

**Nomination of Dr. Vernon O. Crawley, President,  
Moraine Valley Community College for  
ACCT Chief Executive Officer Award – June 2009**

**What has the CEO initiated or helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?**

Dr. Vernon O. Crawley is an initiator, a prodder and supporter for faculty and staff to take risks and come up with creative ideas that will lead to innovative programs. Among the many innovations instituted during his 18-year tenure at the college, three stand out as they all promote student success. They include two nationally recognized programs—First-Year Experience and Center for Teaching and Learning. The third, inclusion of Dr. Crawley's "Eight Expectations of College Staff" in the hiring and training processes, garnered the Human Resources Department statewide recognition for its use of the expectations.

The First-Year Experience, for new full-time students, includes a student placement exam, online orientation, and College 101, a one-hour credit class that familiarizes students with the campus, teaches them what to expect in college and informs them about expectations of them as students in higher education. The program received a 2003 Best Practice Award from the National Council on Student Development and was named one of only nine national and international programs chosen from among 30 creative and innovative programs reviewed in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' annual *Exemplary Programs: Bridges to Student Success* publication.

The Center for Teaching and Learning was born out of development programs for faculty that now includes courses and workshops for all staff. The Moraine Valley Learning Academy, a program within the CTL, received the Organizational Change Award in the 2006 Exemplary Initiatives competition, sponsored by the National Council of Instructional Administrators, a professional organization affiliated with the American Association of Community Colleges. The following year, the MVLA was selected as the college's Innovation of the Year and included in the 2007 League for Innovation in the Community College innovation programs.

Moraine Valley's Human Resources department has incorporated Dr. Crawley's Eight Expectations of College Staff into the official employee annual performance review document. Furthermore, college search teams use them in their interviews, and they are among the agenda items discussed at new employee orientation sessions. The Human Resources department received the 2004 Innovation Award from the Illinois Council of Community College Administrators for the use of the Eight Expectations.

**How has the CEO served on technical or special committees serving two-year postsecondary education and how did this effort affect the college program in the community, state, or nation?**

Dr. Crawley has actively served and advised on a variety of local, state and national committees. They include chair of the Finance Committee, Illinois Council of Presidents; Advisory Committee of Presidents for the ACCT; chair of the Executive Council, Chicago Regional College Program, a partnership between two- and four-year schools and UPS; chair of the Membership Committee, League for Innovation in the Community College; member of the Audit Committee, League for Innovation; past chair and vice chair of the League for Innovation Board; member of the Executive Committee, Community College for International Development; member of the Walt Disney World National College Advisory Board; member of the Executive Committee, Workforce Investment Board of Cook

County, Illinois; chair of the Moraine Area Career System, a council of local superintendents and community college presidents; and member of the American Association of Community College's Executive Committee and Homeland Security Advisory Committee.

His service on these boards and committees has resulted in a variety of positive support for students and faculty and staff. For example, he was one of the founders of the Chicago Regional College Program, a partnership with UPS that provides jobs and free education to college students, most of whom would not be able to attend college without this program. Moraine Valley's involvement as a founding school was recognized in 2007 by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association as its business partnership of the year. His work as a member of the Disney Advisory Board has developed into a great opportunity for many Moraine Valley students as well as hundreds of two-year and four-year students across the U.S. by providing them with paid internships that enrich the students' career goals. Dr. Crawley also has been instrumental as a member of national boards in informing legislative bodies about what community colleges offer and how they can prepare a diverse student population in areas ranging from training as first responders to helping small businesses survive during troubled economic times. A well-respected leader in Illinois, he has worked through committees and boards to gain support from state agencies and associations and legislators not only for Moraine Valley but also for the state's 47 other community colleges.

**How has the CEO demonstrated a "caring attitude" toward the board of trustees, administrators, faculty, and students?**

Dr. Crawley, in his effort to get all staff to understand the vital role they play in student success, established his "Eight Expectations of College Staff," which outlines what all employees can do to enhance the learning experience for students. In fact, the Fifth Expectation states, "Be focused on students, student learning and student success." Indeed, the Moraine Valley Promise speaks directly to that: "We promise to provide a student-centered environment and to focus all college staff and resources in support of student learning, student development and student success."

The key to his "caring attitude" is communication. He created the Executive Leadership Team, made up of the college's senior administration; the Administrative Council, which consists of administrators who directly report to a member of the Executive Leadership Team, so that he could provide information to administrators who in turn could keep their staffs informed on the issues facing the college; and the President's Advisory Council, which is made up of a representative of various groups of employees selected by each group. His door is always open to faculty, staff and students, and he receives hundreds of e-mail messages daily from college constituents.

