A Message from the President

Dear JCSU Community Members:

My hope is that the new format of my newsletter will show you firsthand how Johnson C. Smith University is undergoing radical transformation. I am reminded of an African proverb that states, “If you wait for tomorrow, tomorrow comes. If you don’t wait for tomorrow, tomorrow comes.” In other words, the future and the changes it brings are inevitable. Therefore, we must not be afraid of progress, but should instead run toward it.

At the beginning of this semester, faculty and staff attended an opening school conference which elaborated on the concept of Operational Excellence = C³ (Competencies, Communication & Customer Service). Across campus, you probably have noticed the signage that reflects our new direction and commitment to Operational Excellence.

We have been closely examining and re-evaluating our current processes. Faculty and staff have contributed a large part to this overall discussion in order to help us develop a programmatic structure that will enhance our customer service delivery. You will hear more about these impactful activities in the weeks to come.

As I stated previously, the newsletter has a new look and feel. Each month, we will highlight a division or key University initiatives. In this edition, we are profiling the Office of Admissions. Our goal is to keep you informed as JCSU continues its transition into greatness.

Best regards,
Ronald L. Carter, Ph.D.
Office of Admissions Moves Toward Operational Excellence

By Dwight Sanchez, Interim Senior Associate Director of Admissions

The Office of Admissions endeavors greatly to meet the University’s admissions goal through strategic preparation specifically focused upon diversity, domestic and international recruitment efforts. As the University focuses upon Operational Excellence through Competence, Communication, and Customer Service (C³), the Office of Admissions understands the critical message that Aristotle articulated emphatically: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” Therefore, it is the central focus of the team to epitomize operational excellence, implement and practice stellar customer service and execute relevant recruitment strategizes to enhance the student body expansively. The objectives for furthering our dedication to excellence require the office to focus upon the following:

Objectives for Operational Excellence:

- Establish excellent customer service and relationships with parents, members of the community and internal constituents.
- Devise and apply a strategic plan for recruitment, admissions and effective turnaround time for processing diverse, domestic and international applications.
- Foster and craft a plan to attract, connect and maintain viable relationships with local, regional and national organizations with international affiliations.
- Focus intensively upon local relationships with agencies, organizations and or associations that are international, multicultural and diverse (to connect with international students) to ensure prospective international students have families or affiliations that can offer them a “home away from home” on campus and off campus.
- Construct a blueprint for an Office of International Student Support Services that focuses upon retention, international and diverse community engagement, as well as academic advising.
- Increase admissions yields and assist the University in its recruitment efforts.

Competencies for Operational Excellence:

The Office of Admissions team will function effectively and practice the following:

- Perform exemplary customer service practices by serving all the needs of the customer; preventing communication blackouts; Involving the parents and students throughout the entire admissions process while facilitating each of their needs simultaneously;
developing a strong collaborative process with other offices within the University; and streamlining the operational process to ensure seamless fluidity and consistency.

- Manage processes within the office effectively and succinctly.
- Communicate and posture itself in a very polished and confident demeanor.
- Maintain relationships specifically focused upon diversity domestically.
- Present information, conduct research, deduce strategies for respective territories, rationalize goals, anticipated outcomes and set up contingencies.
- Join, attend and represent the University at professional enrollment services conferences and fairs locally, regionally, nationally and internationally to achieve the University’s goal toward diversity; impact the community perspective of the University from a social, community and academic view (to ensure quality is the highest priority and that the infrastructure is in place, or being mobilized, to sustain the changes of the University).

International Recruitment Strategies for Operational Excellence:

(1) Develop the Diversity and International Counselor to focus upon the following:

- Support institutional objectives towards campus diversification.
- Attract and appeal to families of academically gifted students in strategic markets internationally.
- Establish a stronger global presence through special programming, strategic objectives and recruitment travel.
- Develop an integrated marketing and communication strategy that will highlight JCSU’s ability to support, retain and engage diverse and international students.

(2) Categorize each international territory as "Sustain, Develop and Explore." The last two will get immediate attention as it matters most that the office develops relationships essential to recruiting quality students from international territories. The Diversity and International Counselor will spearhead initiatives that cultivate these territories. He or she will get training to ensure “best practices” are used to reach outside the U.S. and domestically to recruit from schools, programs and regions that have a large presence of multicultural students.

