

September 23, 2003

Dear Editor:

In an age when more than 70 percent of jobs require education beyond high school, the news that Parkland College has received a \$1.6 million Title III grant award from the US Department of Education is gratifying. The fact of the matter is, many students are simply not prepared for college-level work, particularly when it comes to math, reading, and writing. These skills are essential for career success.

With this grant, Parkland students who may be entering college after having been out of school for several years or those who may not have taken advantage of opportunities to develop strong academic skills when they were in high school can become part of student-friendly academic support programs. These programs will consist of course-specific facilitated study groups, learning communities that provide a seamless transition from developmental to college-level work, increased staff for case management and other academic and technological support, and other curricular innovations. All of these efforts focus on one important goal: increasing each student's chances of educational success.

Being awarded this Title III grant will result in a significant infusion of funding in a much-needed area of education. I appreciate the work by faculty and staff that went into the grant proposal. The beneficiaries will be not only Parkland students, but the entire community.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Bennett
Parkland College Trustee

540 Clover Court
Gibson City, Illinois 60936

Phone - H - 217/784-8540
- W - 309/766-8435