He also communicates regularly through his President's Memo, hosts college-wide receptions, and helped establish the Learning College Day program when faculty and staff can take classes that can enrich their personal as well as their professional lives. He is not a top-down manager, but rather seeks input from all levels before making decisions, especially those having an impact on employees. His relationship through ongoing dialogue with union leaders has created a culture of cooperation and teamwork. Faculty leaders say that he is very generous with his time, and they feel comfortable calling on him. In their discussion of issues, they talk about what is the "right thing to do." Small issues never become major issues. He appreciates honesty and does not betray confidences.

Dr. Crawley has a close working relationship with the Board of Trustees and always encourages them to seek information that will help them in their decision making. He holds periodic retreats for the board and also communicates with them through memos and other means to keep them apprised of what is taking place on

campus and issues that may arise. He makes sure that the board knows his schedule so if they do have questions they know when and where they can contact him. When new members of the board are elected, he works with them on how to become effective trustees. Throughout the year, he invites students who have achieved success in a variety of ways to attend board meetings so they can be publicly recognized.

Additionally, he established staff recognition programs that culminate in a banquet at the end of the year. Employees are nominated by their peers and then committees select the recipients, who are honored at the banquet along with retirees and employees for their years of service. Retirees also are recognized at another reception, as well. Many of the employees recognized sum up the college's culture best when they repeatedly refer to it as "my other family" and then thank Dr. Crawley for the opportunity to be a part of the college family.

**How has the CEO been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary education associations?**

Dr. Crawley has been, and continues to be, actively involved in support of postsecondary education associations. He currently serves as chair of the Finance Committee for the Illinois Council of Presidents; chair of the Executive Council, Chicago Regional College Program; chair of the membership committee and member of the Audit Committee, League for Innovation in the Community College; a member of the Executive Committees for the Community College for International Development and the Workforce Investment Board of Cook County, IL.; and is Chair of the Moraine Area Career System. He is as a proponent of education-to-careers programs, including dual enrollment options involving high school and community college partnerships.

In addition to regularly attending committee meetings of these organizations, Dr. Crawley participates in their professional development activities. He is a successful "lobbyist" on behalf of community colleges at the state level, working with the Legislature and the governor's office. In addition, Dr. Crawley has successfully advanced the role of the community college in higher education on the national scene. For example, as a member of the Executive Committee of the American Association of Community Colleges and former member of its Homeland Security Advisory Committee, Dr. Crawley informed national legislative bodies about the training capability of two-year colleges in meeting this national need. At his recommendation, staff from Moraine Valley testified before the congressional House Science Committee on behalf of community colleges offering training in cyber security.

Dr. Crawley is a former member of the executive committee of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges and served on its joint commission on federal relations. He also was named to the Illinois Community College Board Finance Advisory Committee and has been chairman of the Leadership Development Committee for the Illinois Council of Presidents. Furthermore, he served on the ACCT Advisory Committee of Presidents and also served on the board of the American Council on Education also serving on its Commission on Minorities in Higher Education.

**What has the CEO published in the area of two-year postsecondary educational concepts?**

Dr. Crawley has developed a number of presentations he has given at conferences, forums and higher education association events. Also, he has published the following articles:

- "International Business: A Community Effort Backed by Community Experts."
- "Help Colleges Access New Technology," *Chicago Tribune*, October 4, 1996.
- "Learning in the Age of Internet Information Overload," *Community College Week*, December 30, 1996.
- "College Funds," *Chicago Tribune*, May 23, 2001.

- Co-author of "Collaboration Leads to Student Success," in The Leadership Dialogues: Community College Case Studies to Consider, published by the League for Innovation in the Community College, 2004.

**What awards or honors has this CEO received in recognition of leadership in the college, community or nation?**

Dr. Crawley has been the recipient of a number of awards and honors. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) honored him with its Administrative Leadership Award in 2006. He was named national Pacesetter of the Year in 2005 by the National Council of Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR). In 2004, he was NCMPR's District III (inclusive of six states) Pacesetter of the Year. When he was honored for a Decade of Excellence to Moraine Valley Community College as its President, he received a Proclamation from Illinois' Governor, and a flag was flown over the U. S. Capitol in honor of his service to the college. The National Council on Black America Affairs presented a Certificate of Recognition to Dr. Crawley "in recognition of excellent service, visionary leadership, and unwavering dedication as a founding member of the Presidents' Round Table."

