture you want to build and being allowed and supported to do it. And then I think the last piece is being able to articulate a clear vision of what needs to happen. Of how ... How do we move through and realize our ... Move towards our vision and realize our mission and then really implement our strategic plan. I think just being at a very high level and being able to articulate it.

Focusing on internal culture arms the president with knowledge about the institution.

Presidents shared how they use this knowledge to ensure that internal relations success contributes to external relations success.

Here's the thing that I think, and I realized this from the beginning but it becomes evident all through the years. It becomes evident. Our college, we will be as

successful as our reputation and image of quality is in response of this. If the community has trust in us, we can do wonderful things. If the community has trust but they don't believe we have the quality, when we can do good things but not as good. You really have to work on that element.

Additionally, presidents indicated that they must know and understand their college in order represent their college externally. Dr. Thornton shared, “I don’t feel I can be comfortable in doing what I need to do externally unless I have faith in the internal part of my organization.”

**Relationship building.** Every president interviewed shared the belief that building relationships is a vital first step of external relations and continual responsibility of the advancement role of the college president. There are slight differences in the explanations of relationships and the goal of building these relationships. In this section, some of the common perceptions and self-reported attributes of the presidents with respect to relationship-building are reported.

The president must develop an understanding of the needs of the partner, and the college must be able to meet those needs. Dr. Greenway explained the importance of the two-way nature of partnerships. Dr. Greenway indicated that she is genuinely interested in what the college can do for others, and that is an important part of her external relations strategy. She attributes relationship-building success to gaining partners’ trust in the college and partners becoming advocates for the college.

It’s shocking that the better you get at this, the more people are talking to each other, and all the people that are doing the funding trust that you’re a good

institution to give their money to. That they can trust that you're going to do the right thing because you're a strong partner to all of these people that they're a strong partner with.

Another president shared similar comments regarding trust.

It's shocking that the better you get at this, the more people are talking to each other, and all the people that are doing the funding trust that you're a good institution to give their money to. That they can trust that you're going to do the right thing because you're a strong partner to all of these people that they're strong partners with. I really believe that it builds on itself even when I'm not doing the direct asks.

A key element that develops from trust in relationships/partnerships is the perception others have of the college and of the president. The reputation of the college and the college president contribute to partnership development success. Many of the college presidents shared a common sentiment regarding personal and institutional follow-thru. In other words, they shared that relationship-building starts with the president and the institution doing what they say they will do. Dr. Thornton repeatedly referred to his belief that a partner's confidence in his institution and him as the leader of institution as contributing to success in garnering continual—and often, fiscal—support from partners.

It would not have happened if the institution wasn't the way it is and if it didn't have the reputation. If I didn't have the reputation that I have. I can't say that

nobody else would have gotten that but I don't know that we would get that large amount without the president being part of it.

Developing relationships extends beyond simply working with or serving stakeholders. President McCallister illustrated his point by using the words, "strategic development of external relationships." Part of this strategy is learning what the partners expects from the relationship and not just sharing what the college expects or what the college can contribute. "When I talk to people about being a leader, I always tell them, 'focus on developing the right questions, not the right answers.' I think that's a lot more effective strategy than trying to be the smartest person in the room." He indicated that while listening to other leaders, he learns how he can align the college with their mission and goals.

President Simon shared a similar illustration in his response referring to most of his relationship building efforts as "strategic alignments." The business partnership is an "anchor, or cornerstone" for his college. President Simon specifically mentioned the development of public-private partnerships to align the college with local business and industry and to ensure the college is aligned with corporate needs and goals. When sharing one success story, he said, "Now we're written in the shareholder's report. We're identified in the corporate strategy."

Presidents differ in their perspective of the value of relationship-building to alternative revenue generation. For example, one president perceives the relationship as a driver for more contract training revenue.

One advantage I think we have in our system is, because we have such strong business relationships, we talk to employers. They're more willing and interested now than they have been in recent years to pay for the education of their staff.

That's something I think, really, as a system, that we need to try to take advantage of. Some of us are better at it than others. If we spend a little time learning from each other, we can probably do that in a different kind of a way.

One perspective is the long-term sustainability of partnerships to accomplish goals of the institution as well as the partner(s). As one president stated,

Earlier in my career I thought of things in terms of revenue sources and I now think of things in terms of how they can come together in this multiplier dynamic. It's not just bringing revenue in, it's trying to figure out how to get something going with that that sustains.

Others view relationships as a means to secure fiscal resources more directly as referenced by Dr. Greenway above.

**Community Involvement.** When asked about competencies that contributed to success generating alternative revenue, presidents shared the belief that knowing the community and its priorities reflected positively on the President as well as the college.

When speaking of community involvement, Presidents indicated that their understanding of the community was directly-related to their history of being from the very community that their college served.

