



CCL Dean Awarded Joan Simon Lifetime Achievement Award

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Godfrey, Ill. – Tom Monroe, dean of Corporate and Community Learning at Lewis and Clark Community College, is a recipient of the Joan Simon Lifetime Achievement Award for his extensive work in community and workforce education.

The Illinois Community College Board workforce development committee, weTRaIN, awarded Monroe the honor, named for former vice president for Community and Economic Development at Prairie State Community College Joan Simon, at a ceremony in Springfield on Oct. 20.

“It is not given annually, rather to outstanding individuals whose careers in community college workforce development are distinguished,” said Linda Chapman, vice president of Academic Affairs at L&C.

Monroe has been with Lewis and Clark for five years, but has worked in corporate and community education for much longer. His job is to build partnerships between the college and the businesses and people in the college district. So far, during his Lewis and Clark tenure, he has succeeded in enrolling the largest number of workforce training students in the Illinois community college system.

“Basically, I cast the vision for and provide leadership to the people who work in Corporate and Community Learning,” Monroe said. “Here at the college, we have grown our corporate training to touch over 12,000 persons a year, making us the most active of any community college in the state.”

As a division dean, Monroe models the behavior he expects and coaches his staff toward excellent customer service, detailed program planning and execution, and continual improvement in the quality of division programs and services.

“Lewis and Clark is fortunate that Tom accepted our offer of employment five years ago,” Chapman said. “He brought with him extensive knowledge and experience in corporate education and training. He is a skilled and disciplined manager, an excellent mentor, an admirable fiscal manager, and a system wide leader in his field.”

Monroe has an Associate in Engineering Technology from DeVry Institute of Technology and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Elmhurst College, is a graduate of the Motorola Leadership Academy and did graduate studies in theology at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary.

As well as an advocate for weTRaIN – a versatile statewide consulting group and training provider for nearly 2,000 firms each year through 48 training sites – Monroe was also an early advocate for creating a partnership between the colleges and the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center.

“Statewide, I'm proud of acting as an advocate for what we now know as weTRaIN. Collectively, community colleges in Illinois serve thousands of businesses each year, making us the largest and most important provider of skills and learning in the state. The weTRaIN organization creates an alliance of all of our competencies and services, which means we offer better services to our customers,” Monroe said. “At Lewis and Clark, I am most proud of the thousands of moments when our students suddenly realize that they've learned something valuable, that they ‘get it.’ I love to watch their faces as they become happier or more confident. That's not ‘my’ accomplishment – it's what we do as an organization, and there are a couple dozen people whose contributions and professionalism make that happen.”