

FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGES

NEWSLETTER

Spring Semester | January 2021

Events at the U.S. Capital remind us that our republic is fragile; it needs our collective, on-going commitment to liberty, human dignity, justice and equity. It also reminds me that Dakota County Technical College and Inver Hills Community College, as public institutions of higher education, have a responsibility to foster civic agency.

Effective democratic processes need the active participation of informed citizens. We vote, so we elect representatives and influence policy, we provide support for those in need, and we build connections that lead to healthy and vibrant communities. In this work, we will frequently disagree, but our system is designed to manage disagreement, debate and compromise.

Of course, this system depends on people understanding the written and unwritten rules of participation. As colleges, we have a responsibility to teach the skills that make engagement effective and ethical. We teach critical thinking. We help students gather facts and reason carefully. We encourage them to examine their own biases, consider alternative perspectives, and analyze the implications of their positions.

These critical civic skills help foster healthy dialogue and equity-minded practices. It can lead us collectively toward greater social justice. When we teach moral and civic responsibility, we help students learn to exercise their rights and obligations as citizens effectively and ethically. We do not expect students to hold particular political views, but we do encourage them to be self-reflective and to address the diversity of views in our society respectfully.

In the last few years, DCTC and Inver Hills have intensified our commitment to anti-racism, equity and inclusion, recognizing that healthy systems of government need to be equitable. That work has gone beyond our classroom and into our communities as we've partnered with business and government leaders to address community concerns such as equitable and inclusive employment, workforce and economic mobility, and regional quality of life.

While COVID-19 has slowed some of our efforts, our colleges remain eager to strengthen our communities through collaborations with business and industry partners; local, state and federal government; and nonprofits.

In closing, I'm mindful of a quotation from Nannie Helen Burroughs: "education and justice are democracy's only life insurance." At Inver Hills and DCTC, we continue our commitment to social justice and civic education.



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IN THE NEWS

- [Inver Hills and DCTC receive grant to launch a robust recycling program](#)
- [New Inver Hills course provides introduction to social justice](#)
- [DCTC athletics signs three new softball recruits](#)

Stay up to date with our campus communities at [DCTC News](#) and [Inver Hills News](#)

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

- Join us at 11 a.m. Feb. 11th for a [free webinar titled the Introverted Leader](#).
- Follow @dctc on Twitter March 3rd for DCTC Virtual Day at the Capitol
- Follow @InverHillsCC on Twitter March 4th for Inver Hills Virtual Day at the Capitol

CONTACT US

If you have any questions, feedback, or would like to be removed from this Newsletter please send all correspondences to cherrera@inverhills.edu.

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