Board of Trustees’
Retreat
Materials

February 10, 2011
Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Hall –
Room 401
8:30 a.m.
1. Board members practice respectful dialogue that serves the best interests of the college.

2. Each board member works to integrate servant-leadership into the board culture.

3. Each board member has the opportunity to speak uninterrupted.

4. Board members come prepared – board chair needs to understand what is required and set time and material appropriately.

5. Board chair acts as caretaker for the board – acts as filter, evaluates agenda for time well spent.

6. Board chair speaks for the board to the media.

7. Consent materials are available 10 days in advance; remaining board materials are available seven days in advance.

8. Board members should route any requests for additional information to the board chair or the president at least two business days prior to the board meeting.
Board of Trustees’ Retreat Agenda
February 10, 2011
The Rouse Company Foundation Student Services Hall – Room 401
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Breakfast**

- A. Servant Leadership 9:00-9:45
- B. Effective Listening 9:45-10:30

**Break**

- C. Performance Excellence 10:45-11:45
- D. In-depth Board Self-Assessment 11:45–12:30

**Lunch**

12:30-1:00
Stephen Mittelstet, Retreat Facilitator

Stephen K. Mittelstet chairs the National Advisory Committee of “Completion by Design,” a five-year signature community college reform effort of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help low-income young adults complete more quickly and with higher rates of success (2010-present). President Emeritus (since 2010) of Richland College (RLC), Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD), Dr. Mittelstet served on the humanities faculty (adjunct) since RLC opened, 1972. He was honored by the 79th Texas Legislature for his more than quarter-century outstanding service as RLC President (1979-2010) and his contributions to the educational vitality of the State of Texas. Under his leadership, RLC was:

• the first (and still only) community college to be recognized by the White House and the U.S. Department of Commerce as a recipient of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (2005) and only the third in higher education;
• the first accredited higher education institution to receive the Governor’s Texas Award for Performance Excellence (2005);
• selected for the Community Engagement Classification in Curricular Engagement and Outreach & Partnerships by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, addressing the nature and extent of student engagement with the community (2006); and
• named a Vanguard Learning College by the League for Innovation in the Community College (1999/2000), a Greater Expectations College in the Liberal Arts by the Association of American Colleges & Universities, a Pacesetter Best-in-Class Honoree by Florida State University, and one of eight pilot institutions for new accreditation standards by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

A charter signatory to the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, Mittelstet led LEED Gold and Platinum design teams (2007-10) for RLC’s newest award-winning facilities (Garland campus and science hall). He also served as founding Superintendent of the only community college charter school in Texas (2005).

Selected Individual Professional Honors Awarded to Dr. Mittelstet

· National Lifetime Quality Achievement Award, Continuous Quality Improvement Network (AACC affiliate council) (2010)
· 25-Year Community Leadership Achievement Recognition (2010), as Founding Chair of Leadership Richardson in 1985
· Outstanding Alumnus Award, McMurry University (2009)
· Profiled in D Magazine CEO for performance excellence leadership of Richland College (2008)
· International Leadership Award, National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) (2007)
Reading Materials

Prior to the February 10, 2011 retreat, Dr. Mittelstet requests that the trustees read the following two items:

1) Servant Leadership: A Primer for the Howard Community College Board of Trustees
2) Building Whole People, Whole Organizations, and Whole Communities by Stephen K. Mittelstet
What is Servant Leadership?

Although the term “servant leadership” was coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in 1970, the concept dates from as early as the 6th-4th century, B.C.—such as found in Lao-Tzu’s *Tao Te Ching* and even in the unlikely and frequently paradoxical Kautilya’s *Arthashastra*—and later in the words of Jesus of Nazareth, *Gospel of Luke* (22:25-27).

*Lao-Tzu*: The loftiest ruler is one who is barely known by his people. Next is the ruler who is loved and praised by his people; then, one whom they fear; and finally, one who is despised and defied. When the leader lacks faith in his people, they will lack faith in him. The wise ruler is self-effacing and uses few words. Once the ruler has acted, the people will say, “Look what we have done!”

*Kautilya*: The king shall consider to be good not that which is pleasing to himself but what is pleasing to his subjects. . . . He is a compensated servant who enjoys the kingdom’s resources together with his people.

*Jesus of Nazareth*, to his disciples at his last supper: Among the heathen it is their kings who lord it over them, and their rulers purport to be “Benefactors.” But it must not be so with you! *Your* greatest man must become like a junior and your leader must be a servant. . . . I am the one who is the servant among you.


