

## QVCC Foundation/RAC Statement

In 1971, local residents demanded a community college in NE CT. They knew then and we know now, that residents of Windham County, the poorest county in the state of Connecticut, needed access to higher education at the *community* college level in order to improve their opportunity for a better life.

Since then, QVCC has worked tirelessly to break the cycle of poverty which continues to grip NE CT. Every year, the QVCC Foundation Scholarship committee reads hundreds of heartfelt letters from our students describing the impact education has had on them and their families. Their pride rings through when they describe themselves as the first in a family to receive a degree – not a hand out!

Today, hundreds of donors support the QVCC Foundation's mission, which truly puts STUDENTS FIRST! They do so because they know first-hand the impact that QVCC plays in ALL aspects of LOCAL business and personal lives.

Why are we concerned about this so-called "plan"? Because of our allegiance to our College, to our donors who have placed their trust in our leadership as members of the Regional Advisory Committee, and most importantly our respect for our students, requires us to have our voices heard.

QVCC's affiliations with local businesses are broad and varied. Training programs have been developed for our business partners tailored to their specific and timely needs. For Whitcraft in Eastford, Shop Math and Blueprint Reading classes are held, on-site, at the Whitcraft facility. Leadership Development Series are held regularly at our Danielson campus for employees of local business. A Medical Assistant program was developed specifically for Day Kimball Hospital. QVCC's Early Childhood Education Program places students at many local daycare facilities for the required 200-hour practicum.

We need a local team, led by our President, who is engrained in the fabric of our community, not a president in Hartford who can't even find Danielson, to continue to nurture these relationships for the primary benefit of our students.

Furthermore, consolidation would likely mean classes leaving our campus, which would preclude many of our students from completing their education as public transportation is not readily available in NE CT.

This is certainly not the first attempt at a consolidation plan that was to put our citizens first. The Community College system has been made and remade many times, along with many other state agencies. The most recent folly was with the CT State Police in their attempt to consolidate the dispatch function, which resulted in a risk of life.

The QVCC College Foundation and QVCC does put “students first.” We have put “students first” for 46 years. From our vantage point, this PLAN does not put any community college student first. Instead, it asks community college students to bear huge burdens, cost and otherwise. Is this really putting students first? What does that say about the “value” this plan places on a community college education?

It has been said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over, while expecting a different outcome. This plan “Student First” is just that – insanity!

We respectfully ask you to use your roles as representatives of YOUR communities to listen to your constituents’ voices about this Concept-NOT a true “plan.”

Thank you.

Mary Jane Burke  
President – QVCC Foundation.