(3) Office of Admissions will work in tandem with the University’s Committee for Admission for International Students to create a matrix for proper evaluation of students and training for international partnerships and strategies for reaching out to cultures and societies that are foreign. ESSENTIAL: Attend International Education Summits (Indo–Global Education; Latin American and Caribbean Early Childhood and Education Summit, etc.).

(4) Develop an International Initiative Team (Head of Admissions, Faculty, Students, and Diversity and International Counselor) to design and make the Office of Admissions prepared and knowledgeable on all aspects of the international student recruitment process. Establish a full-fledged University-friendly campus for international students (work in tandem with Dean of Student and Residence Life) to ensure their transition is as comfortable as possible. In
addition, work collaboratively with Student Activities Office to consider on-campus activities, initiatives and other organizations, agencies or groups to connect with students and make their academic and social process positive.

(5) Formulate an International Recruitment Team (Diversity and International Counselor/Faculty, Students /Deans/ Alumni) to create a University international support services to recruit international students. This committee will focus on the following:

- Advise and make recommendations to the Faculty and CAIS (committee concerning the recruitment of international students).
- Evaluate "best practices" for the recruitment of international students.
- Monitor trends in the number of international applications.
- Discuss with departments the implications of international recruitment.
- Advise departments on promotion strategies for courses.
- Provide a forum for sharing experience on international student recruitment.

(6) Develop an international student Web page; create correspondences specifically geared toward international students; and provide immediate, but accurate, responses and information accordingly. Collaborate with Metropolitan College to recruit nontraditional, multicultural students for that college through “best practices.”

(7) Maintain professional memberships and partnerships with local, regional, national and international organizations to ensure the office is in line with “best practices;” participate in conferences; bring organizations to campus; become affiliated with faith-based organizations, schools, PTAs, local international groups, etc. This will allow staff to become knowledgable within the field in general.

(8) Develop an Office of International Student Support Services (extension of Student Success)

Focus:

- To generate applications from international students by raising the general profile of the University overseas, particularly in selected target recruitment areas.
- To encourage potential students to view JCSU positively through the maintenance of attractive publications and an informative Website.
- To assist in improving the conversion of applications to registering students with the Office of Admissions process.
- To provide advice and guidance to departments on recruitment and other issues related to international students.
- To make a positive contribution to the nonacademic experience of the international population at JCSU by acting as an effective "first point of contact" for student issues.
New Team Members Join Office of Admissions

The Office of Admissions has added new team members to ensure a smooth flow of business and office operations. Please welcome them to the JCSU family!

Pictured L to R: (Row 1) Kedra Keith, Katie Henry and Nicole Daniels (Row 2) Lethia Singleton, Carol Green and Ronice Johnson (Row 3) Dwight Sanchez and Brian Clemmey Not Pictured: Amy Villegas-McCleave

Dwight Sanchez, Interim Senior Associate Director of Admissions
In this capacity, Sanchez will serve as the head of Admissions and will assume general responsibility for the office and its related functions, including supervision and oversight of all Admissions staff. Sanchez has four years of experience in teaching on the secondary level, including work in community colleges and in a charter school as an academic director, teacher, support staff and coordinator. His family roots are in Honduras and Puerto Rico. He is fluent in Spanish and also speaks French. Most recently, he served as a Spanish teacher in the Memphis City Schools system. Sanchez is a graduate of Johnson C. Smith University (Class of ’04, magna cum laude) with dual Bachelor of Arts degrees in English and Spanish.

Nicole Daniels, Admissions Counselor
Nicole Daniels joined the University as an admissions counselor. Daniels previously served in admissions roles at Livingstone College, Kentucky State University and Illinois Institute of Technology. Among her many skill sets and experiences, she is trained in evaluating international credentials for prospective students. She also served as a Primary designated school official and is versed on SEVIS requirements for international students. She has worked extensively with Jenzabar. Daniels also has worked in the corporate world at Humana, Inc. She received her bachelor's degree in mass media arts from Hampton University.

Katie Henry, Admissions Counselor for Diversity & International Students
Katie Henry joined the University as an Admissions Counselor for Diversity and International Students on August 23. Most recently, she served as a Lead Vocational Counselor and also has served as a student adviser at Kaplan Test Prep & Admissions. Henry has traveled extensively internationally and is bilingual in Spanish and English. She received her bachelor's degree in
psychology and sociology from UNC-Charlotte.

