

# Community College Finance



Community College Finance:  
An Analysis of Resource Development  
at Mississippi's Community and Junior Colleges

By

Fredrick White

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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This is dedicated to my beloved grandmother, Alvia White.



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## PREFACE

Welch (2003) believed that one of the most significant challenges facing community colleges is generating enough revenue to promote the mission, goals, and objectives of the community college. According to Kenton (2005), community colleges thrive on revenue generated from tuition and fees, federal and state programs and endowments. Resource development is income generated activities established by community colleges (Glass & Jackson, 1998b).

This dissertation explores resource development at Mississippi's Community and Junior Colleges. Secondly, it determines whether revenue generated from fundraising serves the colleges' needs. Thirdly, it distinguishes the various types of resource development activities the colleges and junior colleges used to raise funds. Lastly, this research explores the operation integration and organizational structure of resource development at Mississippi's Community and Junior College.

The results of this study demonstrated how the community and junior colleges in Mississippi operate their grants office while in concert with their foundation office. This study revealed the connection between grants functions and grant development at the community and junior college level. The trend has shifted from capital campaigns to cooperative funding in conjunction with community based organizations affiliated with the colleges. Community colleges have to initiate annual fund drives, capital campaigns, special events, and business partnerships in order to secure the necessary resources to survive in the competitive educational environment.



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Rural communities, as well as the colleges that support them, are facing a difficult time with challenges such as providing quality jobs, good education and appropriate health care which are paramount in the success and development of a strong community. Nonetheless, rural community colleges have maintained an active role in preparing these students with the necessary skills to enable them to support their community and create a new economy for that community (<http://srdc.msstate.edu/rcci>). According to Parnell (1985), higher education in America has been impacted by three important events which are as follows; the creation of land grant universities in 1860; the enactment of the G. I. Bill by policymakers; and, the formation of the community college.

### **Historical Overview of Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges**

It is evident from Young and Ewing (1978) that Mississippi's Community and Junior Colleges were created with the passage of Senate Bill No. 251. The bill was introduced by Dr. Julius Christian Zeller, a Senator from Yazoo County, the Nineteenth Senatorial District.

According to the author, Pearl River County Agricultural High School in Poplarville, Mississippi and Hinds County Agricultural High School in Raymond began to offer college courses in 1922-1923 academic school years. It was not until the 1925-26 academic school years that Holmes County Agriculture High School in Goodman and Harrison-Stone Agricultural High School in Perkinston began to offer college courses. Soon thereafter Sunflower County Agricultural High School, Kemper County Agricultural High School, Jones County Agricultural High School and Tate County Agricultural High School began to offer college courses.

In 1922, the Commission of Junior Colleges was established to oversee the public junior colleges in Mississippi. According to the U.S. Census, Mississippi was 86.6 % rural and 13.34 % urban. An astounding 70.9 % of Mississippians during this time lived on farmland. Early research

findings show that after the enactment of the junior college legislation, the population of Mississippi changed by 3.5 percentage points to 83.1 % rural, to 16.9 % urban, and 62.7 % living on farmland (Young and Ewing, 1978).

Geographically, out of the original 11 junior colleges, 4 are located in North Mississippi. However, before the passage of the 1928 legislation, all agricultural high schools had some control over its curriculum since there was no governing organization to control these institutions. Three of Mississippi's senior level colleges along with the University of Mississippi are also located in North Mississippi. Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi, the southern part of the state, was the only college that was available to African Americans (Young & Ewing, 1978).

In 1908, the first agricultural high school passed a law that gave the board of supervisors the power to levy a tax not to exceed two mills per year in support of county wide high schools. The two mills existed for a number of years until it was increased to three mills. The three mills tax levy holds true to all junior colleges except the Gulf Coast Junior College District. In 1968 this district was given special authority to increase its tax levy to a minimum of four mills for maintenance and operation (Young and Ewing, 1978).

In 1932-1933, the public junior colleges began to see an increase in student enrollment due to the creation of new academic programs. The enrollment reached a high of 4,074 students during the 1939-1940 school sessions. The junior colleges struggled during the Great Depression and the primary focus for the president's of these institutions was to erect buildings and purchase equipment. The presidents of the junior colleges during this time-period were:

1. Russell Ellzey	Copiah-Lincoln	1928-1932
2. S.L. Stringer	Pearl River	1926-1932
3. J.S. Vandizer	Sunflower	1926-1935
4. P.W. Berry	Northwest	1926-1935
5. M.P. Bush	Jones County	1927-1940
6. J.D. Wallace	East Mississippi	1927-1939
7. M.C. McDaniels	Holmes	1928-1940
8. R.C. Pugh	East Central	1928-1934
9. Copper J. Darby	Perkinston	1929-1941
10. J.M. Kenna	Southwest	1929-1947
11. G.J. Cain	Hinds	1929-1938

From 1932 through 1942 the community and junior colleges experienced an economic hardship. This time period was coined the “The Years of Struggle” for community and junior colleges in Mississippi. As mentioned earlier, this economic hardship came as a direct result of the Great Depression. The Mississippi Junior College Association in 1936 applied for a grant through the General Education Board of New York to incorporate the study of Business and Finance in the junior college curriculum. The Mississippi Junior College Association received the grant in the amount of \$75,000.00 and later appointed a committee to explore the creation of a seminar or laboratory school for Mississippi Junior College Administrators (Young and Ewing, 1978).