Being from, actually, I've lived in the district my whole life except for when I was going to [college], I feel like I have a connection with a lot of the communities. I

played sports in a lot of the communities that we serve. I think it's easy for me to go into pretty much any part of our district and quickly find something I have in common with people there. Either I know somebody who they know or I know someone who owns a business in town that they are a patron of. Those kinds of connections. . . . That was actually one of the things why I felt it was important to take this job is because I think someone coming externally, it would take them 2-3 years to develop kind of that true knowledge of who the people are here.

Another president shared,

I do think that given that I was born and raised here in [the district], I do understand this community. . . . That's my message when I go out. I care about this city. I grew up here. It's important to me. It's important to our institutions. We serve an important purpose here. So do you. We have the same end in mind to make this a better place for our citizens.

Presidents attributed success to asking "how can we be a good partner to you", committing to participating in solving community problems or addressing community needs, then following through on those commitments. Dr. Greenway shared an example of how her college is helping meeting a business community need.

This morning we had a meeting with one of our BID districts. One of our new strategies is to go into business parks and start doing some needs assessment. . . . First we do a needs assessment, figure out what it is [they] need. Then we come in—there's so much that we can do to help, but we really need to narrow it down.

. . . We've done that now, since I've been president, with six or seven business districts. It's starting to grow, and it's really starting to blossom.

This community involvement opens doors for the college to request funding in return.

I talk about what the need is and how they can help, then what we're asking for. I do a lot of, I'm right there, so I'm the face of the institution. They know that I'm committed, they know that this is serious, that I'm willing to come and meet with them.

The presidents' responses suggest agreement that community involvement is more than what the college does for the community as an educational institution.

Involvement includes strategic alignments, serving on CBOs, caring about common issues, and contributing to addressing those issues within the district that the college serves. "I think the best way is to get involved in challenging community organizations or projects."

Committing to community involvement is not without challenges. For example, Dr. Ferguson shared, "I intuitively believe that this a community organization, and the more we build a connection and we develop trust with the community, the better it will benefit our organization." However, Dr. Ferguson recalled struggling with concern that the perception of his college faculty and staff would be that he was spending too much time outside of the college walls and not focusing enough on the internal workings of the organization. After many years of experience his opinion has changed. He said:

It seems like ancient history now because it seems just so important now, logical now, to engage in the community. . . Our college, we will be as successful as our

reputation and image of quality is in response to need. If the community has trust in us, we can do wonderful things. If the community has trust, but they don't believe we have the quality, then we can do good things.

**Telling the Story.** As the “face” of the college, a primary role of the presidency is effectively telling the college story, which presidents also referred to as advocacy.

According to President McCallister;

I think that what you'd find when you're dealing with external folks, you have to have the background. You have to know your stuff, but you also have to be able to explain it, articulate it, persuade, and influence. . . . I think it's communicating to the communities about the value of what we provide in this area, and how communicating about the public benefit to them, if we're successful in creating a more educated workforce.”

Repeatedly the participants shared the perception that successful presidents can articulate the vision of the college and the value to the community.

I would say one of the things that we have here is I really understand our story. I've spent a lot of time learning the culture and history of the community we represent. I know a lot about the history [of the district]. People tend to give because there's a person story connected to it. . . . When I'm talking to someone about the history of the college and the impact that our college has on thousands of students every year, I can give real personal examples. I can talk about Gavin, who is a barber-cosmetology student at [the college].

**Active Fundraising.** Fundraising success starts first with seeing value in fundraising as an alternative revenue generation strategy and then making a personal commitment to the role of fundraiser. All of the presidents interviewed indicated that they felt they had been successful fundraisers. It should be noted that the purpose of this study was not to define fundraising success but rather to determine perceptions of factors contributing to success.

Only one president stated that fundraising was not a part of the alternative revenue generation strategy to mitigate the impact of decreases in traditional sources of revenue. He stated, “. . . I don’t view that as necessarily, unless we could secure a significant endowment, I don’t necessarily see that as a recurring way to solve our long term financial problems.”

When explaining how much time was spent on fundraising, Dr. Russell stated, “I think everything I do pertains to fundraising.” Presidents were not asked to quantify how much time was spent on fundraising, but were asked to explain how much fundraising was a part of their advancement role.

The personal connection that the president makes with the donor, and more specifically with executive level leaders of partners, is essential to fundraising success. Dr. Greenway shared that in some cases the donor may only want to meet with the college president.

Fundraising activities include far more than the “ask”, and although the presidents are often an essential part of the activities, many of the presidents were quick to suggest the role of the rest of the college is integral. These presidents suggest that the leadership competency often employed to ensure success is related to resource allocation. With one

exception, there was an almost deference to a complete advancement agenda rather than affirming that the president is the primary fundraiser.

