Dear Friends,

In what seems like the blink of an eye, Miami Dade College has established a tradition that spans almost forty-five years. What began as a small experiment in community-based higher education has become a symbol of opportunity for each new generation of college students. Today, MDC is the largest institution of higher education in America, enrolling more than 160,000 students.

Growth is built upon that which is stable and sure. While risk and daring grab the headlines, clarity of purpose and consistency are always just below the surface, the bedrock.

In developing Miami Dade College’s 2004-2010 Strategic Plan, reaffirming the College’s mission and vision was an essential first step. MDC’s foundation for growth is contained in the simple acknowledgement of the College’s reason for being. Our mission statement expresses a singular responsibility – to provide our students with the best possible chance to learn. But fulfilling that purpose is a dynamic process, one that challenges us to understand the changing needs of our community, the workplace and our students. To enhance the College’s ability to fulfill that overriding purpose, the Strategic Plan is structured around five principal themes:

- Access to the College
- Student Achievement and Success
- Serving the Community
- Resource Development and Allocation
- Employees and the College

The participation of our faculty, staff and students was an essential element in the development of the plan. Their experience ensured that the plan’s goals and objectives would be rooted in the realities facing our students. Knowledgeable voices from our South Florida community also helped to forecast the years ahead.

No doubt, the challenges and possibilities will be extraordinary. Higher education will remain the central necessity of our community, and MDC’s Strategic Plan is our road map for responding to this challenge. Providing the community with exceptional and relevant learning is the focal point of our work.

Warmly,

Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón

Opportunity Changes Everything
The Mission

Miami Dade College is committed to be a college of excellence, renowned for its:

Satisfied, well-prepared students who, through their extraordinarily positive experience at MDC, have acquired the needed knowledge and skills to be successful in their ongoing academic and career pursuits;

Empowered employees, working within an environment that encourages creativity, risk-taking and accountability, who apply their individual and collective talents to fulfill the College’s mission;

Highly supportive community that recognizes the significant impact of the College’s educational and training programs; and

Effective use of adequate resources to enable programs to flourish and the talents of people to emerge.

The Vision
Miami Dade College’s six campuses and two major outreach centers offer a wide range of higher education programs, responsive to the education and career needs of the diverse South Florida community. MDC’s open-door policy ensures that each person seeking to enter higher education will have that opportunity.

**Learning Pathways**

**The Opportunity**

**MDC opens doors for all students**

- The majority of MDC students begin academically underprepared for college in reading, writing, math or English language skills. MDC’s nationally recognized developmental support programs prepare these students for success in college-level work.

- Academically talented students are welcomed to the Honors College, offering a challenging and rigorous curriculum. Honors graduates continue their studies at the nation’s finest institutions, including Harvard, Yale, Smith, Cornell, Georgetown, Columbia, Mt. Holyoke, University of Michigan and others.

- MDC has developed unique academic transfer agreements with more than 60 colleges and universities throughout Florida and the nation.

- Enrollment has increased more than 40 percent in the past four years.

**The Students**

**MDC is the largest college in the nation, enrolling more than 160,000 students**

- MDC enrolls more Hispanic students and more African-American students than any other college or university in the United States.

- More than half of MDC students are the first in their families to attend college.

- MDC is diversity
  - Students are 62 percent female, 38% male, with an average age of 27.
  - Students attend MDC from 166 countries, speaking 91 languages.

- MDC provides access for financially needy students
  - 38 percent of students live beneath the poverty line; 58 percent are categorized as low income (below $27,000 annually for a family of four).

- MDC students receive over 100 million dollars in financial aid, loans and work-study; MDC ranks first among all colleges and universities for the number of students and dollar amount of need-based federal Pell Grants.

- 78 percent of students are employed, with 28 percent working full-time.

**The Programs**

**Academic degrees in more than 200 areas of study**

- **Associate in Arts:** Prepares students to continue studies toward a bachelor’s degree at a four-year college or university.

- **Associate in Science:** Specialized degree programs in technical, scientific and research areas including aviation, allied health and nursing, entertainment, information technology, engineering, education and more.

- **Bachelor of Science in Education:** MDC’s newest degree fills a critical need for teachers in South Florida; majors in secondary biology, physics, chemistry, earth science, math and K-12 exceptional education.

