Introduction
This report has been prepared for all college personnel and is being presented and discussed at the professional growth and development workshop on January 7, 2004. I not only want to discuss our goals and challenges for 2004, but to take a moment and reflect on some of the many accomplishments of the past semester and year. My appreciation and gratitude is extended to the faculty and staff and to the Board of Trustees for all of the successes in advancing the institution. I am proud to be associated with KC and I want to thank everyone for the excellence in teaching, learning, and service to record enrollments.

A highlight this past semester (October 6) was having former U.S. Senator Paul Simon on campus for a presentation as a visiting lecturer under the KC Foundation “Teachers and Coaches Entrepreneur Program.” It was a privilege and honor to have had this opportunity to visit with Senator Simon and to hear his views on national and global issues. He was a great statesman, diplomat and American, and we were saddened with his death this past month. We have extended our condolences to his family. I have some pictures of his campus visit posted on my web site http://www.kaskaskia.edu/junderwood (click on “Senator Simon visit). I want to call to your attention one picture of him observing our “Wall of Honor” as he is viewing the “Senator Paul Simon Essay Recipients” section. He will be greatly missed, as he is a tremendous loss to our country and the world. I have extended our appreciation to Marietta Broughton, Editor of the Centralia Sentinel, for arranging for Senator Simon’s visit. When she asked him to visit and to present a lecture, he accepted immediately without hesitation and without costs, as he has dedicated his life to public services. Several students, trustees, faculty, staff, and guests of the college had the opportunity to meet and visit with Senator Simon during his visit and we all were blessed to have had him with us on that special day in October.

The following discussion will reflect some of our major accomplishments and events for this past semester along with the major goals that we will be pursuing:

Enrollments
In terms of total headcount, we will serve in excess of 10,000 students this fiscal year in credit and non-credit offerings, on and off-campus, and including full and part-time students. Of significance, the college’s previous peak credit enrollment occurred back in 1992 with 76,234 credit hours (2,541 FTE), followed by a low in 2001 of 63,726 credit hours (2,124 FTE), and finally a record enrollment in 2003 of 83,482 credit hours (2,783 FTE). For 2004, we planned for a record enrollment of 88,500 credit hours (2,950 FTE), but it now appears that we will exceed 93,000 credit hours (3,100 FTE). The history of our credit hour production is reflected under Table 1.
Also, attached to this report is a summary of the fall enrollments as recorded by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Note that KC has experienced a fall enrollment increase over the past three years of 73.2 percent. We are followed by the next highest institution with an increase of 25.8 percent, and of the 39 community colleges in the state of Illinois there are only six colleges with increases above 20 percent for the past three fall semesters. This enormous increase at KC is a tribute to the excellence of our PT and FT faculty and staff, on and off-campus.

I have said many times that the main reasons why our enrollments are growing are first and above all due to the quality of teaching/learning and support services; accessible and affordable offerings at times and places convenient to the learners; expanded offerings and programs; non-traditional scheduling of offerings to include fast track short term courses, distance education, telecourses, and web-based courses; student life activities and events; career assistance functions; image of the institution; effective student recruiting and admissions processing; and, relationship building with business and industry, secondary schools, and our university educational partners. In short, there are several factors that have led to our record numbers, but it is through the effort of teamwork in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration in an environment of excellence conducted by a superb and hard working faculty and staff that is making this happen. As we all know, students are excellent recruiters and when they have an effective experience they suggest to others that KC is a great institution. Further, an environment has been created in which students are put
first and one that is conducive to learning; thus, it is the people of the institution who are to be credited with the wonderful success of KC.

Creation of a Branch Campus
During 2003, the KC trustees approved the creation of a branch campus in Vandalia. Our Educational Center in that community will be expanded to offer degree programs in various disciplines. An option for a 42 acre site near I70 (north side of Vandalia) has been approved and a major gift campaign to raise $2.8 million for local matching funds to construct a new facility has been launched. A state funding request for $5.5 million has been submitted and the college trustees have pledged $.5 million, for a total project of $8.8 million. Several college personnel and trustees are directly involved in the campaign under the coordination of Bruce Conners, Vice President for Educational Services. KC Foundation Directors, Jack Johnston and Ernie Chappel, are co-chairs of the campaign. Many thanks are extended to Chuck Harris and Travis Henson for developing the campaign promotional materials. Also, we appreciate the work on this campaign of Vickie Cook, Dean for Continuing Education, and Fran Rickman, Assistant Coordinator for the Vandalia Educational Center.

KC Construction Projects
The following is a brief update on the status and plans for capital improvements. I appreciate very much the work of Donna Hilgenbrink, Vice President for Administrative Services, and her staff for coordinating these projects:

- **Workforce Building** – We have submitted to the Governor’s office numerous documents of support for releasing funds for this project. Additionally, we have been in contact with ICCB, DCEO, area legislators and other groups to seek support for releasing the $7.6 million that has been appropriated. Many thanks to Dr. Peter Vig, Murlen Garner, area labor trade unions and others for actively supporting the release of funds to replace the temporary buildings. We are hopeful that funds will soon be released for the project.