Many of the presidents were relatively humble when discussing their role in fundraising activities. Rather than highlighting their own personal success as fundraisers, most were quick to focus on institutional fundraising success. “I don’t care who gets the credit. I only care about the citizens of [our district] and are students really helped by the partnerships that we have and by the work that we do internally.” Another president, immediately responded with, “I don’t like to talk about myself” when asked to share his thoughts on his own success. When pushed to expand on their role more, presidents often deferred to their actions that support external relations with lead to the next theme.

Only one president reported fundraising success as an exclusively individual accomplishment. When asked about fundraising duties of the president she shared, “I’m the one who they want to talk to, and I’m the one that seals the deal on everything with fundraising. I’m the one out front always. Our businesses wouldn’t be giving if it wasn’t me at the table talking to them.” This president provided numerous examples of fundraising success that contributed to the college’s ability purchase capital equipment, complete capital building projects, and implement new program initiatives.

**Resource Allocation.** All of the presidents interviewed in this study believe that institutional alternative revenue generation success is in part due to resource allocation to advancement activities. The presidents indicated that upon assuming the presidency or when committing to alternative revenue generation that their first action was ensuring that resources, including human resources, were allocated to alternative revenue

generation. The presidents shared that allocating resources involved numerous activities or initiatives that they each lead. Some of the specific resource allocation efforts have been reported above in the descriptive findings for each president. Additional activities and initiatives are described below.

The presidents reported hiring or relying on an already existing effective Foundation Director or CAO as well as supporting other leaders' development in advancement-related functions. Dr. Thornton spoke of "grooming future leaders, mentoring, and coaching" when talking about preparing others in the organization to assist with fundraising. Dr. Simon shared,

If I left tomorrow, would someone else in the college be able to make that same call? We're trying to build some capacity. As I mentioned, in many of our meetings our vice president for community and government relations will come to meetings with me. I'm hoping that we can sustain this way beyond me, so that everybody gets to know [the external partners]. It builds a network of support even if it's not at the CEO level, at least at a high enough level where you keep that line of communication going beyond the individual.

Presidents reported that one of their duties included ensuring that the Foundation Board of Directors was on board with the advancement goals of the college. To accomplish this goal, efforts often included adding or changing board members.

Resource management leadership also includes using the talents of other college leaders. Presidents reported knowing their own strengths and the strengths of their leaders then using those strengths to ensure success in alternative revenue generation. Dr. Simon

shared that he knows that his strength in external relations is on the “corporate side”, and that he has other people in his organization to further external relations with alumni, personal donors, and other CBOs.

**Entrepreneurism.** Entrepreneurism is regarded by WTCS presidents as an opportunity for alternative revenue generation. As mentioned previously in the individual descriptions, many WTCS presidents consider themselves to be entrepreneurial in their advancement efforts. Some even suggest that entrepreneurship is more favorable as a long-term strategy than fundraising. Some colleges, like Dr. Simon’s, have established entrepreneurial on-campus ventures through public-private partnerships that generate revenue.

Entrepreneurial presidents support an entrepreneurial culture. Dr. Russell reported success in encouraging college staff to take risks and try new things. She shared that she encourages and supports innovation and doesn’t allow failed ventures to negatively impact relationships with her staff. She shared, “Everybody [at the college] has that entrepreneurial spirit.”

### **Cross-Case Analysis**

The final analysis of the findings is a cross-case analysis with two other case studies cited in the literature review that examined community college perceptions of advancement leadership. This analysis explores similarities in themes that emerged from other case studies of two-year college presidents with respect to alternative revenue generation.

Gentile (2009) and Miller (2013) conducted case studies of community college presidents in New Jersey and Michigan respectively. The findings of the two studies contain similar themes to this case study of WTCS presidents. Table 3 compares the major themes of each study.

Table 3

*Major Theme Comparison: Attributes of Community College Leaders from Three States*

<b>Michigan Community College Presidents</b>	<b>New Jersey Community College Presidents</b>	<b>WTCS Presidents</b>
Important role in -strategic planning -creating vision -providing direction for foundation operations		Internal focus Resource allocation
Leads fundraising effort Uses fundraising team	Plans fundraising efforts Leads fundraising efforts Use fundraising team	Active fundraising
Face of the college Develops relationships Involved and connected in community	Increasing external focus Relationship development Community involvement	Relationship building Community involvement
Manage internal and external perceptions of self within unique environment	Further the message	Tell the story
Needs attributes, skills, and abilities that allow to connect with individuals on personal level		
	Entrepreneurial in generating alternative revenue	Entrepreneurial

## **Summary**

The descriptions of the nine presidents illustrate a variety of preparation avenues, leadership characteristics, and perceptions of the advancement role. Most WTCS presidents have common preparation experiences with respect to formal academic preparation and previous leadership experiences. While some have experiences working outside education, the majority of leadership development occurred within the higher education work environment. Previous leadership experiences prior to the presidency for all presidents included leadership positions within a community college, and most occurred within the WTCS.