Kedra Keith, Admissions Counselor
Kedra Keith joined the Admissions team as an Admissions Counselor on August 23. She most recently served as a program coordinator for the Boys and Girls Club of America. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and communication from Hampton University and her MBA with a concentration in marketing from Strayer University.

Lethia Singleton, Administrative Assistant I
Lethia Singleton joined the University and ESSS Division as an Administrative Assistant I (temp) in the Office of Admissions. Singleton has 23 years of administrative and clerical experience. Her education includes two years at Borough of Manhattan Community College in business administration and two years at Pan-American Institute. Singleton is bilingual in Spanish and English. She will perform receptionist, clerical, data entry and other duties and will be stationed in the receptionist area of the Office of Admissions.

Amy Villegas-McCleave, Administrative Assistant II
Amy McCleave joined the ESSS Division in early August as an Administrative Assistant II in the Office of Admissions. Villegas-McCleave most recently worked at the Charlotte School of Law and previously worked at JCSU in the grant funded HBCU-Up program. She received her bachelor's degree in organizational communication from Pfeiffer University and will begin work on an MBA/MSL (Master of Science in leadership and organizational change) in Fall 2010, also at Pfeiffer University.

The new staff joins existing staff members: Ronice Johnson, Associate Director of Admissions; Brian Clemmey, Senior Administrative Assistant; and Carol Green, Data Entry Clerk.

Admissions Counselors Represent JCSU on the Road
We see and work with Admission Counselors, but do we really know what it takes to be one? An Admissions Counselor represents the University both on and off campus to prospective students, parents, secondary school counselors and other individuals or organizations involved in the college selection process. In addition, planning and implementing recruitment activities for assigned high schools and territories, including travel to various sites, are fundamental activities necessary for success. Furthermore, counselors advise and counsel prospective applicants on the admissions process and opportunities at the University: counseling occurs primarily by in-person appointments, phone calls and e-mails.

So what does a typical day for an Admission Counselor include? During the fall, they do a great deal of traveling to attend recruitment activities at a variety of sites. The Counselor inputs any applications or inquiries received during the day. Follow-up includes emails and
phone calls to prospective students.

Spring also involves following up with individuals to qualify them to move forward in the enrollment process. Contact is made through e-mails and phone calls to prospective students. Local travel is expected during this time, particularly to schools and organizations.

Finally, summer responsibilities involve planning recruitment travel for the forthcoming season, attending professional conferences, participating in cross training with various offices throughout the University and conducting inventory. They also initiate contact with rising seniors as prospects.

Although you might not interact with our Admissions Counselors on a daily basis, rest assured they are on the road recruiting some of the brightest minds who will walk through our gates as future Smithites.

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**Retreat Offers Team-building Strategies**

Recently, the Office of Admissions held a retreat which ultimately provided an opportunity for the new team to unite and focus on the essential materials and other recruitment tools in preparation for the travel season. Specifically, it was the time to revamp operational processes, evaluate "best practices," underscore and improve turnaround time and efficiency and review the entire "front to backend" methods which impact our customer service development and success.

In addition, the staff was brought up to speed on admissions processes, strategies for diversity, domestic and international recruitment. Training related to admission process, professional developmental tools, and on-site expectations also were discussed and practiced. New processes regarding communication, efficiency and marketing was equally targeted to ensure the team critically analyzed territories which yielded rather highly both historically and geographically. Other salient points which were covered dealt totally with understanding the vision of the University; positioning the team for success as the Office of Admissions expands its reach through international recruitment, affiliation with multicultural groups locally and overseas; and the evaluation of foreign territories by categorizing them as sustained, develop, exploratory.

Keeping in line with C³, the team focused on specific objectives and competencies that tied to operational excellence, effective communication and a seamless processing (flow charts) to ensure constant progress and interaction with all applicants throughout the application process.

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**Student Population Moves Towards Diversity**

As the academic year moves forward, the following preliminary statistics provide a snapshot of our student body. JCSU is dedicated to retaining its current students, as well as developing a more diverse student population:
*Total enrollment (day and Metropolitan College students): 1334

*Total students validated for day courses (traditional): 1291

*Total students validated for Metropolitan College courses (nontraditional): 56

*Total first-year students validated: 223

*Of the total enrollment (1334), the following preliminary statistics are indicated within the database as of September 7, 2010:

- 91.6% are Black, non-Hispanic (1222)
- 0.4% are Hispanic (5)
- 0.2% are Native American/Islander (3)
- 0.5% are White (6)
- 0.9% indicate Other in the database (12)
- 6.4% do not have an ethnicity indicated in the database (86)

*Of the total enrollment (1334), 2.3% are from international countries. The international countries consist of (28) students from Jamaica, (1) from Bermuda and (1) from the Bahamas.