The Mississippi Junior College Association presented an idea to the Mississippi Vocational Education Board to launch regional centers for technical and vocational training. As a result of these efforts, 26 vocational buildings were formed with more than 65,000 square feet available for students (Young & Ewing, 1978).

From 1942-1952 the junior college system in Mississippi suffered financially as a result of World War II. There was decrease in enrollment due to the attack on Pearl Harbor which forced many of the college's students to active duty. The presidents of the junior colleges in Mississippi realized that this was a problem and expanded course offerings that met the requirements of the armed forces, civil service commission, and the war supply factories. These expansions were as follows:

1. Commercial departments, clerks and typists courses
2. Mechanic, auto, radio, and aircraft shop courses
3. Building trade and wood work shop courses
4. Basic Science, chemistry, and economics courses
5. Personnel and production management courses

According to Young and Ewing (1978), the junior college system in Mississippi during the fourth decade began to mature into fully functional two-year institutions. In 1942, ten out of the twelve junior colleges received accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools during the third decade. During the fourth decade, the remaining two were accredited, and the two multi-county district's junior colleges were created and also received accreditation. Coahoma Junior College and Utica Community College did not receive accreditation during this period. The Mississippi public junior college system became active in the American Association of Junior Colleges (Young & Ewing, 1978).

In 1964, Mississippi proposed legislation to establish nursing programs in its junior and senior level colleges. In 1955, the Mississippi Junior College Association voted to eliminate girls' basketball on a competitive level. However, in 1962 the Mississippi legislature passed a resolution that acknowledged girl's basketball as being athletic and spiritual thus organizing an official girl's basketball program. The girl's basketball program was also reinstated as a competitive sport by the Mississippi Junior College Association during the 1973 and 1974 school term.

Mississippi's junior colleges experienced a decade of growth from 1962 to 1972. According to Young and Ewing (1978) the colleges experienced the following accomplishments:

1. Increase student enrollment
2. Freshman and Sophomore transfer credit
3. Technical training and short-term courses
4. Evening classes
5. Nursing and allied health classes

New laws were created to further enhance the viability of the junior colleges in Mississippi. The passage of House Bill 215 gave way to junior colleges to function as separate units. Many lawmakers, as well as school administrators, felt that this move provided each college an opportunity define its role as well as develop its own unique identity. In 1962, House Bill 597 established a junior college district which was centered on Harrison, Stone, George, and Jackson counties. The district was named the Mississippi Gulf Coast Junior College, District of Mississippi.

On a national level, the acknowledgement of the role of the community college dates as far back as the President's 1947 Commission on Higher Education. It is important to note that two-year institutions such as Joliet Junior College were in existence prior to this time; however, Joliet did not become comprehensive until after 1947. President Truman stated, "This commission... will be charged with an examination of the functions of higher education in our democracy and of the means by which they can best be performed" (President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947, vol.1, p.v).

Congress supported and passed the 1963 Higher Education Facilities Act. This Act required educational funds to be used for community college facilities in which states were required to provide match money (Wattenbarger & Cage, 1974). This important legislation led to the expansion of the community college.



During the 20<sup>TH</sup> century, community colleges were in the infancy stages of higher education. Joliet Junior Community College was the first community college created to offer courses beyond high school. It was an important time for community colleges because it illustrated the effective use of tax dollars and a strong commitment to postsecondary education (Vaughan, 2000).

The mission of the community college was to provide admittance to postsecondary education through open access and fair treatment to students by teaching, lifelong learning and encouraging the use of comprehensive educational programs (Vaughan, 2000) In other words, higher education would become affordable and accessible to people who may not otherwise have had an opportunity to continue their education.

The American Association of Community Colleges (1998) argued that community colleges are by nature the most diverse sector of higher education because of its open door admissions policy and its variety of academic and non-traditional programs that are geared at meeting the needs of a diverse population. Community colleges respond to the needs of their communities. The community college students, 65% work part-time and another 65% are first-generation college students.

## **Statement of the Problem**

According to Schmidt (2002), state and local budget cuts have caused many educators to concern themselves with alternative funding to cover college expenses. Alternative funding may consist of but are not limited to grants, tuition and fees, user fees and alumni support. Alumni support provides a good source of revenue for community and junior colleges (Klein, 2004).

The lack of state and federal funding has pigeonholed community colleges in the United States into considering eliminating academic programs and initiating other cutbacks to maintain revenue (Kenton, 2004). Community College administrators have begun to explore revenue options, i.e. private fundraising. Kenton (2004) also maintains that community colleges have found it necessary to seek financial resources outside of tuition and fees. Hence, these findings suggests to the conclusion that many community colleges' financial stability is severely compromised when tuition and fees are increased.

A national survey reported that community college presidents identified failed resources as their number one problem. Of those surveyed, 72% of those surveyed had some experience with resource

development and 41% of those who answered said that they have had some success with resource development (Glass, 1998).