The essence of Greenleaf’s servant leadership concept is that “the servant-leader is servant first. . . . It begins with a natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first . . . as opposed to, wanting power, influence, fame, or wealth. . . . The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants and who therefore can help others to move in constructive
directions? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?"

The central concept of the modern servant-leadership organizational behavior and leadership movement begun by Greenleaf more than four decades ago—which has also been supported by numerous leadership and management authors as Blanchard, Block, Covey, DePree, Senge, and Wheatley, as well as by "wholeness" advocates such as Parker Palmer--has been summarized as follows: **Servant-leaders achieve results for their organizations by giving priority attention to the needs of their colleagues and those they serve. Servant leaders are often seen as humble stewards of their organizations' resources (human, financial, and physical).**

**Key attributes of the servant leader:**

--listening  --conceptualization
--empathy  --foresight
--healing  --stewardship
--awareness  --growth
--persuasion  --community building

**Definitions:**

--management: from Latin, manus “hand,” as in “the hand on the reins guides the horse”
--leadership: going out ahead to show the way (available to everyone in the institution who has the competence, values, and temperament for it, from the chairman to the “least-skilled”)
--trusteeship: holding (and acting according to) a charter of public trust for an institution
--institution: a gathering of persons who have accepted a common purpose, and a common discipline to guide the pursuit of that purpose, to the end that each involved person reaches a higher fulfillment as a person through serving and being served by the common venture, than would be achieved alone or in a less committed relationship

**Key Concepts of Chapter III, “Trustees as Servants,”** [in addition to Trustee-related concepts from other chapters] in Greenleaf’s *Servant Leadership*:

--The trustee role is to **monitor closely the movement of the institution toward its goals** and to act both as critic and advocate, defender and court of last resort.

--No one is to be entrusted with the operational use of power without the close oversight of fully functioning trustees.

--Trustees must become a conspicuous leaven in a society that is much too disposed to division, hatred, and violence; a **trusted society is not a manipulative one; it is a caring society.**
Information is key to **trustee objectivity** and **non-managerial involvement** in a **deliberative body**.

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**Institutional ambiguity** is a **challenge to trustee understanding**:

- operational necessity to be both dogmatic and open to change
- disability goes with competence
- healthy, dynamic tension between belief and criticism in high-performing institutions

- trustees are not “super-administrators”
- initiating vs. reacting

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**Trust, Ethics, Wholeness, and Intuition**

For Greenleaf trust is critical: “Legitimacy begins with trust. No matter what the competence or intentions, if trust is lacking, nothing happens. . . . The only sound basis for trust is for people to have the solid experience of being served by their institutions in a way that builds a society that is more just and more loving, and with greater creative opportunities for all of its people.” If one is servant, whether leader or follower, one is always searching, listening, hoping for a better way to build the organization: “Those who choose to follow this principle will not casually accept the authority of existing institutions. Rather, they will respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted as servants. To the extent that this principle prevails in the future, the only truly viable institutions will be those that are predominantly servant-led.”

Greenleaf speaks of an “urgent need, around the world, for leadership by strong ethical persons--those who are by nature disposed to be servants . . . and healers in the sense of **making whole** by helping others to a larger and nobler vision and purpose than they would be likely to attain themselves.” Intuition must be coupled with essential facts and data (cognition) to the **whole** servant leader, who develops a feel for patterns and the ability to generalize based on what has taken place before and a scan of what the present and future may hold.

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**Empathy and Listening**

“Servants, by definition, are fully human [whole],” states Greenleaf. “Servant leaders are functionally superior because they are closer to the ground--they hear things, see things, know things; and their intuitive insight is exceptional. Because of this they are dependable and trusted.” Referring to a story of Confucius, Greenleaf continues, “It establishes how old is the notion that the servant views any problem in the world as in here, inside oneself, not out there. And if a flaw in the world is to be remedied, to the servant the process of change starts in here--in the servant--not out there. This is a difficult concept for . . . modern man. . . . There is too little preparation for and willingness to undertake the hard and high-risk tasks of building better
institutions in an imperfect world, too little disposition to see ‘the problem’ as residing in here and not out there.”

_Institution Building_

Greenleaf, referencing trustee qualifications, states, “The most important qualification for trustees should be that they care for the institution, which means that they care for all the people the institution touches, and that they are determined to make their caring count. One of the facts of life that trustees should note is that satisfactory is too often the goal of administrators. If distinction as servant is to be achieved, that must be the goal of trustees.”