He is often tapped to speak about topics related to the CEO and board relationship, leadership, organizational culture and change, membership and accreditation. He is a frequent presenter at the Executive Leadership Institute of the League for Innovation in the Community College, at the Future Leaders Institute of AACC, at the Advanced Future Leaders Institute of AACC, and at leadership programs sponsored by Parkland College, Kankakee Community College, and the College of Lake County. Also, he participated in a town hall meeting sponsored by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley, and he represented community colleges at the IBM-sponsored President's Forum on "Technology Catalyst for Change."

**What outstanding characteristics of this CEO motivated you to nominate him or her?**

Since 1991 when Dr. Crawley became president of Moraine Valley Community College, he has provided sterling leadership and has presided over an unprecedented period of growth in the college's history.

1. A contemporary showcase for the performing arts was opened on campus in 1994 when the Fine and Performing Arts Center began operation. The new state-of-the-art facility houses the college's student programs in theater, music, arts, and humanities and features a 600-seat proscenium theater, a fully-equipped black box theater, and an art gallery.
2. Off-campus education and student services were expanded in the district when the college's first off-campus full-service Moraine Valley Education Center at Blue Island opened in 1998 with 767 students enrolled.
3. In 2001, the college Board of Trustees hosted the grand opening of Building D, completed that summer. The building offers students the latest classroom instructional technology, an expanded campus bookstore, and a Cybercafé.
4. The most ambitious building and renovation period in the college's history began in 2006 when the college launched an \$89 million capital bond referendum campaign, which received district voter approval. From this effort has come construction of the new Student Union and complete renovation of the existing Student Services building.
5. Two other new buildings, the Moraine Business and Conference Center, site for expanded, technology-rich meeting rooms and classrooms and the Culinary Arts program enhanced kitchen, and the Dr. Vernon O. Crawley Science Hall, to provide enlarged science labs and classrooms and the most up-to-date technology, will open this fall.

6. In fall 2010, the second full-service off-campus facility, the Southwest Education Center, will open. This \$10.5 million project will be the college's first LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building. Some of the LEED features include a geothermal heating and cooling system to reduce the building's overall energy consumption, and day lighting, sun harvesting and lighting controls, as well as water-efficient landscaping.
7. Student enrollment has increased continuously during Dr. Crawley's tenure. For example, Moraine Valley's 2009 spring enrollment of 19,036 students is a record high and exceeded the 19,000 mark for the first time in the college's 42-year history.
8. When Dr. Crawley came to the college in 1991, Moraine Valley was ranked seventh among the 48 community colleges in the state of Illinois. Today, it is the state's second largest.
9. Dr. Crawley's remarkable leadership is evident in the success of our students: 99 percent would recommend the college to a friend, 77 percent are retained, 88 percent graduate and transfer, and 88 percent of those with occupational credentials are employed. Our students have a 97 percent pass rate on the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission registry exam; a 96 percent pass rate on the emergency medical technical exam; a 94 percent pass rate on the Certified Medical Assistant exam, and an 83 percent pass rate on the radiologic technologist exam.
10. President Crawley's shared philosophy of learner-centered education fosters perpetual development of new programs (118 degree and certificate options), expanding distance education delivery options (over 110 online courses with multiple sections), off-campus education centers in neighborhoods throughout the district, major grants from entities such as the National Science Foundation and the U. S. Department of Education supporting TRIO and other programs and student services. Also, Dr. Crawley has helped the college secure two U. S. Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions grants totaling \$3.75 million.
11. Moraine Valley is ranked among the top 8 percent of the nation's 1,186 community colleges in associate's degrees and certificates conferred and fourth in the nation in associate's degrees conferred in multi-disciplinary studies (science transfer programs).

Dr. Crawley takes pride in his involvement and participation with businesses and community residents. He is a long-time member of the Oak Lawn Rotary, the organization that developed plans for establishing Moraine Valley as a community college. He has served on the boards of St. Francis Hospital, the South Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium, and was a member of the Disney Advisory Board, among others. Dr. Crawley regularly meets with elected officials, college and university presidents and administrators, school superintendents, business, industry and organization leaders, and community residents to gain their input into Moraine Valley planning and operations. He does this through various means, including holding formal focus groups throughout the district with representatives of these groups.

Dr. Vernon O. Crawley is a college president committed to student success. He is a leader who provides guidance and direction to his employees to do their best at all times. He is an impassioned administrator who makes certain Moraine Valley's students have every opportunity to gain the quality education they seek and to be successful, the focal point of his administration. This is a litmus test everyone working at the college must meet, and it is met each and every day with pride, enthusiasm and renewed spirit, all inspired by the college president.