

The Inbody family is gearing up for another great Christmas together. I honestly love the holidays. We added a new feature to our Christmas display at the house – Virtual Santa! If you drive by our place at 8th and Evergreen through one of the windows you can see Santa walking around the house, delivering gifts, eating cookies, checking his list, and waving to you. It's a lot of fun! Come by and take a look.

We have a tradition in our house of getting the family excited for the big day. Say, for instance, I just found a gift for one of the girls that day and had it hid for Christmas morning, I will tell her, "I know Christmas secrets!" "What!?! What is it!?!?" "You'll find out on the 25th!"

Now the girls do this too, when they have a gift for me, but it sounds more like taunting than excitement when they do it. They often chant, "I know Christmas secrets!" over and over to the rhythm associated with forming a conga line. Then I order them to not keep secrets from their father and reveal the gift. It never works.

I received a series of wonderful early Christmas presents as President this year, ones that the College has worked to earn for some time, and I don't want them to remain secrets any longer! I was quite excited to get them!

First our fall semester enrollment was extraordinary! Our enrollment was up nearly 11% over fall 2010 (which was a great year in its own right). Led by enrollment at our new Ottawa campus (up 18%) and the online campus (up 16%), nearly every aspect of the College posted higher numbers to achieve this great result.

Our residence hall has never had as many students. We had 258 in residence at the end of the semester. In my nine years at the College I have not seen that high of occupancy.

We received several new grants this year to further our programs ranging from \$48,000 for welding, to \$90,000 for adult basic education, to \$37,000 to help train the new Spirit workers. All totaled, we earned an additional \$215,000 this year in new grant money. Not bad at all!

Two of our students cut the ribbon on our new state-of-the-art simulation hospital and business center in Rowland Hall this semester. The \$850,000 renovation was partially paid for by gifts from many of you who donated to NCCC to receive Kansas tax credits. On behalf of the students who are currently enjoying that gift – thank you!

One of the most exciting presents I received was our CAAP test score results. For the past four years the College has been testing all of our campus English courses at Ottawa, Chanute, and Online using a nationally normed test from ACT called CAAP, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency. There are two parts to the test, a multiple choice English exam that we give to our English Composition I students and an essay test that we give to Comp II students. It compares the results of NCCC students to other first and second year college students from across the country. When we first gave the test years ago it indicated that we had some work to do to improve those scores.

The faculty redesigned the curriculum, added new classes, revised course materials, encouraged tutoring, and re-examined cut-scores. I am very proud to say that their hard work paid off! We scored

at national average on the multiple choice test. And on the essay test we beat the national average like it was scrambled eggs. (I was going to say “we beat it like it was the KU football team” but several of my bosses, the Trustees, are KU grads and I don’t think they would enjoy that joke much, so let’s just stick with the egg thing.)

Congratulations goes to our wonderful English faculty - Mary Weilert, Ruth Zollars, Patti McDonald, Ethan Smilie, Peter Tormala, Sally Sudja, Nancy Hindle, William Pore, Michelle Graf, Amber Reagan-Kendrick, Sarah Kern, Richard Lind, Matt Loomis, and Graciela Newman. Thanks also to Tosca Harris, former Division Chair, who help facilitate the changes. Way to go!

For all these hard-earned gifts I want to say thank you to the community, employees, and students of NCCC. Your support has made us the fastest growing community college in the State this semester. And your commitment to quality shows in all of our accomplishments.

If you know of someone at the College that you would like to say thank you to, please go to our website at www.neosho.edu. At the bottom of the page, next to a devastatingly handsome photo, you will see a button where you can nominate one of our employees to receive a service award. We will give this award three times a year to a deserving College employee and we need your help to identify these great people.

From the Inbody family, Brian, Jennifer, Abrielle, and Alayna, Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas to you and yours! May the best of this year be the worst of next.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and comments at binbody@neosho.edu