Contrasting formal organizational structure of rules, regulations, policies, and procedures with the informal structure provided by caring people that make the formal structure work well, Greenleaf notes, “The informal structure responds more to leadership: building purpose and challenging with opportunity, judicious use of incentives, astute ordering of priorities, and allocating resources where they count the most. Leadership provides the encouragement and shelter for venturing and risking the unpopular. It gives support for ethical behavior and creative ways for doing things better. The result is team effort and a network of constructive interpersonal relationships that support the total effort.”

_Management and Leadership_

Referencing the differences between administrators/managers ["do the thing right"] and leaders ["do the right thing"], Greenleaf continues: “The formal and informal structures combine to give an institution its organizational strength. However, there is a paradox in this relationship. The necessary order and consistency that the formal structure gives also interfere with and inhibit the informal structure. It is important to realize that order and consistency are both necessary and inhibitive. For optimal performance a large institution needs administration/management [operators] for order and consistency, and leadership [conceptualizers] to mitigate the effects of administration on initiative and creativity and to build team effort to give these qualities extraordinary encouragement. The result, then, is a tension between order and consistency, on the one hand, and initiative and creativity on the other. The problem is to keep this tension at a healthy level that has an optimizing effect.”

_Operators and Conceptualizers_

“The operating talent carries the institution toward its objectives, in the situation, from day to day, and resolves the issues that arise as this movement takes place. This calls for interpersonal skills, sensitivity to environment, tenacity, experience, judgment, ethical soundness, and related attributes and abilities that the day-to-day movement requires. Operating is more administering than leading,” Greenleaf continues. “Conceptual talent sees the whole in the perspective of history--past and present. It states and adjusts goals, analyzes and evaluates operating performance, and foresees
contingencies a long way ahead. Long-range strategic planning is embraced here, as is setting standards of relating all the parts to the whole. Leadership, in the sense of going out ahead to show the way, is more conceptual than operating. Conceptual here is not synonymous with intellectual or theoretical. Conceptualizers at their best are intensely practical. They are also effective persuaders and relationship builders.

“Both the operator and the conceptualizer are results-oriented. The operator is concerned primarily with ‘getting it done.’ The conceptualizer is primarily concerned with what ‘ought to be done’—when, how, at what cost, in what priority, and how well. They work together as a reinforcing rather than a counteracting team,” Greenleaf observes. “The achievement of such optimal balance is hindered by a stubborn fact: whereas conceptualizers generally recognize the need for operators, the reverse is often not the case.”

**Power and Authority**

“There are several kinds of power. One is coercive power used principally to destroy. Not much that endures can be built with it. Even presumably autocratic institutions like businesses are learning that the value of coercive power is inverse to its use. Leadership by persuasion and example [where the response is voluntary] is the way to build—everywhere.” Greenleaf notes that power and its use is key for all leaders. Having knowledge contributes significantly to power and how that knowledge is shared gives authority (“the sanctions that legitimate the use of power”).

**At the End of the Day, Caring for Institutions**

“What we have learned about caring for individuals we must now learn to give to institutions. . . . Caring, we know, is an exacting and demanding business It requires not only interest and compassion and concern; it demands self-sacrifice and wisdom and tough mindedness and discipline.” Greenleaf concludes: In the absence of solid evidence, servant leaders may stand alone, largely without the support of their culture, as a saving remnant of those who care for both persons and institutions, and who are determined to make their caring count—whenever they are involved. This brings them, as individuals, constantly to examine the assumptions they live by. Thus their leadership by example sustains trust.”

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*Additional References and Websites:

Blanchard, Ken, *Leading at a Higher Level*

Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education

Kaiser Permanente Northern California Residency Leadership Program

Richland College Thunderdocuments

Spears, Larry, “Practicing Servant-Leadership”

Wikipedia, Servant Leadership
Building Whole People, Whole Organizations, and Whole Communities

Stephen K. Mittelstet is president of Richland College of the Dallas County Community College District, and superintendent of Richland Collegiate High School of Mathematics, Science & Engineering.
My life is my message.¹