Seven major leadership competency themes emerged that addressed the research question for the study. These themes include: internal focus, relationship building, community involvement, telling the college story (advocacy), active fundraising, resource allocation, and entrepreneurship. The major themes that align closely with other case studies of community college presidents are: relationship building, active fundraising, community involvement, telling the story, and entrepreneurial. A limitation of case studies is the inability to generalize beyond the case; however, cross-case analysis allows for comparison of studies to illustrate patterns that may be demonstrate a broader application of themes beyond the original studies.

## **Chapter Five: Summary and Discussion**

This case study of WTCS college presidents explored the perceptions of nine college presidents with at least one year of experience in the presidency. Presidents were asked to share their perceptions of their role in seeking alternative revenue for their institutions, what educational and work-related experiences contribute to their success in securing alternative funding, and what leader attributes contribute to their success in advancement activities—including alternative revenue generations.

Data were gathered via nine semi-structured interviews with Wisconsin Technical College System presidents using WebEx web-conferencing, telephone call, or in-person. Each confidential interview was recorded using a recording application that also provided a transcription service. The interviews were transcribed by the transcription service then reviewed for accuracy. I assigned pseudonyms for each president to ensure anonymity. The sample for this case study was diverse with respect to leadership philosophy, length of time in the presidency, size of college (student FTEs), college operational costs, and geographic location (urban or rural setting).

The literature review for this study yielded three bodies of research that inform the research question and the sub-questions study: community college leadership, preparation for the community college presidency, and the advancement role of the community college president. Analysis of the findings of the study yielded numerous themes which are reported in alignment with the three bodies of research and the research question and sub-questions. Findings are reported first with descriptions of each president's academic preparation and work experiences as well as the president's

involvement in advancement. Individual descriptions using the pseudonym that was assigned to each president provide insight into the participants' preparation for the college presidency. Next, findings related to academic preparation and work experiences that prepare for the advancement role, perceptions of leadership for the advancement role, and leadership characteristics or competencies that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation in the context of case themes are shared. Findings are reported primarily using direct quotes from the presidents to best represent the presidents' perceptions. As described by Merriam (2009), the case analysis provides in-depth insight into the "bound system" of the Wisconsin Technical College System.

The purpose of this study was to add to the understanding of the leadership characteristics and competencies, work experiences, and academic preparation that contribute to community college presidents' success in securing alternative revenue. In Chapter four, the overall findings of the study were presented including the major within-case themes of the study. This section contains conclusions related to those themes, a discussion of the congruence between the findings of this study and findings of similar studies of community college presidents, and recommendations for future research.

### **Key Findings and Conclusions**

Building on the three bodies of literature, the key findings and conclusions for this case study are presented in three sections: community college leadership, preparation for the community college presidency, and the advancement role of the community college president.

## **Leadership Legitimacy in the Community College Presidency**

Myriad leadership theories exist and have been applied to college leadership. Central to the studies that informed this research and the findings of this study is the 21<sup>st</sup> Century leadership theories to explain the styles, characteristics, and competencies of community college presidents.

The leadership characteristics and styles necessary to effectively lead are dependent on type of institution, internal institutional environment and external environment (Neuman & Bensimmon, 1990). Participants in the study explained perceptions of leadership legitimacy based on their own experiences as college leaders within the context of the institution they are currently serving. For example, early career leaders focus more on the internal organization while experienced presidents who had established institutional culture and trust that their internal structure and organizational culture are well-established tend to focus more externally. In addition, presidents who were originally from the community they serve perceive that their deep understanding of the local community and connection to the people of the community serves them well in the advancement role.

Effective leaders possess a collection of qualities including personal attributes, communications skills, leadership skills, and competencies (Plinkse & Packard, 2010). There are multiple qualities identified by WTCS Presidents that align with those identified by Plinske & Packard (2010). For example, most presidents have an earned doctorate. Additionally, presidents believe that they are able to maintain trust, understand

the different communities in their district, and their respective needs, are good listeners, are articulate, and articulate a clear vision.

The complexity of twenty-first century community college leadership requires multiple theories and perspectives to establish an effective leader profile. Competency models include behaviors, traits, and leader actions. Discussion of the community college president leadership profile in the context of competencies aligns with community college and culture. Leadership competencies and characteristics of WTCS presidents described as within-case themes above align with the AACC competencies. Furthermore, table 4 shows that findings of this study support the AACC competency framework.

