

Walsh president: Take college to students

By Susan Buck
staff writer

Colleges must become more "convenience-oriented" to better adapt to changing demographics, both in metropolitan Detroit area and across the country.

That's the opinion of Jeffery Barry, president of Walsh College of Accountancy and Business Administration in Troy.

Barry spoke Thursday on "Investing in the Future: Higher Education in the 1990s" as part of the Dittin-

gushed Speaker Series on Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

"THERE ARE natural centers where students congregate, where they live and where they work," said Barry. "Maybe the college ought to be commuting to the students rather than the students commuting to the college."

Dr. R. Stephen Nicholson, OCC chancellor, also was scheduled to speak, but a scheduling conflict prevented him from doing so.

"Colleges and universities need to become more convenience-oriented and look at packaging courses," Barry said.

A case in point, he said, was the way Walsh College seized the opportunity two years ago in offering courses in Detroit at the Renaissance Center in an effort to attract some of the center's 12,000 white-collar workers.

Weekend courses, weeklong courses and inter-institutional courses are alternative ways to attract and teach students, he said.

"Pragmatism limits vision," said Barry. "If the concept is good, the details will fall into place."

WALSH COLLEGE was founded in 1972 and has 2,500 students; 1,700 bachelor's degree students and 800 master's degree students.

Walsh is touted as the nation's only independent, upper-level college of business administration. Upper level means it has no freshman or sophomore students.

A college's mission is equal to the importance of its vision, said Barry. "With innovation, there is always risk."

Barry is the recipient of many awards and honors, including the distinguished alumni award from Albion College in 1974. He also was recog-

nized as an outstanding educator in America more than a decade ago.

Quoting an unnamed source, Barry said that running a college is kind of like walking through a field of rattlesnakes. "You have to keep moving, but no sudden moves. You have to keep progressing, but not too suddenly."

STUDENTS NEED to answer why they are attending college: preparation for a job or preparation for life; going for the grade or going for the knowledge.

"Some people do both," said Barry. "I counsel my own children to go for the knowledge. If you go for the knowledge, the grade will be there," said Barry, who is married, with two children.

Likewise, teachers need to ask themselves why they are teaching. "The payoff is not necessarily in dollars," he said.

Colleges will need to find ways to encourage and support increasing numbers of non-traditional older students and students with special needs, like child day care, said Barry.

"We are looking at students who are pursuing education on a 'here and there' basis. We need to change our thinking in regard to stopouts — students who drop out for a period but will return," said Barry.

Students who return to college after a long absence frequently need to relearn how to study, manage their time and rebuild confidence, he said.

'Shoehorn effect'

Orchard Ridge needs new capital

By Tim Richard
staff writer

When it was built 23 years ago, the Orchard Ridge Campus of Oakland Community College was a pioneer, honored by architects and school administrators.

Today the campus overlooking I-896 in Farmington Hills is suffering from what president Dan Jakken calls "the shoehorn effect" — cramming the photography, commercial art, video and culinary arts into buildings intended for other purposes.

"It's very difficult for the handicapped to move on campus," Jakken told the OCC Board of Trustees last week.

Parking lots are a cold 10-minute walk from the center of campus, he said, and there is no convenient parking for visitors who just want to pick up a registration form.

TRUSTEES AGREED to explore leasing land at the east end of campus for a commercial conference center.

Although no figures were used, of-

ficials think rents might help pay for a two-tiered parking deck and building renovations.

"We're talking big dollars, six figures," Jakken said of the culinary arts improvements alone.

Chancellor R. Stephen Nicholson warned, however, that the five-campus OCC is low on both operating and capital funds.

"We are, in a sense, in my judgment, substantially underfunded. We are disadvantaged in the state (aid) formula. Our capital funds are short," the chief executive said. He said OCC spends \$3,174 per student compared to the state average of \$4,154 for 29 community colleges and the national average of \$4,824.

If OCC were funded at the national average, Nicholson said, its current \$31.7 million budget would grow by \$26 million.

Instead of using an enrollment-driven formula developed by legislators several years ago, he said, state officials are increasing aid a flat 2 percent.

TRUSTEES AGREED to explore a partnership with some-

thing that would be both a revenue producer and "symbolic" — a scientific term, borrowed by educators, meaning close association of two dissimilar organisms.

In 1985 Schoolcraft College in neighboring Livonia set up a building authority and leased part of its unused land near the I-275 freeway to a developer who put up office buildings.

The change upset some Schoolcraft trustees, who viewed a commercial development with suspicion. But they later changed their minds and voted for it.

OCC trustee David Hackett, on the board for 24 years, opposed exploring a commercial partner. Later in the meeting, trustee Judith Wiser announced she will introduce motions next month to:

- Dedicate proceeds from all future real estate sales for special capital improvements.

- Dedicate \$2 million from the sale of land adjacent to the Auburn Hills campus to a scholarship fund to be named for chancellor Nicholson. The land was sold to the city for road expansion.

Ethnicity to be topic of workshop

A day-long workshop on ethnicity will be sponsored by the Oakland County Youth Assistance Advisory Council family education committee on Thursday, April 13.

Running from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30

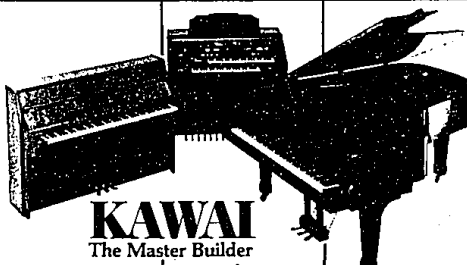
p.m., it will be held in St. George Greek Orthodox Church, 1515 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills. Topic will be "Parenting in a Multi-Ethnic Society."

Keynote speaker will be Richard H. Lobenthal of the Anti-Defamation

League of B'nai B'rith. Monica A. Umanne of Oakland University will conduct a workshop.

Fee of \$20 covers a continental breakfast and lunch. Registration information is available from Nancy Elfeast 852-3716.

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The good news is that this sale is going on now through Saturday, April 1st. The bad news is that it, like spring, comes but once a year.

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