*The top (3) states for total enrollment are North Carolina (472), South Carolina (157) and Maryland (121).

*Of the total enrollment, (59%) are female, (40%) are male and (1%) have no gender indicated in the database.

*First-to second-year retention rate is 70%.

Preliminary statistics as of September 7, 2010
Admissions Office to Expand

The Office of Admissions Welcome Center is modernizing! The redesign will make the area engaging, fluid, and efficient. “The goal of the redesign is to foster a welcoming atmosphere and be on the cutting edge; it establishes our dedication to operational excellence,” said Dwight Sanchez, Interim Senior Associate Director of Admissions. “It accentuates our focus to providing excellent customer service.”

Redesign is scheduled to begin this fall.

Floor Plan Renderings: Prof. Hasaan Kirkland

A Message from the Vice President of Enrollment Services & Student Success

“Amissions Reframed to Admissions C³”

Dear JCSU Community Members:

The University is on a mission to achieve its vision and part of that vision, is Operational Excellence C³ with a foundation supported by competencies, communication and customer service (C³). “Transformative Change” at the University level, or any organization for that matter, obliges that all of its moving parts embrace and be immersed in operational excellence. Each of those three “Cs” is critical to a successful Admissions operation.

The Office of Admissions, arguably the most important area within the University, second only to the Office of the President, has experienced a great deal of transition, flux and even disorder over the last five years. Although technically all of those things represent “change,” they do not represent the intentional, strategic “transformative change” that Dr. Carter has inspired and required of the University since his arrival. However, we are committed to the “C³ way,” and the Admissions Office will be the first of the three enrollment services offices to receive its C³ overhaul. Beginning this fall, the Admissions Office and its related enrollment management efforts are being repositioned, and in some ways reinvented, to maximize its efficiency and its ability to vie not only for more students but for more high potential students.

We have begun this transformative process with a new Admissions team intentionally crafted and selected to bring a new energy, commitment to excellence and sense of what is possible to
our enrollment efforts.

We are engaging SEM Works consultants to assist us with this transformative change by: (a) auditing, correcting and enhancing the “front-to-back” end processes, ranging from the application process to admissions decisions to financial aid packaging; (b) training and orienting the Admissions team on critical aspects of an effective admissions operations; and (c) advising the University on strategically setting its enrollment targets for the next several recruitment cycles.

Acacia Innovation consultants are actively assisting us with our recruitment marketing efforts, including customized communications outreach and marketing materials for prospective students.

The Admissions operation has been restructured conceptually and functionally to be organized into two distinct but integrated components—a recruitment component and an admissions component: The Recruitment component will house the "front end/visible" admissions functions (i.e., the reception center and welcome hospitality lounge for prospective students and parents). The existing personnel positions that will staff this component include the Admissions Director, Admissions Counselors and Administrative Assistants. Hard copy applications will be received from students by this area, and there will be computers for walk-in prospective students to apply immediately online while their families relax in the lounge area in the same location and have a snack, beverage or enjoy music or a video on the flat screen television. The application computers would eliminate walk-ins from having to complete a hard copy on the spot or potentially walk away with a hard copy and never complete it. The Admissions component will include the "quiet" but equally important processes and functions (data entry and application processing; decision letter processing, application filing system, etc.). The existing personnel positions that will staff this component include the Associate Director, a Data entry Clerk and an Administrative Assistant. The implementation of this new structure begins this fall with the reconfiguration and expansion of the Admissions office space on the first floor of Biddle Hall; a rendering of one of the new office configurations is shown above.

The Division of Enrollment Services & Student Success team is highly committed to this endeavor and, most importantly, to serving prospective and current students. We are energized and excited to begin this work with a renewed perspective framed by Operational Excellence= C³. Please consider my next and final sentences here as a “call to arms”: It is imperative that every person (faculty, staff, students, alumni, etc.), every office from admissions to facilities and every other constituent of the University believe that recruiting students to the University, retaining them and ultimately graduating them is the responsibility of us all. We are all a part of the University’s Admissions Team—and we welcome you as an active and engaged member. Join us on this journey of Transformative Change toward C³!

Kindly,
Lisa Montgomery
Vice President for Enrollment Services & Student Success