- **Student Center Addition** – This is an exciting project that will nearly double the current size of the Student Center and will also provide a facelift for the current space. We expect the project to be completed by the end of the spring term. This will complete the improvement plans for the cafeteria, kitchen, serving and dining areas. Many thanks to all those who have been involved in the planning and designing for these improvements.

- **Crisp Technology Center** - A new parking lot is now under construction and is expected to be completed within a few weeks. Additionally, improved drives and parking on the south side of the Center along with lighting are a part of the project. Recently, the Family Learning Center has been moved to the Crisp Technology Center and they are doing a wonderful job. We are now planning for needed interior improvements to include labs, classrooms, and new restrooms.
• **Student Village** – Planning is now underway for designing student housing that would be constructed on the south side of the campus. The issuance of bonds and operational management is being pursued through the KC Foundation. Initially, we are thinking of constructing units to serve 100-150 students, which depends on financing. This will be a 2004 project.

• **Vandalia Branch Campus** – The major gift campaign to raise the needed matching funds will be completed in spring 2004. The start of construction is depending on state appropriations approval.

• **Campus Improvements** – A painter has been employed to start the process of repainting halls and rooms. We also want to continue to improve the décor of offices and classrooms. Additionally, our campus grounds improvements will continue to be supported. A KC Foundation “Recognition Wall” will be designed for an area near the main entrance.

• **Campus Front** – A boulevard entrance is being designed off of Shattuc Road near the middle of the campus. As a part of this project is the erection of a granite/brick sign at Shattuc Road and a Clock Tower near the current flagpoles. The south side of the boulevard will consist of athletic fields, restrooms, concession stand, tennis courts, and baseball hitting facility. The north side will be planned for future parking.

**Economic Development and Instructional Initiatives**

The College committed to working with and supporting the area Economic Development Alliance (formally the Marion County Alliance). We have taken a leadership role in assisting this group prepare a single face for the KC district relative to economic development. Our role includes developing a single database on the strengths and assets of the area, a web page for the Alliance, developing marketing materials, and assisting with the recruiting of businesses to locate in the area. We also will be working with Governor Rod Blagojevich’s economic development regions (specifically, Southwest and Southeast Regions). On November 4, 2003, KC hosted in partnership with the Centralia Sentinel, an Economic Summit that was very successful in addressing the future opportunities of the area and region. In short, KC is very connected and committed to economic development initiatives for the advancement of the area and region.

Many new programs and expanded offerings are being planned for 2004. Among those proposed by Penny Brinkman, Dean of Career and Technical Education, are: Electrical (residential/commercial); Masonry Brick Laying; Graphic Arts; Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning; CISCO; and Plumbing Technology. We are working with the area Trade Unions with the coordination of apprenticeship opportunities for these new offerings. I want to express my appreciation to all of the faculty who have produced on-line courses, as we had 27 courses offered over the Internet this past year and we will have over 40 courses offered this spring. Next fall we will be one of only four Illinois community colleges with an Associate of Arts degree on line. Also, many thanks to the faculty that have offered telecourses and courses through distance
learning (interactive-video technology). As a result of all of these efforts our students and area residents are receiving multiple instructional delivery methods. Thus, our faculty is making educational opportunities more accessible then ever before.

A Fine Arts Degree is in the approval phase, a state-wide Associate in Education is being developed, expansion of our Speech program to include a competitive team function is planned, and a Journalism program is being considered, just to mention a few of the new and expanded efforts of the Arts and Sciences Division.

It is important to mention the enormous expansion of our dual-credit offerings, when just a few years ago we were enrolling fewer than a 100 students district-wide to an enrollment this year in excess of 2,000 high school students. Appreciation is extended to our faculty and educational administration for creating the affiliation agreements and making these offerings available. We now have agreements with each of our 16 district high schools, and I doubt that any other community college can match this.

**University Center**

We have now implemented portions of the University Center concept through the affiliation agreements with area colleges and universities. This concept is important for filling the needs for upper division and graduate courses in an effort to make available offerings to those who are place and time bound. Given the time demands on the lives of many of our area citizens, it is not possible for them to commute miles to take course work, thus the concept is to take education to the learners at times and places convenient to them. We hope to further develop this concept to include staffing and office space for coordinating university offerings. Of course, as the programs grow so will the need for additional instructional space, and in particular during high demand times. We want to develop agreements with Uofl, SIU-C, SIU-E, along with other universities for migrating their programs to KC. We now have agreements with EIU, Greenville College, Uofl-Springfield, McKendree College, Cappella University, and Franklin University. I want to thank our instructional personnel for forwarding this concept, as KC is becoming a broker for expanding higher educational offerings for our district citizens.