—GANDHI

By Stephen K. Mittelstet

Gandhi’s inspiration, true for the individual, is also true for the lives of the higher education institutions we lead, especially if we intend our students to be builders of sustainable local and world community, characterized by social equity and justice, economic sufficiency, and a healthy environment. In short, if how we conduct our institutions and our teaching-learning processes is at odds with what we profess, observant students will feel the hypocrisy, see the irrelevancy to their world, and very likely apply whatever they’ve learned more or less randomly throughout their lives. We must model the change we want our students to make in the world.
First, of course, we must be clear—to ourselves, our students, and our other stakeholders—what it is we want our students to learn and become. At Richland College, where I’ve had the privilege to serve as president now in my 30th year, we have operated for nearly two decades from a succinctly stated mission statement (“Teaching, Learning, Community Building”) and, more recently, from an organizational vision to “Be the Best Place We Can Be to Learn, Teach, and Build Sustainable Local and World Community.”

This vision has set high expectations for ourselves and our students, for in the process of teaching and learning sustainable community building, we have had to systematically modify and implement programs, methodologies, systems, processes, and behaviors in how we teach and learn together. Otherwise, the life of our institution would be antithetical to the message we want our students’ lives to be.

**Agents for Change**

In 2005, Richland College faculty and staff were lauded for their significant progress over the past decade toward achieving this bold vision. The White House and the U.S. Department of Commerce honored us with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, and the Governor of Texas recognized us with the Texas Award for Performance Excellence. In part for my Richland leadership leading up to this recognition, I was invited last summer to join the distinguished faculty of the Salzburg Global Seminar (SGS).

Since its inception in 1947, this American nonprofit organization has been housed in the 18th-century castle, Schloss Leopoldskron, recognized (if at all) by most Americans as a setting for the 1964 film “The Sound of Music.” Stemming from the energy of the post-World War II Marshall Plan, the SGS has for the past 62 years provided a neutral, independent platform for dialogue on global topics such as the one that brought more than 50 U.S. higher education faculty and administrative leaders to our particular seminar, “Colleges and Universities as Sites of Global Citizenship (Be the Change Agent).”

My distinguished SGS faculty colleagues included William Reckmeyer (our chair), San Jose State University professor of leadership and systems, who teaches and consults from within the System of Systems Center for Excellence, established by Congress to develop more integrative approaches to complex issues affecting national strategy, homeland security, and international affairs; Charles Hopkins, the York University (Toronto) UNESCO chair, who coordinates an international network of institutions from 38 countries, which focuses faculty education on issues and teaching-learning practices inherent in sustainable development; and Reinhold Wagnleitner, University of Salzburg associate professor of modern history, visiting professor of American history at six U.S. universities, and author of numerous books. Highlighting our faculty team was Justice Anthony Kennedy, who served as guest lecturer.

We often received overwhelming challenges from this diverse group of experts on the effect of higher learning in shaping global citizens as an essential component of creating sustainable global society. Throughout our term, I was frequently brought back to Gandhi’s message in considering how we—college and university leaders—must operate our institutions as exemplars of sustainable community, both within our organizations and as partners with interrelated higher education and other institutions. In a sustainable community, we operate as authentic, credible institutional learning laboratories for our students and collaboratively leverage resources to accomplish our student learning goals with like-minded colleges and universities worldwide.

We Salzburg fellows wrestled with how we could be more effective change agents—ensuring that “sustainable community building” would not be “number 81” in a long list of prior, across-the-curriculum mandates, resulting in yet another boutique program or “pocket of excellence,” but rather an overarching, organizing vision for the entire college operation and educational program. My colleagues challenged me to describe how Richland’s own change agent journey had led to increasing credibility as a site for developing global citizenship among students: How did you get faculty buy-in? How do you engage your board of trustees? How do you prevent the next organizational emphasis from overshadowing this urgent, pervasive 21st century mandate?

Throughout my long tenure as Richland’s president, I’ve observed that astute leaders take the time to learn from their expert faculty—the master teachers—about how to design their institutions and organizational behaviors to model the successful teaching-learning communities their teachers create within their classes. These professors foster whole, healthy communities, characterized by mutual trust, in which students and faculty learn from one another, by virtue of both academic discipline and varied life experiences resident in each classroom, with its rich diversity in age, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, and learning styles.

These wise, Socratic teachers know how to provide a safe place for mind, body, and spirit to be fully
engaged. They are masters at balancing challenge and support within each class. They know that good, persistent, penetrating questions are the best tools for empowering students with lifelong learning skills to discover their own, discerning answers. These classroom challenges are not unlike the challenges we face in leading our institutions to be directed—yet self-organizing and self-governing—organizations, which operate not in isolation but in collaboration with other entities to achieve sustainable community.