- **Vocational Credit Certificates:** Short-term programs provide targeted training for direct entry into the workforce, for careers in business, information technology, tourism, public service, technical fields and more.

- **Continuing and Adult Education:** Professional-skills enhancement and classes in art, music, technology, healthy living, the environment and more.
Education’s impact has an influence well beyond the lives of students. Its social and economic influence raises the quality of life and creates opportunities that transcend classroom and campus. MDC’s activities support new and existing businesses and stimulate long-term growth.

**MDC’s economic impact**
- County’s 7th largest public employer.
- 2,400 full-time and over 6,000 total employees; 65 percent minority, mirroring our diverse community.
- $1.6 billion in additional annual earnings in our community due to MDC operations.
- $57.9 million annually in social savings from reduced welfare and unemployment claims, lower crime and improved healthcare.

*Source: CCbenefits, Inc.*

**MDC leads the way in urban revitalization**
Greater Miami represents the leading edge of urban America’s evolution. With more than 50 percent of the county’s residents foreign born, the region symbolizes the hope and hardship of beginning anew.

New business ventures in information technology, entertainment, biomedical, tourism and more are opening new workforce opportunities. But MDC’s students continue to emerge from Miami’s urban core, ranked among America’s poorest cities. More than 40 percent of Miami’s households earn less than $18,000 per year. Educational achievement is the driving force in reversing the effects of poverty.

**MDC’s cultural impact**
MDC hosts cultural events throughout the years, including the renowned Miami Book Fair International, the Miami International Film Festival, Cultura del Lobo Performance Series and campus-based gallery and performance events. New World School of the Arts high school and college students also contribute their talents to the yearly schedule.
The process included several key steps:

- The Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee, representing faculty, staff, administration and students, identified the five broad themes that encompass the College’s work.

- Environmental scans were conducted to identify issues and trends likely to impact the College.

- Via town hall and departmental gatherings and electronic communication, all College employees were invited to participate in a multistep process that identified innovative ideas and goals and established priority areas of concentration.

- Student leaders from all campuses contributed via focus groups.

- The SWOT exercise, identifying the College’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, allowed all personnel to contribute to a global appreciation of the challenges the College faces in the years ahead.

- The College community reviewed the preliminary draft, suggesting adjustments for the final draft.

- The Strategic Plan was presented to the MDC District Board of Trustees in July, 2004.
Higher Education

- Technological advances including wireless computing, Internet-delivery options, shared portals and more demand new resource investment.
- College labor supply in technical fields is increasingly competitive.
- Changing accreditation standards reflect greater accountability and student involvement in community service.

Economics

- Indications of stronger economy but job creation and overall recovery remain questionable.
- Demand for College services remains very strong, but increasing competition for public funds necessitates search for additional funding sources.
- Costs are increasing faster than funding, leading to greater reliance on economies of scale and internal efficiency.

Labor

- High-skill/high-wage occupational training requires stronger ties with area employers.
- Development of program and faculty for identified fastest-growing industries and occupations through 2010.
- Increased level of cooperative work experiences, field placements, and internships to benefit students and local employers and combat high unemployment in South Florida.

Demographics

- Continuing need for remedial and English as a Second Language programs.
- Continued need for baccalaureate program in education and potential for baccalaureate degrees in other fields.

Politics

- Policy shift to performance funding threatens community college funding and mission.
- Restrictive immigration policy and decrease in tuition for non-resident aliens will lower revenues as enrollment rises.
- Development of new baccalaureate programs requires clarified statement of need and benefit for the South Florida region.
A college education is a journey. MDC’s 2004-2010 Strategic Plan addresses each element of that journey, from a student’s approaching steps to the human and financial resources that support each personal journey to completion. The plan is built around five themes that encompass the College’s mission.

Access to the College
Our students are often parents and members of the workforce, so MDC’s effort to establish convenient neighborhood campuses in underserved areas of the county can make the difference in opening the door to college. Once across that threshold, a student’s first contact with MDC is all important. The personnel and systems that support these early interactions are designed to spark confidence in the care and efficiency of the College’s guidance. These interactions also mark the beginning of the learning experience at MDC, clarifying student responsibilities and performance expectations.

