**EDUCATIONAL SPEECH**

**FOR**

**GREG EDINGER**

Hello everyone!! I’m very pleased to be here today at this inaugural event and I am even prouder to be part of what this event commemorates. As we officially acknowledge the start of Ron Schumacher’s tenure as President of Terra State Community College, we are also recognizing the beginning of a fruitful, creative, and productive partnership between two vital institutions. It’s been said that “With patience, persistence, and partnership, we can create economic opportunity for every person willing to work hard for it.” As the “stewards” of both Vanguard Sentinel Career and Technology Centers and Terra State Community College, Ron and I believe in the power of partnership, the value in forging alliances, and the benefits in knowing we are stronger and more viable **together**.

The world is changing... rapidly... and in order to remain sustainable, it is urgent to address challenges, assess opportunities, and encourage effectiveness, implementation of our goals, and most importantly, provide the “educational fuel” with which the next generation will learn to use to flourish. We are responsible for providing that education and encouraging the stimulus of students that are about to inherit the future. The very gesture of exploring the partnership between these two institutions provides a roadmap for all of us and demonstrates how to think creatively about addressing and managing future situations. The process also has served to form a “laboratory” of sorts. In our own way, this district has created its own “think tank....” and we thought... “What are our resources??? How do we address and implement change so that we offer the most appropriate education for the best possible value? What’s the most effective way to serve the students of our districts? In the process, we have demonstrated the strength of connection and Ron and I are confident that as we delve further into strengthening the bond between our two schools, **everyone** will benefit.

When someone like Ron Schumacher shows up, the word “partnership” naturally comes to the forefront of any discussion. Ron has been enthusiastic, eager, ready and willing to support and promote the goals of Terra State and the students that rely on receiving the knowledge and training that will ably prepare them for the “adventures” they will face in the working world...... as engaged and curious administrators, a logical question presented itself to both of our teams... “What else can we do to support the teens in our community to receive the best preparation available even **BEFORE** they enter and attend Terra State? The response became crystal clear.... **partnership**.

Through research, discussions, financial analyses, and just plain common sense, we realized the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. We saw that if we would offer preparatory programs at Vanguard Sentinel that would directly correlate to the continued education provided by Terra State, there would, in effect, be a **WIN- WIN-WIN** situation...for both schools and for the students. Being able to reap the benefits of such a mindful collaboration offers an illustration of adaptability that even in and of itself is a valuable lesson to learn... and not just for the students.

To paraphrase Andrew Carnegie, “Partnership is the ability to work together towards a common vision... the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives.... It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.” It is no secret that there is a shortage in the labor force of people with what is known as “middle skills....” The programs we have designed address what’s missing in the job market. As we explored how to respond to the needs of our community, it became evident that partnership resolves many of the issues we face... and most of all, it shows our students the power of that process and how collaboration... at **ALL** levels, serves to improve conditions and increase opportunities and benefits for all involved.

In a publication titled, “The Importance of Educational Partnerships,” we can find confirmation that our theory, when put into proper action, works. “Education is not an isolated experience but an interactive endeavor that takes place over the course of a person’s life. When communities, schools, and families work together, they can provide the best possible resources to enhance education for all.” You know what I’ve discovered? “All” means **ALL** of us... the students are not the only ones learning by the forging of this partnership.... Ron and I are learning, the administrators are learning... the distinguished members of our local government are learning... we’re learning how to read the signs and test the waters of the ever changing conditions in both education and the professional sector. We are learning how to leverage our assets and mesh them with those of others to make **ALL** of us stronger, and most of all, we are learning how to serve our students and to prepare them for the future... with open minds, willingness to adapt, and respect for the contributions of each person involved.

Again, congratulations, Ron!!! I look forward to working with you, to serving the students who rely on us, and to continue innovating and strengthening the valued partnerships and opportunities we currently have and will discover in the future!!