“Whole people—authentically engaging mind-spirit-body—best learn, teach, serve, and lead.” This Richland College organizational value is seen as co-requisite to building a whole, effective organization, which in turn, is necessary to model for our students how to build sustainable local and world community on a whole, healthy planet. It has also led us to the corollary: “Whole people will never come to work in an institution where systems and processes are undependable, inequitable, and otherwise dysfunctional and where competent, passionate people fall through organizational default and are unfairly penalized.” In such institutions, people begin to protect their vulnerable souls by bringing only part of themselves to work, playing it safe, going through the motions, and avoiding the responsible risks necessary for the teaching-learning innovations we need to help our students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes requisite in global citizenship. Richland’s organizational values—developed by students, faculty, and staff—have set behavioral standards for our teaching, learning, and community building: integrity; mutual trust; wholeness; fairness; considerate, meaningful communications; mindfulness; cooperation; diversity; responsible risk-taking; and joy.

**Modeling Performance Excellence**

Throughout the last dozen years or so, Richlanders have used the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Criteria to create our own external organizational Socratic "teacher," an approach that has helped us develop a comprehensive performance excellence model to improve our mission/vision-related student learning outcomes and communicate that progress to our many stakeholder groups—taxpayers, legislators, accrediting agencies, and others (see Figure 1).

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Figure 1. Richland College’s Performance Excellence Model

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To help us understand how the \textit{whole organization} emanates from the \textit{whole person} (students, faculty, staff), connecting soul to role, in the broader context of \textit{whole communities} and a \textit{whole, healthy planet}, Richland developed its Center for Renewal and Wholeness (see Figure 2) for our own professional development and for the many visiting teams we receive from colleges and universities worldwide.

Figure 2. Center for Renewal and Wholeness in Higher Education Conceptual Diagram

1. College Curriculum for the New Global Century—with four Essential Learning Outcomes, based on seven Principles of Excellence that lead to seven suggested action steps for colleges and universities—was published in 2007 as part of the Association of American Colleges & Universities' 10-year LEAP (Liberal Education for America’s Promise) initiative. Richland's faculty, in concert with counterparts from the seven colleges of the Dallas County Community College District, used the New Global Century Curriculum as an overlay checklist as they drafted the 2009 update to the district's core curriculum, to ensure that our students' learning meshes well with what they'll receive in transferring to like-minded U.S. universities.

2. The American Council on Education web site lists 26 publications since 2001 that assist faculty and college leaders on topics related to building global citizenship and 48 publications related to various aspects of the "triple bottom line" of sustainable community building (social equity and justice, economic sufficiency, and a healthy environment).

3. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) is a major co-sponsor of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), which more than 550 presidents in all 50 states have now signed. AASHE is pilot-testing STARS (the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System) with more than 90 colleges and universities, including Richland College. This instrument will help ACUPCC signatories and other institutions track, assess, and rate their progress toward building sustainable community in all three triple bottom-line components in a format that will encourage benchmarking, partnering, inspiring, and learning across institutions.

4. The anticipated Wingspread Report, \textit{Building Sustainable Local and World Community: A 21st Century Community College Call to Action}, is expected to be co-published in 2009 by the Continuous Quality Improvement Network, the League for Innovation in the Community College, and the American Association of Community Colleges. The report, emanating from the fall 2007 Wingspread Conference, will build on the 1990s works of Ernest Boyer on building civil campus community,\textsuperscript{4} Parker Palmer's 1998 \textit{Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life},\textsuperscript{5} and Terry O'Banion\textsuperscript{6} and Kay McClennen's\textsuperscript{7} works on student learning outcomes, by focusing student learning on building sustainable local and world community.

5. The Salzburg Global Seminar International Studies Program invites college and university faculty and administrative leaders to join the growing number of fellows who help their institutions become more effective sites for global citizenship learning and development among students.
I am grateful that Richland's master teachers (both faculty and staff)—as well as community leaders and college and university president colleagues—have been patient, persistent, and Socratic over the past 30 years in helping me learn how to be the best CEO I can be, just as I know they are with their students and constituents. Together, we—now in tandem with a growing network of college and university colleagues worldwide—are getting better at helping our students become responsible global citizens and providing evidence thereof to the many stakeholders who are counting on us.

May our colleges and universities be the message our world needs us to be.

Notes: