



## 2012 TYCA “Fame” Award Winners

The Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) has announced the winner of the Public Image of the Two-Year College “Fame” Award along with “Honorable Mentions”.

### **FAME:**

**Grace Chen wrote a collective body of articles extolling community colleges, their opportunities, and their leadership in higher education. Her many articles include:**

“New Community College Transfer Programs Putting Students on Fast Track to Success” (August 24, 2011)

- Here she noted the latest community college transfer programs launched around the country as of 8/11.

“Community Colleges Leading the Pack in Digital Technology” (October 10, 2011)

- In this article, Chen explains how The Center for Digital Education and Converge Online recently recognized some of the community colleges across the country that are making the best use of technology to enhance the education experience. That is, she showcased the fine work several community colleges did in:
  1. Integration of technology into campus life and course curriculum
  2. Documenting the online admissions processes
  3. Providing Sufficient technology training for both faculty members and students
  4. Efficiently using Web 2.0 social functions
  5. Accommodate distance education and
  6. Providing ample online services for students, including tutoring and advising services

“Community Colleges React to President Obama’s State of the Union” (February 3, 2012)

- In this article, Chen notes that community colleges appreciated the shout-out they received during President Obama’s recent State of the Union address. Still not all were convince his plan would work.
- She admits that “While it remains to be seen whether additional funding will come to future, the first step – raising awareness for the important role community colleges play in today’s employment scene – was accomplished through the President’s speech. (People seem to need to be reminded!)”

“Wealthier Students Taking Community College Path” (March 11, 2012)

- Here Chen explains how “The face of the community college student appears to be changing in more ways than one, as a slow economy and skyrocketing tuition rates at four-year schools have begun to take their toll.”
- “A recent study by student loan provider Sallie Mae found that more students from high-income families are moving to community college right out of high school, thanks to lower tuition costs and better career options.
- It also seems that the attitude toward community college education is improving, as more students see this path as a viable option to a bright future.

“Community College Students Headed to NASA” (March 17, 2012)

- 92 community college students from 24 different states were carefully selected to help design robotic rovers for Mars exploration by NASA.
- As Leland Melvin, NASA’s associate administrator for education, stated in the press release. “Community colleges offer NASA a great pool of STEM talent critical to our scientific and exploration initiatives. They also serve a large portion of our nation’s minority students. Engaging these underserved and

underrepresented learners in STEM initiatives helps NASA build a more inclusive and diverse workforce for the future.”

All in all, Grace Chen offered diverse portraits and a plethora of articles this past year accentuating the positive achievements made by community college and community college students.

**HONORABLE MENTION #1:**

**“Butte College to Become First Grid-Positive College in the US”**

- Over the past few years, Butte Community College in Northern California has distinguished itself as a “national community college leader in sustainability.
- As of May 2-11, it became the only college in the United States that is “grid positive—producing more clean energy from sustainable on-site solar power that it uses.”
- Butte includes “sustainability” in the college’s mission statement and represents “one of five initiatives in the college’s strategic plan.”
- Multiple sources reported that “In addition to the solar projects the college has developed sustainability-related career and technical education programs; infused sustainability into existing curriculum; created a sustainability studies certificate; conducted numerous student-led green events and activities; gained Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification on its Arts Building and is awaiting final approval of Gold Certification on Student and Administrative Services; developed and implemented a number of sustainability-related workforce development activities; recycles over 75 percent of its waste stream....”
- Cheers to Butte—a community college—for developing comprehensive green technology and career pathways, infusing “sustainability into career and technical education programs.”

**HONORABLE MENTION #2:**

**“Valencia Named Top Community College in Nation” (by Carol Traynor)**

- While Valencia College, FL learned won well deserved recognition as well as the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence in its own right, Dr. Sanford Shugart, President of Valencia College gave a nod to the community college system as a whole, including: “It is such a privilege to represent my colleagues and the hundreds of community colleges across the country that have done amazing work for years and years.”
- “In selecting Valencia as the best community college in America, Aspen officials noted that over half of the college’s full-time students graduate or transfer within three years of entering the school.”
  - Graduation rates have been rising among all Valencia College students, including underrepresented groups.
  - In the past decade, “graduation rates among college-ready African American students,” nearly tripled (from 15.4 percent to 44.3 percent today).
  - “Graduation rates for college-ready Hispanic students have similarly impressive gains, jumping from 38.7 to 45.5 percent in the last decade.”
- Congratulations to other Aspen Prize Finalists: Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown, SD; Miami Dade College, Miami, FL; Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Perkinston, MS; Mott Community College, Flint, MI; Northeast Iowa Community College, Calmar, IA; Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara, CA; Southwest Texas Junior College, Uvalde, TX; Walla Walla Community College, Walla Walla, WA; West Kentucky Community and Technical College, Paducah, KY.