It is most important to note that resource development is a universally problem. Rural communities cannot attract jobs without educating the workforce. Community colleges play a significant role in assisting communities by providing access to education and training. This research study will explore resource development at Mississippi's Rural Community and Junior Colleges. This will attempt to determine the types of activities that Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges use to raise funds and to determine if the funds raised are in sync with the needs of the college.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore resource development at Mississippi's Rural Community and Junior Colleges. Secondly, this research seeks to determine if the revenues generated from fundraising serve the college's immediate revenue needs. Thirdly, this research seeks to distinguish between the various types of activities that Mississippi Rural Community and Junior Colleges use to raise funds. Lastly, this research explores the operational integration and organizational structure of resource development at Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges. Research in the area of resource development is extremely important in uncovering avenues of obtaining revenue for community colleges. Hence, a comprehensive picture of this problem needs to be addressed to determine if community colleges are actively pursuing resource development opportunities or not.

## **Sample**

The colleges and junior colleges involved in this study are: (1) Coahoma Community College, (2) Copiah-Lincoln Community College, (3) East Central Community College, (4) East Mississippi Community College, (5) Hinds Community College, (6) Holmes Community College, (7) Itawamba Community College, (8) Jones County Junior College, (9) Meridian Community College, (10) Mississippi Delta Community college, (11) Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, (12) Northeast Mississippi Community College, (13) Northwest Community College, (14) Pearl River Community College and (15) Southwest Mississippi College.

## Research Questions

In order to address the problem of this study, several research questions were developed. The research questions are guided by these policy areas that are important to the study of resource development in Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges which are: (1) resource development (private fundraising); (2) education; (3) governance and (4) politics. They are as follows:

1. What are the advancement functions reporting lines of the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi?
2. How do the grant functions of the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi interact with other college departments?
3. What are the responsibilities of employees involved with grant functions at the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi?
4. How successful were the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi in their submission of grant applications?
5. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi perceive the use of award amounts for evaluation of the institutional grant program?
6. What performance indicators of effectiveness do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report?
7. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the performance indicators?
8. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded?
9. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded to institutional budget?
10. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the increase in percent of grant funds awarded compared to previous year?
11. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds that support strategic goals?
12. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded relating to the number of students served?

13. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded regarding the number of faculty involved?
14. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded regarding the return on investments?
15. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded regarding achievement of grant objectives?
16. How do the community colleges and junior colleges in Mississippi report the percent of grant funds awarded regarding indirect administrative costs?

### **Limitations of the Study**

The proposed limitations to this study are as follows:

1. Information and data is dependent upon the correctness of data provided by the college personnel on the questionnaire.
2. Data is analyzed based upon the return response received by the researcher.
3. This study is generalized to rural community and junior colleges in Mississippi.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following definition of terms will be utilized in this study.

*Community College* is an institution of higher learning that offers and associates degree as its highest degree (Vaughan, 2000).

*Development* is the long-term fiscal support of an institution (Jackson & Keener, 2002).

*External funding* is money or other tangible resources acquired through public or private grants and contracts or through private or corporate donations to support the mission of the college (Vaughan, 2000).

*Federal Appropriations* are monies received by an institution through the federal government (NCES, 1999).

*Fundraising* is money that has been received from private sources (Birmingham, 2002)

*Grants* refer to funds that are awarded by public government agencies based on proposals submitted to the agencies that outline how the requested funds are to be used. The awarding agency retains responsibility

for the funds and usually requires periodic programmatic and financial reports to the grantee (Morgan (2005) as cited in Canine, 1989).

*Grant Success Rate* is the number of grants funded divided by the number of proposals submitted by an institution (Morgan (2002) as cited in Herbkerson & Hibbert-Jones, 2002).

*Indicators* are the data that objectives have been met or determine the degree to which they are attained (Morgan (1992) as cited in McLeod & Atwell, 1992).

*Institutional Advancement* focuses on creating, maintaining, and enhancing the relationship of the institution with the community and with the constituent groups that financially support the institution's mission (Morgan (2005) as cited in Glass & Jackson, 1998).

*Measure of effectiveness* are established standards or benchmarks that set the level of achievement against which an educational activity, program, or institution is compared (Morgan, 2005).

*Operational integration* refers to the degree of informal interaction and collaborative activity that occurs among the institutional advancement functions of an institution (Morgan, 2005).

*Resource development* refers to grant development and private fundraising activities initiated by community colleges to secure external funds (Glass, Jackson, & Luke, 1998).

*Resource development officer* is a person who is responsible for grant development and or private funding at a community college (Morgan, 2005).

*Revenue Funding* is all unrestricted gifts and other resources used for current operating purposes (NCES, 1999).

*Return on investment* is the total amount of grant revenue an institution receives during a specific time period divided by the amount of funding the institution invests in the grant procurement process (Morgan, 2005).

*Sponsored research* is the array of activities related to the application and management of grants and contracts at a university (Morgan, 2005).

*State Appropriations* are monies that are received by an institution through the state legislature (NCES, 1999).

*Tuition and Fees* is fees that are assessed to students for educational purposes (NCES, 1999).