Table 4

*Comparison of WTCS President Competencies and AACC Competencies*

WTCS President Leadership Competencies	AACC Leadership Competencies
Internal Focus	Organizational Strategy, Communication, Resource Management
Relationship Building	Communication, Collaboration, Professionalism
Community Involvement	Collaboration, Community College Advocacy
Tell the Story (Advocacy)	Communication, Community College Advocacy
Resource Allocation	Resource Management
Active Fundraising	Resource Management
Entrepreneurial	Resource Management

In other words, there is congruence between the leader attributes that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation described by WTCS president and attributes of effective community college presidents that are described in the literature.

**Preparation for the community college presidency**

WTCS presidents are similar to other community college presidents with respect to earned doctorates. The doctorate appears to be a formal requirement and not

preparatory (Duree & Ebbers, 2012; McFarlin, Crittendon & Ebbers, 1999, Weisman & Vaughn, 2006). Presidents in this study attributed little of their advancement leadership success to formal academic training. Some presidents who earned doctorates in programs in higher education could recall specific coursework related to community college advancement.

Traditional career progression to the presidency includes previous academic leadership (Weisman & Vaughn, 2006). WTCS presidents with similar previous leadership as Academic or Student Services Vice Presidents report little preparation for the advancement role of the presidency through academic leadership experiences. Previous leadership experiences that contribute to advancement success are gained through working in positions that provide external relations opportunities; active engagement in college partnership development, working with external stakeholders, and being involved in the community. Findings of this study support previous research that non-traditional pathway prepares for the advancement role of the presidency. Presidents who were afforded opportunities to gain experience in advancement-related activities prior to the presidency reported a higher level of preparation.

At least some leadership development is gained through mentor/mentee relationships. WTCS presidents mention mentor/mentee relationships. Unique to this study is presidents who report relationships with business mentors, or mentors from outside higher education, as supporting the external relations function more. This finding may suggest that mentorship from business leaders may better support preparation for advancement-related duties such as fundraising.

According to Eddy (2013), presidents gain experience and learn skills needed for the role. WTCS Presidents report gaining advancement experience from on the job training after assuming the presidency. One benefit of this preparation method is the development of competencies in context due to the situational nature of community college leadership. Presidents have the opportunity to learn to be the leader that the internal and external culture demands.

WTCS presidents reported similar avenues of preparation for the college presidency as previously studied presidents. Yet, like other presidents, they report feeling ill-prepared for at least some of the advancement duties—most often fundraising—of the presidency prior to assuming the role.

### **Advancement role of the community college president**

WTCS presidents view advancement as an essential part of their role. Previous research regarding community college fundraising indicates that the president is the “face of the college” and the chief advancement officer. For community colleges this is often due to small advancement teams and limited resources allocated to advancement functions. (Bass, 2003). Contrary to the literature, WTCS presidents are investing resources in the advancement function of the institution, including hiring qualified and effective advancement staff. Presidents remain the “face”, but they are engaging and including other college leaders in the advancement functions resulting in more successful fundraising and other alternative revenue generation efforts.

In addition to investing in staff, WTCS presidents invest time in advancement functions. Many previous studies have asked presidents to quantify the amount of time

spent on external relations. Quantifying was beyond the scope of the study. In addition, most of the presidents interviewed do not separate the activities in their minds. Presidents agree with the literature that all advancement leads to fundraising (Croteau & Smith, 2012). It is an oversimplification to state the internal relations versus external relations roles of the presidency.

Developing mutually beneficial relationships with external stakeholders positions community colleges for successfully securing alternative revenue (Hall, 2002; Boggs, 2003). This study shows that community colleges are indeed well-positioned to reap financial benefits from the college-community relationship by meeting stakeholder (employer and other community) needs. All WTCS presidents perceive that most advancement efforts begin with building and sustaining relationships. For the WTCS, these stakeholders are often employers who hire the colleges' graduates. The beginning of a relationship is already established by the college meeting the employers' workforce needs.

Presidents also suggest that garnering fiscal support from external stakeholders requires extensive knowledge of and participation in the community. For some WTCS presidents, this knowledge comes from having grown up in the community and having spent a lifetime engaged in and caring about the community. This characteristic may be unique to the community college presidency as University presidents may not be as likely to be place bound and have the same caring connection to the community. Presidents talked of engaging in addressing community issues in collaboration with other community based organizations. Beyond serving a community, community colleges are

also positioned to address community-based issues. While only one president mentioned community engagement as an opportunity to create sustainable programming efforts, there may be opportunities to leverage these collaborations for new funding sources. Further research into community college engagement as it relates to funding opportunities may be warranted.