**Student Life Activities and Organizations**

How thankful we are to have the wide array of student activities and organizations available on campus to provide even yet greater learning opportunities for our students. We appreciate the student activities coordination of Sandy Shook and Maggie Calcaterra. I also want to acknowledge the “Scroll” which is an outstanding college newspaper under the direction of Dr. Sue Hardebeck and Steve Normansell. Our Core Values team, led by Sharon Conners, Jill Tomaszewski and Dan Herbst, continues to receive state and national recognition and will be a featured program at the April 2004 AACC
PTK is inducting record numbers with Brian Cambron and Stephanie Burgher as sponsors. PBL continues to excel in competition with Virginia Williams, Angenien Wacker, and Jon Boehning assisting the club. Student Congress is an effective organization with Jeff Sulcer and Brad Odum sponsoring. Inter-collegial athletics and the performing and visual arts programs are all very successful. For the fifth consecutive year, the KC SIFE team, under the sponsorship of Ron Tremmel, has placed at regional competition. Our Rad Tech Scholar Bowl team, sponsored by Mimi Polczynski, finished in fourth place at state competition. Rich Rittenhouse and the Drafting Department sponsored a very successful secondary schools competition. Many thanks to Pete Donnelly and Kevin Ray, along with our construction and welding students, for all the community service projects they provide. Additionally, we appreciate the community support of Graham Dewsbury and our Culinary Arts students. Also, our Math and Science faculty, coordinated by Bill Mathena and Eric Hofelich, sponsored another successful high school scholar competition this past year. It is noteworthy that several student organizations are now reaching out to include students at our off-campus educational centers. I want to acknowledge our students, faculty, and staff in supporting many community projects and activities, i.e. the Athletic Department for the reading program and the Thanksgiving food distribution, the blood drives with particular recognition to our Cosmetology students and faculty, and a special thanks to Evelyn Stover for a superb job of coordinating many of these community programs. KC is a caring institution which is very evident through these many programs of giving, and we thank everyone for participating and leading these service efforts. In total, we have some 40 student organizations in place at KC and I want to thank everyone for assisting and supporting these groups.

New Organizations
We all are so pleased with the progress that has been made with the creation of the “Friends for the KC Fine Arts” coordinated by Steve Normansell, and the “KC Sports Association” coordinated by Cathy Karrick. Both are raising funds for supporting the programs at KC, and at the same time new friends of KC are being formed.

Adult Basic Education and Transitional Studies
With 28 percent of our adult population without a high school diploma and nearly 70 percent of this population functionally illiterate, it is imperative that we continue to support and even expand our GED and Reading Link programs. Further, we need to continue work to build bridges through transitional studies, tutoring, and personal preparations for those students under prepared for college credit. We are the last great hope for many of our citizens and I am extremely proud of the superb job that our personnel are doing in reaching and serving students in our Skills Lab, Transitional Studies, ABE/GED/ESL, Reading Link, and all other related programs. Incidentally, each of our college district counties reflects 80-85 percent of the adult population with less then an Associate Degree, which certainly is indicative of the need for our educational programs given the
fact that 75 percent of today’s good paying jobs require education beyond high school.

**Technology**
We have done a very good job of funding critical technology needs in recent years through our Technology Plan; however, with the rapid changes occurring in technology we must continue to plan and fund future needs. Our new student technology fee will continue to be critical to meeting new technology demands. Future plans include needs for students and staff ID equipment, imaging system, financial and student services software, computer lab upgrades, and specific equipment for educational programs. Also, expanded technology will provide increased information that will be available on web pages and for web team operations.

**Educational Centers**
Given that over one-half of our unduplicated headcount enrollments (1/2 x 10,000) are served at our off-campus educational centers, it is imperative that we continue to promote offerings through our outreach efforts. We have now completed our plan to establish a presence in Salem, Greenville, Trenton, Vandalia, and Nashville. It will be extremely important to now consider additional space needs at some of our Educational Centers due to increased needs and demands for offerings. I appreciate very much the hard work of Dean Vickie Cook and her office along with our Educational Center staff members.

**Closing Comments**
My New Year’s resolution is to be the best spouse, father and grandfather that I can be along with being a good college president. I am proud to be associated with KC and appreciate very much working with the faculty and staff and board of trustees. Together in the spirit of teamwork and collaboration we will continue to move our college forward in serving our citizens. I am extremely pleased with the participatory planning model in place that is under the direction of Nancy Kinsey, as it was through this model that we have determined our goals and objectives. Thanks to everyone for a great 2003 and I am looking forward to an exciting and successful 2004. I wish everyone the best in the New Year.

Dr. Jim Underwood
President