



Northwest Iowa  
Community College

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Dr. Bill Giddings, President of Northwest Iowa Community College Retires**

Dr. William “Bill” Giddings will be retiring as President from Northwest Iowa Community College. Dr. Giddings has decided to retire after thirty eight years of service to Community Colleges with twenty four of those years committed to Community Colleges in Iowa and the past six years being at NCC.

Leroy Van Kekerix, President of NCC’s Board of Trustees, stated, “During Dr. Giddings’ presidency NCC has seen a lot of changes. There has been a dramatic growth in the enrollment of students. NCC has both added more programs and increased the size of existing programs. Bill has worked with the Board, staff, faculty, school districts, legislators, community businesses and citizens in a professional and friendly manner that has fostered a period of cooperation and growth with the college. He has worked hard to make NCC’s campus have a more collegiate feel with the addition of the new dorms, the Northwest Iowa Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center along with NCC’s new school colors and the mascot, ‘The Thunder’. Bill has pushed his passion for the students and student learning throughout the campus and its’ programs.”

Dr. Giddings began his role as the 8<sup>th</sup> president of Northwest Iowa Community College on July 1, 2005. He was the Executive Vice President of Educational Services at Northeast Community College in Norfolk, Nebraska, a position he had held since 2004. Prior to that, he was Campus President of Central Community College in Grand Island, Nebraska. He also has educational experience at Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge, Iowa. Dr. Giddings holds an undergraduate degree in Mathematics, a master’s degree in Education, and a doctorate in Higher Education Administration, all from Iowa State University in Ames.

Looking back over his career, Dr Giddings said that the biggest change in education in the past 40 years is technology. Giddings stated, “Not just the technology we use on a day-to-day basis, but how we use technology in teaching and in the learning process in the classroom.”

Giddings remembers in the early 1990’s when he was excited to have a computer terminal on his desk. The actual computer hard drives were housed in a huge room on campus and the only thing he had in his office was a monitor and keyboard. Eventually, the technology evolved to a desktop computer and now Giddings, along with many other people, have laptops and hand held devices like cell phones that have the capability to do more than those first huge computers could even begin to do.

But, some things have stayed the same over the past forty years of Giddings’ career. “One of those constants would be the need for one-on-one attention to students. Students need that personal dialogue, teaching and tutoring,” Giddings stated. “I started my career as an instructor in a learning center tutoring students. That is exactly the same thing that we currently do in the NCC Learning Center. When I walk by our Learning Center and see the instructors working with students one-on-one, it reminds me that some students need a little extra help and attention. You can’t replace personal attention to students in order to help them succeed. I am sure the material has changed and the technology has changed, but it is still the personal contact with the students that helps them to succeed - I don’t think that will ever change.”

There are many favorite moments that he has had during his tenure at NCC, but one of his favorites was the first NCC versus WIT football game. “That was a game that started a change at NCC. We started thinking more about student activities. Even though we lost that first game by a last second touchdown, it

was the beginning of a shift in thinking; NCC needed to become a more comprehensive college that included more student activities.” Giddings also mentioned the opening of the two student dorms, Lyon and O’Brien Halls, and going to the Phi Theta Kappa All State dinner each year as highlights of his time at NCC.

One of his biggest disappointments was not passing the General Obligation Bond. “That was a big goal of mine to accomplish before I retired,” said Giddings. “I would encourage the NCC Board and Administrators to continue with that effort because of the needs of the College. With funding streams the way they currently are the General Obligation Bond really is the only way to keep up the excellence, as reflected in being named one of the *Top 120 Community Colleges* in the nation by the Aspen Institute and being named as the *20th Fastest Growing Community Colleges* in the nation by Community College Week magazine.”

Some other things Dr. Giddings wishes could have been accomplished during his tenure was the development of organized sports. “I really wanted to start organized soccer, cross country or golf teams at NCC. With the formulation of some sports teams I think it would have broadened the scope and comprehensive opportunities for our students,” he said.

Giddings plans to take June and July off. After that, “I am both anxious and excited about the next phase of my life. I need to take some time off and enjoy my new grandchild and then find out what’s waiting for me around the next corner. I look forward to what comes next because I do not have a specific plan laid out. I have found in my life that things rarely work on my timeline. The Lord will provide the opportunities and the next steps in my life. I will just have to take that in stride and see what comes next.”

Although Giddings doesn’t have any specific plans, one thing he does plan to continue is his work with the Higher Learning Commission. “I have been in education for forty years and still want to have my hand in education in some form,” he said.

Dr. Giddings advice for the future is to continue with the cooperation across the campus, within the citizenship of our communities and local businesses that all came together because of the General Obligation Bond. “Even though it failed by only 11 votes, the College and surrounding communities came together as one big team. Every department, division, and individual worked together for the one common goal - to try to pass the bond. The college needs to learn from that process and continue the cooperation if we want to continue to be one of the top 120 community colleges in the nation or the 20<sup>th</sup> fastest growing community college in the nation. Keep it up – it will make the College rich with excellence!”

Dr. Giddings last day will be May 13. His last official event is spring commencement to be held in the new Northwest Iowa Lifelong Learning and Recreation Center. The spring commencement will be a record breaking event with 275 graduates that will be recognized.

#### **Partial list of Memberships and Professional Awards**

Board of Director of Grand Island, NE Area Economic Development Corporation – 1998 to 2004

President of Grand Island, NE Chamber of Commerce and Board of Directors -- 2003

Member of the Nebraska Diplomats, a statewide economic development group

Sheldon Chamber and Development Corporation Board Member – 2005 to present

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Sheldon, 2005 to present

Member of the Iowa Power Fund Board – 2008-2010

Awarded the Iowa Lifelong Learning Distinguished Service Award - 1992

Adult & Continuing Education of NE, Outstanding Adult Educator Award – 1999

Nebraska Community College Association, Outstanding Chief Executive Officer Award - 1999

Mexican-American Commission of NE Certificate of Recognition - 2002

Iowa State University of Human Services Virgil Lagomarcino Award - 2009

Iowa Association of Community College, Chief Administrator of the Year Award - 2010