**Fundraising.** Fundraising has been an important issue for community colleges for at least the past twenty years (Lombardi, 1992; Glass & Jackson, 1998). The evolution of community college fundraising from infancy to approaching four-year university levels appears to be a slow process. The findings of this study suggest that community colleges are progressing along the fundraising leadership continuum. While some participate in the traditional role of fundraising through the foundation for student scholarships and capital equipment purchases others successfully establish public-private partnerships that fund college infrastructure and sustain programming efforts. WTCS Presidents vary greatly in their perceptions of their role as fundraiser and the value of fundraising as a sustainable alternative revenue strategy. Regardless of level of active fundraising, all president recognize that fundraising is a necessary skill. This belief is in alignment with the literature that suggests that fundraising leadership is a critical skill for community college presidents (Duree, 2007; Jackson & Glass, 2010). The challenge continues to be that fundraising has been and continues to be a necessary skill, yet most presidents continue to state that they felt ill-prepared to fundraise for their colleges when they assumed the presidency. More direct efforts to prepare presidents are necessary.

## **Recommendations**

Internal and external relations occur simultaneously, in parallel, in context, and often, co-dependently. College presidents who perceive alternative revenue generation to be a responsibility of the position must accomplish this task in addition to and in alignment with other leadership duties of the position.

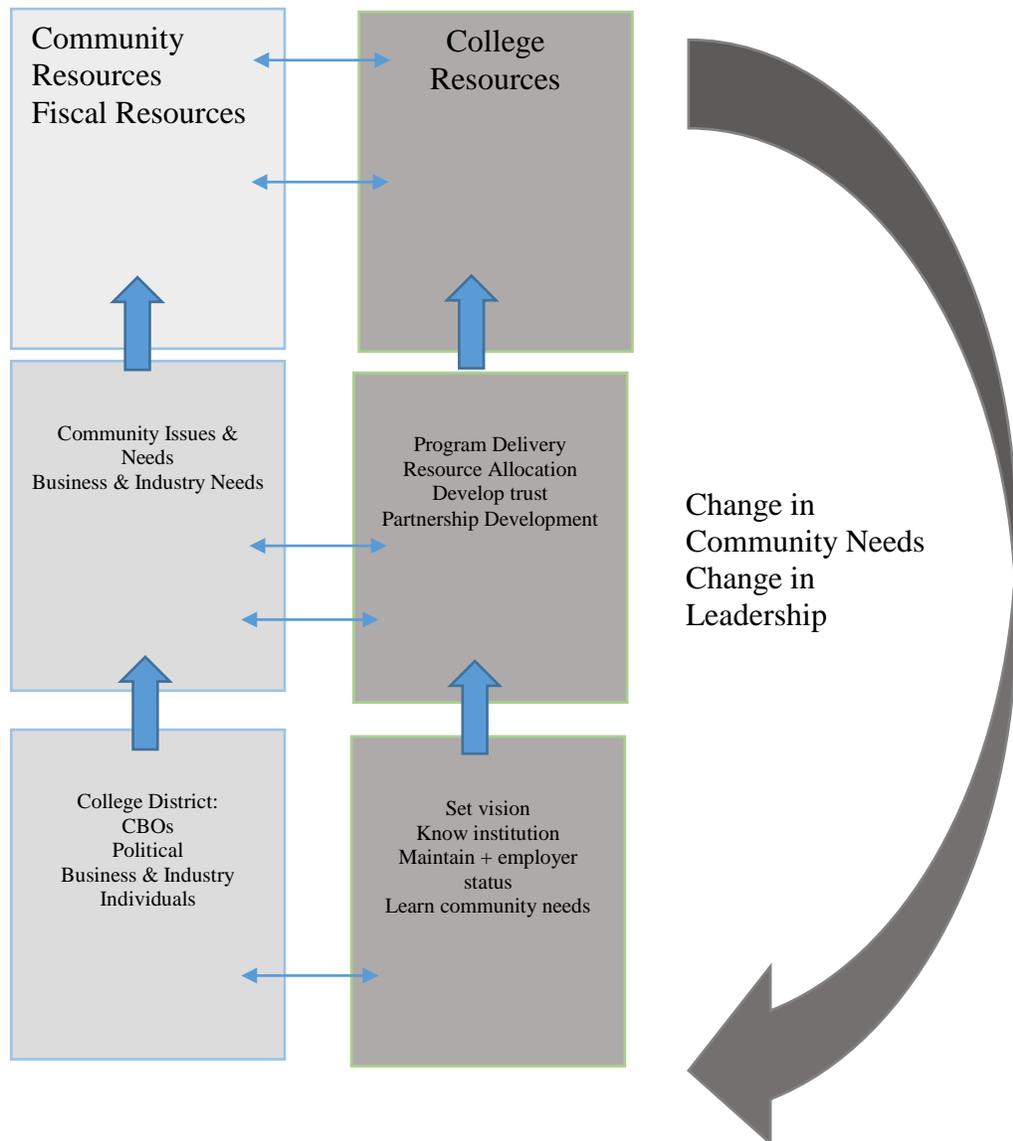
Successful alternative revenue generation is a function of successful interaction of the college president and the college in the ecosystem in which the college operates. The literature reviewed and the presidents interviewed indicate the existence of the community college centers on serving the needs of the local stakeholder community. The college operates within the community and interacts with the community. The leadership competencies identified in this study indicate that the president role has both an internal and external focus. Effective presidents cannot focus exclusively internally or externally but rather must lead with an eye to both sides of the college walls.

With both internal and external relations leadership responsibilities in mind, I propose a model of effective community college presidential advancement leadership much like a biological/environmental ecosystem. The Leadership Competencies Ecosystem model, displayed in Figure 1, demonstrates the internal operation of the college under the leadership of the president while interacting with the external environment.

This model aligns with the AACC competency model and could be used in “Grow Your Own Leader” programs to ensure future leaders understand how the advancement role fits into the community college presidency.

Figure 1

*Community College Leadership Competencies Ecosystem Model*



A college president becomes an effective leader in the advancement ecosystem when he/she:

1. Sets a vision
2. Gets to know the internal institution—programs, successes, contributions to community
3. Establishes and or maintain positive employer status—internal relations with employees
4. Ensures the institution meets the needs of the community
5. Establishes and maintains external partnerships/relationships
6. Successfully secures alternative revenue

Preparing leaders for the college presidency using the two most commonly accepted preparation methods of “Grow Your Own” leadership and doctoral programs while incorporating the American Association of Community Colleges competencies could help better prepare presidents for the advancement role. Presidents who believe they possess these competencies view themselves as successful at securing alternative revenue.

**Suggestions for future research.** It was beyond the scope of this study to investigate the government relations role of advancement, but it is worth noting that multiple WTCS presidents mentioned the challenges of navigating the political environment. Further study into preparation and skills for successfully leading government relations activities is needed.

Further studies of community college presidents engaging in succession planning and providing advancement opportunities to future college leaders may also prove beneficial to addressing the impending leadership challenges community colleges face. In addition, studies centered on success associated with acquisition of the leader attributes that contribute to successful fundraising identified in this study may be beneficial as this

study did not explore the level of success associated with the time and experience in the President position.

Future research to determine how the Leadership Competencies Ecosystem Model applies to different community college systems in other states may also be valuable. The contextual nature of the President role may contribute to the application of the model and warrants further study.

Research methodology and data gathering challenges that may be addressed with future research include interviewing advancement leadership staff who work closely with college presidents to learn about perceptions of others regarding the role of the Presidents in alternative revenue generation, holding longer interviews with presidents, and observing presidents in the fundraising role.

While qualitative methodology is challenging for this type of study, a mixed method study involving survey questions provided to presidents prior to interviewing could provide insight into the extent to which leadership competencies are valuable for generating alternative revenue.

## **Summary**

This case study of Wisconsin Technical College illustrates potential incongruence between the traditional academic preparation and previous leadership experiences and leadership characteristics of community college presidents and the contemporary president's role in and ability to secure alternative sources of funding for their institutions. The study also expanded knowledge of leader attributes that contribute to successful alternative revenue generation. Comparing this case study to studies of

community colleges with different governance, cultures, funding structures, and different external environments provides insight into the contextual nature of community college leadership while giving credence to established leadership competency theories including the AACC Competency model.

Two-year colleges face many future challenges. Leadership programs must be designed to prepare the next generation of leaders. By understanding academic preparation, leadership experiences, and leader attributes that contribute to alternative revenue generation, colleges will be able to prepare future presidents for the challenges they will face.

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## Appendix A

### **Recruitment Email**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

My name is Aliesha Crowe, and I am a student in the Higher Education Ed.D. cohort at the University of Minnesota and the Executive Director of the Foundation and Alumni Association at Chippewa Valley Technical College. To fulfill the requirements of the doctoral program, I am conducting a dissertation study on the role of Wisconsin technical college presidents with respect to fundraising.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are currently serving as President of \_\_\_\_\_ Technical College. I am interested in your perspective of your current role and your experiences in seeking alternative revenue sources for your institution. I will be conducting a multi-site bounded case study to gain an understanding of the perspectives of multiple presidents of WTCS institutions. I respectfully request your participation in this important study.

I would like to conduct a 60-minute interview with you on your campus or via web-conference in the near future. The interview is completely voluntary. If you are willing to participate in the study, please send me a confirmation email indicating your availability for a face-to-face or web-conferencing interview. If you prefer I contact your support staff to arrange for an interview time, please send me the email address and phone number of the appropriate contact person.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aliesha R. Crowe

## Appendix B

### **Consent to Participate in a Research Study**

Topic: Two-Year College Presidents' Perceptions of Leader Attributes that Contribute to Successfully Securing Alternative Revenue.

You are invited to participate in a research study of the fundraising role of Wisconsin Technical College Presidents. You were selected as a possible participant because you are President of a Wisconsin Technical College. I ask that you review this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Aliesha R. Crowe, Organizational Leadership & Policy Development

#### **Background Information**

The purpose of this study is to add to the understanding of the role Wisconsin Technical College presidents play in fundraising for their institutions. Specifically, this study is designed to determine the perceptions of current presidents of their preparation for the fundraising role and their success in using fundraising.

#### **Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in one interview on your college campus or via electronic technology. The interview is expected to last approximately one hour. The interview will be recorded with an electronic recording device.
2. Review the transcribed interview and comment on main points of the interview.

#### **Risks and Benefits of being in the Study**

The study has limited risk.

There are no direct benefits to participating in this study.

#### **Compensation:**

You will receive no compensation for participation in this study.

#### **Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report that I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to associate you with specific comments. Research records will be stored securely in a locked facility and only researchers will have access to the records. Study data will be encrypted according to current University policy for protection of confidentiality. The recording of your interview will be kept by me and shared only with a transcribing service.

#### **Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota, the Wisconsin Technical College System, or your institution. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

#### **Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is: Alisha R. Crowe. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at the University of Minnesota, 715-205-2732, [alba0073@umn.edu](mailto:alba0073@umn.edu). My co-advisors are: Professor David Weerts, University of Minnesota, 612-525-2289, [dweerts@umn.edu](mailto:dweerts@umn.edu) and Professor Andrew Furco, University of Minnesota, 612-626-1630, [afurco@umn.edu](mailto:afurco@umn.edu).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Signature of Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

## Appendix C

### Pre-Interview Script

Thank you President XYZ for taking the time to meet with me today. As I shared with you on the phone, I am a doctoral student at the UMN, and I am interested in the perceptions technical college presidents have of their role as fundraiser for their institutions. You were selected for this study out of a group of presidents at the helm of similar-sized colleges in the system because of your willingness to participate.

Your participation in this study will help me gain an understanding of the fundraising role of technical college presidents. Thank you, again. I emailed you the informed consent form. Did you have a chance to review that form? I have a couple of questions to ask you about the form before we sign it.

I will be using an electronic recording device throughout the interview. Your comments today will not be associated with you or your institution, and I will be removing your name from your answers during the transcription phase of the data analysis process. I understand your time is valuable, and we have scheduled one hour for our conversation today so let's get started with the questions.

### Proposed Questions for Semi-Structured Interviews with WTCS Presidents

You have been president here at \_\_\_\_\_ college for \_\_\_\_ years. Think back to when you first became president, what was your perception of your role as President of the college? (This opening question helps establish rapport as I will have gathered some information about their leadership at the college. In addition, this question helps set the stage for the rest of the interview focusing on perceptions of the president in their own role.) (1)

1. How does your perception of the role of President compare to your actual role over the past \_\_\_\_ years? (1)
  - a. What duties do you have that you did not expect?
  - b. Does your board have expectations of you that surprised you? Have these changed over time?
  - c. What experiences specific to external relations did you not expect?  
Alternative revenue generation?
2. What types of academic preparation and work experiences did you have that helped prepare you for the role that you have at \_\_\_\_\_ college?
3. How have the changes (reductions) in state and federal revenue over the past three years affected your college? (2)
4. What other sources of revenue have you explored to mitigate this loss in revenue? (2)
  - a. Can you tell me more about that?

5. What role do you play as president in implementing alternative revenue generation strategies? (2)
  - a. How have you increased your college's fundraising efforts?
  - b. Do you have any major projects or initiatives planned that require you to raise money?
  - c. Are there specific activities that you engage in as the college president to raise money for the college? Do you meet with donors? Potential donors?
  - d. Can you share any examples of successful fundraising activities? (1)
6. Keeping in mind your example of successful fundraising, what are some of the competencies or characteristics that you possess that contributed to this success? (2)
7. What aspects of your previous educational and work experiences prepared you for the role of fundraiser? (3)
  - a. What types of positions have you served in previously?
  - b. Did any of your course work (bachelors, masters, or doctoral program) provide training in external relations and specifically fundraising?
8. What would have helped you be better-prepared for your role with respect to funding changes and shrinking budgets? (3)
  - a. If you could offer advice about preparing to aspiring two-year college presidents what would you tell them to do to prepare for the fundraising aspect of the position?
9. What does the future role of technical college presidents look like?(1)

### **Proposed Closing Questions**

I would like to review a couple of the key thoughts you have shared with me today. I have written these \_\_\_\_\_key perceptions of your role. Do these accurately describe your perception of your role as a fundraiser for \_\_\_\_\_college?  
Is there anything else that we have not yet discussed that you would like to add to our conversation today?