Student Achievement and Success
Throughout its history, MDC has welcomed new generations of learners. More than half of the College’s students are the first in their family to attend college. Our students comprise the most diverse population in all of higher education, bringing a wealth of learning styles and cultural differences to the classroom. They face unprecedented challenges, balancing work, family and educational responsibilities, often under severe economic pressures. The Strategic Plan reasserts the College’s commitment to our most fundamental challenge: to support individual students in their educational journey, and to continue to uncover meaningful methods of measuring student learning.

Serving the Community
MDC’s mission statement underscores the importance of the College’s relationship to the community. From inception, MDC strived to attune itself to the higher education needs of a growing community. Forty-five years later, the College remains true to that creed, embracing its central position in the community’s evolution. The Strategic Plan recognizes the enormous wealth of interaction between the College and all elements of the community. Partnerships in the years ahead promise benefits to our students, our community’s economy and all our citizens in sharing the rich cultural diversity that defines our community.
Resource Development and Allocation

MDC is confronted by enormous growth in enrollment and diminished funding from the College’s primary source, state government. Maintaining the advantages that distinguish MDC – small classes and exceptional teaching faculty, commitment to academic advisement and student support services and state-of-the-art educational technology – will require continued development of alternative revenue sources. Partnerships with public and private sources allow the College to build new programs and provide a beneficial return on investment in skilled, well-prepared graduates.

Employees and the College

Our faculty and staff make up MDC’s creative engine. Their willingness to explore new dimensions of knowledge is the greatest factor in establishing an environment of scholarship and learning. The Strategic Plan ensures that training and growth opportunities will sustain our personnel as the innovative cornerstone of the institution.
**Access to the College**

**Strategic Goal 1:**
Enhance systems and processes that facilitate orientation, advisement, registration and financial aid for students.

- Focus on more user-friendly technology and expanded training for staff.

**Strategic Goal 2:**
Improve systems and processes to encourage student enrollment, enhance transfer experiences and support a full range of educational goals.

- Focus on transition from high school, non-traditional and transfer students, the Virtual College and transfer of MDC students to other colleges and universities.

**Strategic Goal 3:**
Explore establishment of new campuses in underserved areas of Miami-Dade County.

- Focus on efficient infrastructure and compact campus venues.

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**Student Achievement and Success**

**Strategic Goal 1:**
Ensure success in each discipline by identifying barriers and implementing strategies to overcome the challenges faced by our diverse and non-traditional student body.

- Focus on barriers to success, creative collaborations between faculty and student support and critical transition points in student achievement.

**Strategic Goal 2:**
Document and enhance the quality and consistency of student learning across the spectrum of programs, courses, and student educational goals.

- Focus on valid methodologies, learning outcomes, teaching strategies and curriculum review.
**Serving the Community**

**Strategic Goal 1:**
Provide cultural and educational programming, and partner with the community to respond to needs.

- Focus on social and economic concerns related to education and community representation on college advisory boards.

**Strategic Goal 2:**
Provide multiple opportunities for students to gain practical experience, and for communities to reap benefits of student contributions.

- Focus on internships, alumni mentoring and expansion of service learning.

**Strategic Goal 3:**
Provide a professional and helpful environment for all who interact with the College.

- Focus on service excellence, recruitment, the work environment and employee satisfaction.

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**Resource Development and Allocation**

**Strategic Goal 1:**
Develop mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance resource contributions from business and industry, public sector sources, private foundations and individuals.

- Develop strategies and a comprehensive database of external relationships toward increased public and private support.

**Strategic Goal 2:**
Ensure that MDC provides equitable opportunities for all groups, including those underrepresented in the business community, to participate in College business activities.

- Focus on information and support for all qualified vendors.

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**Employees and the College**

**Strategic Goal 1:**
Develop and implement a process for employee growth that will encourage creativity and accomplishment and facilitate progression to higher levels.

- Focus on career ladder for support staff, training, innovation and performance goals and salary schedule review.

**Strategic Goal 2:**
Employ a diverse workforce that mirrors the Miami-Dade community.

- Focus on management succession and leadership opportunities, with attention to women and minorities.

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* For extended versions of all aspects of MDC’s Strategic Plan, log on to www.mdc.edu/planning_and_effectiveness/strategic_planning.asp
Miami Dade College Strategic Plan 2004-2010

The Strategic Planning Coordinating Committee

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Putting Students First for More Than Forty-Five Years