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Raising the Bar: The Modern Community College Presidency

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RAISING THE BAR:
THE MODERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENCY

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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By

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ABSTRACT

One of the largest challenges facing community colleges in the new millennium is identifying leaders who possess the necessary skills and competencies to successfully navigate the modern presidency. Facing a dynamic shift in the fiscal landscape, community college presidents are tasked with filling the gap between institutional needs and existing forms of financial support. The purpose of this study was to examine community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current roles. Because the president plays a pivotal role in the acquisition of alternative funding sources, the effectiveness of this leader is critical to the overall mission of the institution; therefore, it is necessary to understand how their prior experiences in fundraising may impact the ease with which they develop and engage in external relationships with key constituents.

Employing purposive sampling methods, three current community college presidents serving public, single-campus two-year colleges with institutionally affiliated foundations were selected as case study participants. The qualitative research design engaged various methods of data collection with face-to-face semi-structured interviews serving as the primary data source, accompanied by document collection, observational field notes, and reflexive journal entries. In this inquiry, the research questions spanned three broad categories, which served as the framework for coding and analyzing the data. The categories included: (a) impact of full-time fundraising experience; (b) fundraising skills and competencies perceived as valuable to the community college presidency; and (c) advice for aspiring college presidents.

The findings suggested that advancement professionals are well suited for the presidency based on the heightened expectation of fundraising as a means of achieving financial stability and the increasingly external nature of the presidency. The valuable fundraising skills and

competencies recommended for today's leaders included personalized communication and the

ability to build lasting relationships with a variety of constituents. The study's participants

offered advice for future leaders related to organizational leadership and professional preparation

based upon their own personal journey to the presidency. The highly transferable skills that

presidents with prior fundraising experience bring to the position establish them as qualified and

effective candidates for the modern presidency.

This dissertation is approved for recommendation
to the Graduate Council.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Enrolling nearly one-half of all undergraduate students, community colleges have evolved from modest beginnings and now, as they recently celebrated their centennial, represent an essential component of the American system of higher education. According to Kubala (1999), "community colleges are vital to the future of this nation . . . It will be the community college that will keep American working" (p. 183). Their unique open door policy coupled with the affordability and accessibility, in addition to their agile response to industry demands has gained regional and national recognition for these centers of educational opportunity. Mendoza et al. (2009) noted, "the community college climate is characterized by its adaptability, cutting edge innovations, and responsiveness to community needs" (p. 867). Boggs (2008) recognized community colleges apart from all segments of American higher education for being "the most flexible, the most responsive to the educational needs of communities, and the most resourceful, taking calculated risks and leveraging scarce resources to accomplish their educational missions" (p. vii).

Previously overlooked, community colleges can no longer be disregarded because they are the economic drivers of the communities they serve. "The 'comprehensive community college' of the twenty-first century offers a wide array of credit, non-credit, and lifelong learning experiences across a seemingly endless array of disciplinary and technical foci" (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002, p. 573). They strengthen the nation and are indispensable to the future of our country as we confront challenges of the global economy. Preparation of a highly skilled workforce is vital in order to preserve the nation's competitiveness and economic opportunity, and it is only in the past decade that it has become apparent that community college

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graduates need to be prepared to participate and compete in a global economy (Hockaday &

Puyear, 2000). While educating today's students for tomorrow's jobs, "community colleges have

become the institutions of choice for workers who want to upgrade their skills and for displaced

workers preparing to reenter the workforce" (Boggs, 2010, p. 2). Their close working

relationship with business and industry is a recipe for success in terms collaboration to develop

curricula that encompasses the necessary skills and training for the current and future job

markets. In a report on community colleges and industry partnerships, Soares (2010) highlighted

the unique role two-year colleges play in achieving our nation's goals:

> Among higher education institutions, community colleges stand closest to the crossroads
>
> of higher education and the real world, where Americans need to apply a mix of technical
>
> knowledge, business acumen, and creativity to add value in firms whose imperative is to
>
> compete on innovation. (p. 7)

With nearly 1,200 community colleges nationwide enrolling more than 12 million

students, these institutions represent the largest, fastest-growing, most affordable segment of the

American higher education system (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC],

2011a). With significantly lower tuition rates than their four-year counterparts, community

colleges promote a culture of diversity and inclusion. In order to preserve their vitality,

community colleges must be fiscally prepared to effectively meet the increasing demand of the

communities they serve.

Funding for these public institutions is commonly derived from a combination of sources,

including state and local support, student tuition and fees, and the occasional auxiliary enterprise

(Budd, 2006). The comprehensive mandates befalling community colleges require adequate

resources, and as the missions and roles of public colleges have expanded so have their financial

needs leaving historic funding models inherently unsustainable for operational sufficiency. According to Mendoza et al. (2009), "considering the current financial climate and the limited funding resources inherent to these institutions, financing is a predominant concern at the institutional level" for most community colleges (p. 867). Traditional modes of funding have not kept pace, challenging these institutions to seek partnerships and alternative resources. "The percentage of funding per student has been decreasing steadily; larger shares of educational costs are being transferred to students . . . . unfortunately, this downward spiral leads to lowered access for many people" (Roueche, Richardson, Neal, & Roueche, 2008, p. 16). The future health of community colleges will depend upon the presidents who lead them, as constraints on public funds show no signs of abating, especially as more state legislatures tie budget increases to specific performance goals (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2011b).

The landscape of higher education is changing, and there are new rules and considerations that will impact the scope and function of these institutions in order to satisfy all of the demands. "Now more than ever, community colleges are realizing that business as usual is untenable . . . traditional structures and systems, established when these colleges first opened, today limit their capacity to be productive" (Flannigan, Greene, & Jones, 2005, p. 1). At the dawning of the 21st century, converging forces set the stage for a new comprehensive community college. Today's community college leaders live in a world of greater transparency and accountability than in years past and serve an expanded function in guiding their institutions during turbulent times. According to Phelan (2005), presidents increasingly face an "ever-increasing number of fiscal pressures as they seek to meet the expanding needs of their constituency while balancing a stressed budget" (p. 87). The current and future success of the nation's community colleges will be determined in large part by the ability of their leaders to

develop key relationships, leverage resources, and generate resources through the cultivation of sustainable and significant revenue streams. In seeking additional revenue sources, Kelly, Gibert, and Armistead (2010) have suggested that "greater reliance upon the private sector as a legitimate and stable partner should be sought" (p. 1). However, according to Flannigan, Greene, and Jones (2005), the financial level of gifts and endowments depends largely on the extent to which donor relationships have been cultivated; therefore, fundraising has become critical to the survival of community colleges. Chitwood and Jones (2007) echoed those sentiments stating "fundraising is not an option; it is a necessity, vital to the current existence and the future of the colleges" (p. 2). The modern community college presidency requires a leader who can take on the role of chief advancement officer and declare fundraising as an institutional priority.

Statement of the Problem

A plethora of informative studies exist on community college presidents, profiling their career paths, priorities, relationships, leadership styles, and projected turnover; yet, most of these studies illuminate those who have arrived at the most senior leadership positions only to find they are ill prepared. Less consideration is given in the literature as to the alternative trajectories for aspiring professionals that may better suit the requirements of the modern presidency, as well as help replenish the leadership pipeline to replace the retiring generation of community college leaders. The traditional academic background exhibited by many current and aspiring leaders may no longer provide adequate preparation for the fiscal and social challenges characterized by the modern community college presidency. Confronted with new facets of fiscal and peripheral complexities, expectations of community college presidents now include an array of skills that could not be found in the traditional academician's toolbox. The modern presidency represents a dynamic shift in the role and scope of community college leadership with fundraising and fiscal

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affairs among the most high-profiled endeavors and among the attributes prized most by trustees in presidential selections. Wenrich and Reid (2003) found that people wishing to become community college presidents did not enter the field expecting to raise money, and yet today that role is assuming more importance for most leaders in the community college setting.

According to Cook (1997), many academic presidents have trouble adjusting to the role of fundraiser. Due to the increasingly complex nature of this work, presidents and other college personnel must possess greater familiarity with the technical aspects of philanthropy like giving options and instruments for giving. Whether creating endowed chairs, seeking private scholarship support, or completing capital projects, strengthening relationships with individuals and groups who are invested in the college has never been more important. As a result, "friendraising has entered into the lexicon of many educational leaders," according to Roueche et al. (2008, p. 17). As colleges shift from the historic academic model to a more comprehensive approach, they will require leaders who demonstrate collaboration, strategic planning, advocacy, and communication; ironically, advancement professionals typically exhibit these same key skills (Chitwood & Jones, 2007). According to Shaw and Shaw (2008), "today's college president must be more than a visionary leader, motivational manager, and innovative administrator…he or she must also be an excellent fundraiser and fund development manager" (p. 21). Kubala (1999) argued that community college presidents "are called upon to be visionaries, fund raisers, managers, mentors, arbitrators, economic developers, and above all, public servants" (p. 183). Like the colleges they lead, they are expected to be all things to all people.

The president symbolizes the face and voice of the college in the community, and because of their numerous external engagements, their influence is both broad and deep. Ryan

and Palmer (2005) found that "if colleges are to realize the full potential of their community relationships, the president must be willing to devote a great deal of his or her time – much of it off campus – to developing and sustaining these relationships" (p. 45). Strong and creative leadership is important, but the philanthropic culture must pervade the institution. A shift from the traditional paradigm has prompted many leaders to take a more proactive approach to pursuing the hearts and dollars of potential donors; therefore, this study sought to provide empirical research that could be used as a basis for determining whether previous fundraising experiences have better equipped sitting community college presidents for the demands of this position and for identifying, developing, and training the next generation of leaders for the modern presidency.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. Community college presidents provide critical fiscal leadership that is paramount for their college's success and are increasingly evaluated on their ability to grow endowments, increase giving rates, secure scholarship funds, and manage capital campaigns (Shaw & Shaw, 2008). Obtaining a better understanding of how development skills impact the presidency may offer insight in finding the next generation of leaders who can successfully navigating the evolving profession.

Research Questions

The review of literature regarding community college presidents and fundraising yielded the basis for the following research questions, which guided this study:

1. How did previous full-time fundraising experience impact the modern presidency?

2. What specific fundraising skills and competencies were perceived as valuable for community college presidencies?

3. What advice was offered to aspiring community college leaders to adequately prepare for this role?

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations are self-imposed parameters the researcher places on the scope of a study. The current research only consisted of three case studies of sitting community college presidents. The study was limited to participants who had prior full-time fundraising experience and did not consider those with broader advancement experience or grant acquisition experience. Further delimiting criteria stipulated that participants must have a minimum of one-year in their current presidency and an institutionally related foundation.

Limitations of research cannot be controlled completely by the researcher; however, steps were taken to minimize their potential impact. The study was limited by the relatively small sample size and did not allow for transferability to other settings and other participants.

Significance of the Study

Perhaps one of the largest challenges facing community colleges in the new millennium is finding presidents who possess the necessary skills to successfully navigate the current fiscal climate. The present financial challenges come as a result of the movement from total reliance on state support to the pursuit for other institutionally-driven forms of revenue to fund essential college operations and services. Because the president plays a pivotal role in the acquisition of alternative funding, the efficiency and effectiveness of this team leader is critical to the overall mission of the institution; therefore, it is necessary to understand how their prior experiences in

fundraising may impact the ease with which they engage in external relationships, as well as develop and cultivate relationships with key donors.

Search committees and college governing boards responsible for filling presidential vacancies may use the findings from this study to develop selection criteria for their recruiting and executive selections. Chitwood and Jones (2007) found that "each year, more presidential search committees are selecting development and advancement vice presidents over academic vice presidents . . . across the nation, the traditional career path that has typically run through the chief academic office is changing" (p. 1). Findings from this inquiry's conclusions may be beneficial for organizational and leadership development programs, as well as educational training opportunities through national organizations like the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Council for Resource Development (CRD) to arm current and aspiring leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary for the modern presidency.

While scholars have focused on necessary core skills and competencies for tomorrow's presidents (Breaux, 2006; Duree, 2007; Hassan, 2008) and the increasing need for presidents to become familiar with and involved in fundraising (Chitwood & Jones, 2007; Hall, 2002; McGee, 2003; Ryan & Palmer, 2005; Wenrich & Reid, 2003), there is a deficiency in the literature regarding the perceived benefit of full-time fundraising for community college presidents prior to their presidency. Fundraising is emerging as an important component of fiscal leadership, and yet relatively little research exists on the specific development skills and experiences of current presidents and how these characteristics may affect their institutional leadership.

Definition of Terms

Individuals and groups in various professions and fields may interpret similar terms differently; therefore, definitions of the key terms utilized throughout the study are provided

below. These operational definitions are relevant to leadership contexts and constructs within the community college environment.

American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). This national organization aims to advance the role of America's community colleges by providing advocacy, leadership, and service opportunities to their nearly 1,200 associate degree-granting member institutions (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2012a).

Community Colleges. These are public, accredited two-year institutions of higher education that most commonly award the Associate of Arts or the Associate of Science as its highest degrees (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). The broader mission of these institutions includes open enrollment and service to the community. This study was limited to single-campus institutions.

Community College President. This term refers to the chief executive officer of a public two-year college with overall responsibility for the institution (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002). Other possible references may include community college leader, president, or chief executive officer.

Council for Resource Development (CRD). This national organization aims to connect, educate, support, strengthen, and celebrate community college development professionals. It is the only professional association dedicated exclusively to supporting the unique needs of development professionals at associate-degree granting institutions. An affiliate of the American Association of Community Colleges, CRD serves over 1,600 members at more than 700 institutions (Council for Resource Development [CRD], 2011).

Development. Development, also commonly referred to as "fundraising," consists of programs and activities by which the college seeks private funding for its programs and to build

long-term strength through improvements to its facilities and additions to its endowment (Worth, 1993). While these terms can be used interchangeably, development implies a more sophisticated process of planning in which institutional needs are matched with the interests of donors.

Fundraising. Fundraising, also commonly referred to as "development," is the process of soliciting and gathering contributions by requesting donations from private sources (Muller, 1986). Professional fundraising also entails investigating potential funding sources, conducting background research, and developing possible funding opportunities (Ryan & Palmer, 2005). Solicitations are usually made face-to-face or in a personal context and employ specific professional knowledge and skills.

Institutional Advancement. This term offers a broader umbrella encompassing resource development among other activities that advance the mission of the institution through continuous efforts to foster new loyalties. According to Muller (1986), institutional advancement embraces alumni relations, fundraising, public relations, communications, and government relations and focuses on doing "all the things necessary to maintain an adequate supply of resources to a college or university" (p. 9).

Philanthropy. This Greek term means "love of mankind" in its direct translation. Philanthropy is an idea, event, or action that occurs for the betterment of humanity. According to The Center on Philanthropy, "philanthropy encompasses formal and informal voluntary association, voluntary giving, and voluntary action and thus is a powerful force in shaping all societies" (The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, 2012).

Resource Development. Resource development is an entrepreneurial operation that melds public and private resources, knowledge of college needs and operations, effective solution development, and a visionary approach to creating preferred futures for a multi-faceted

institution (Brumbach & Villadsen, 2002).

Summary

Community colleges are facing a dynamic shift in their fiscal landscape, necessitating alternative revenue sources to fill the gap between institutional needs and existing forms of financial support. Fundraising, as one such source, has become a critical component to fiscal leadership, resulting in a presidency that requires an increasingly strong external relations component. The traditional, academic view of presidential leadership must give way to a new outward-looking paradigm if colleges are to build steady revenue streams that will allow them to meet the growing demands of the community.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Across the nation, community colleges are experiencing daunting circumstances stemming from economic and political uncertainties, compounded by leadership turnover and heightened expectations, a context which creates tremendous challenges for community college presidents (Floyd, Maslin-Ostrowski, & Hrabak, 2010). The environment in which today's community college leaders operate is more complex, volatile, and demanding than in the past, requiring a modernized assortment of skills. Taking into consideration this shifting paradigm, the literature is abounding concerning community colleges and their leaders. Many recent studies have illuminated the leadership traits and competencies of modern community college presidents (Breaux, 2006; Fox, 2008; Hassan, 2008; Reid-Bunch, 2006; Schmitz, 2008 Van Dusen, 2005), while others have addressed the president's direct involvement in fundraising (Besikof, 2010; Duree, 2007; Eldredge, 1999; Pinchback, 2011; Saunders, 2009; Stewart, 2006; Thomas, 2006). Regardless of the particular subject matter, the common theme shared by these studies is the reality that the community college presidency has evolved to include a host of new expectations.

The imminent wave of retirements in higher education's administration has only further compounded the challenges for community colleges with regard to their future leadership (Shults, 2001). While the founding leaders of the community college movement were the "pioneers and the builders," the new generation of leaders must operate in a much more complex environment and possess a new array of the skills and competencies to lead these multi-faceted institutions through the next century (Boggs, 2003, p. 19). After reviewing the literature, several authors have provided clear and insightful guidance with respect to effective leadership and the growing need for private-sector funding. While the role of fundraiser has become an expectation

of the job for many presidents, little data have been collected about professionals who already come prepared to perform this increasingly important task. The purpose of this study was to examine community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. In order to better understand this central phenomenon, it is important to consider the following: the growing need for private support, the increasingly external nature of the presidency, the president as chief fundraiser, opportunities for leadership development and preparation, as well as filling the leadership pipeline.

Growing Need for Private Support

Community colleges have become the center of educational opportunity and provide access to higher education to people who would not otherwise have that chance because of financial or geographical limitations, lack of preparation, or family or job responsibilities. According to Boggs (2003), these institutions enroll the most diverse student body in the history of higher education and are expected to respond ever more quickly to emerging community and national needs. Community colleges have evolved to remain responsive to the educational needs of their communities, offering vocational education, contract education for local businesses to prepare and develop the workforce, and community service courses; however, resources are constrained, accountability requirements are mounting, labor relations are becoming more contentious, and society is more litigious than ever before.

The importance of alternative fund development will become even more critical as we progress through the next century as presidents are increasingly called upon by constituents to find solutions to unprecedented programs, and to do so with limited resources (Pierce & Pedersen, 1997). Throughout all of higher education, there will likely continue to be a reduction

in traditional sources of funding, whether in actual dollars or as a percentage of the total budget. According to Katsinas (2005), "the financing mechanisms used to fund community college operating budgets increasingly conflict with the goal of universal access to postsecondary education" (p. 29). Faced with significant budget constraints, state governments and local municipalities have reduced the financial support they provide to public colleges to where institutions have become "state assisted" as opposed to "state supported" (Ryan, 2003). Addressing these issues will challenge future community college leaders to search for new sources of revenue in the face of expanding enrollments and increased community demands. Yet, according to Romano (2005), "tuition is the one source of revenue that all colleges seem reluctant to raise" (p. 33). Students, parents, and stakeholders already feel higher education is too expensive, so rather than raise tuition, which would limit access for many students, colleges are pursuing external funds through the establishment of development offices and foundations, as well as embarking on capital campaigns (Ryan, 2003). According to Gaskin (1997), "if we are to meet the students' needs, we must begin to consider alternative fund development as a key responsibility" (p. 84). Community colleges are unique among higher education institutions in their potential access to local appropriations as well as state funding (Askin, 2007); however, funding shortfalls, compounded with soaring enrollments and rising costs, means colleges have come to depend more on generous donations (Masterson, 2010). Consequently, future community college leaders will have to be creative in balancing the significant challenge of keeping tuition affordable while also providing their institutions with the appropriate amount of resources.

External Nature of the Modern Presidency

The fundamental change in the fiscal landscape of higher education has serious implications surrounding the role of the college president. This new environment, characterized by revenue shortfalls, requires a high degree of external leadership to advance the mission of the college. According to Miller and Holt (2005), "community college leaders have a tremendous responsibility to provide stewardship for public resources and trust . . .they must effectively communicate with the public, and they must be seen as ethical, trustworthy leaders who have the community's best interests in mind" (p. 73). Bornstein (2003) found the weakened economy, unstable state funding patterns, and changing student demographics have forced presidents to focus on more external, nonacademic issues and to function as entrepreneurs, economic development partners, and fundraisers.

Community college presidents have not always played such an active role in the external affairs of the institution. Their former three-pronged identity as administrators, supervisors, and educators has turned primarily into an exclusively administrative role. Classroom instruction is now chiefly reserved for the specialists, the professors housed within the academic departments. Faced with new facets of complexity, expectations of community college presidents now include an array of skills, such as knowledge and experience in financial matters, public relations, governmental relations, and fundraising. The growing importance of external relations has become increasing necessary to the survival of community colleges. According to the American Council on Education [ACE] (2007), presidents are spending a greater percentage of their time on external affairs. Initially, they indicated spending only 8.1% of their time externally, whereas in 2006 this percentage increased to 39.4%. Time equally shared between internal and external tasks increased from 34.7% to 46.9% during that same period. Presidents must vie for their slice

of the pie in state and federal funding, as well as impress a large public audience to make a case for additional support. Presidents are finding it imperative to spend increased amounts of time and energy on external efforts, so their institutions can continue to thrive (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). A change in fundamental responsibilities has led to a change in the dynamic of power and authority on community college campuses. Although they are considered the principal authority within their institution, a power granted to them by their board of trustees, community college presidents must delegate a great deal of that authority in order to maintain efficiency due to the increased pressures and demands they now face (Wenrich & Reid 2003). Most often, they rely on their senior-level administrators, also commonly referred to as their Cabinet, for assistance in running the day-to-day operations of the college. Presidents must be able to facilitate collaboration in order to take the institution to new heights, and one of their newest roles and responsibilities is that of a chief fundraiser for their institution (Ryan, 2005).

As the primary spokesperson for their institution, modern leaders must embody the necessary skills to interact with the public on a continual basis. With more time spent addressing external concerns, the president has become a public icon subject to constant scrutiny forced to bear the complexities of greater accountability and transparency to the public they serve (Stinebeck & Wasser, 2006). "If colleges are to realize the full potential of their community relationships, the president must be willing to devote a great deal of his or her time – much of it off campus – to developing and sustaining these relationships" (Ryan & Palmer, 2005, p. 45). To further demonstrate this point, a Career and Lifestyle Survey conducted by Weisman and Vaughan (2007) examined 545 community college presidents nationwide and found presidents continue to average about 57 hours per week performing work-related activities. These activities

include participating in four evening or weekend events, which represents a fundamental shift from internal activities toward external relations.

As previously noted, presidents are finding it imperative to spend increased amounts of time and energy on external efforts so their institutions can continue to thrive. Like the colleges they lead, community college presidents are asked to be many things to many people: leader of the academic community, chief executive of the business enterprise, the college spokesperson, the fundraiser, and the advocate (June, 2006). With community colleges now relying heavily on external support to fill the growing gap between institutional needs and financial support from tuition and government taxes, the president's positive integration within the community will produce greater results in sustaining financial support in the community, according to Miller and Holt (2005).

Institutional Commitment to Fundraising

Presidents must make a formal institutional commitment to the development process by investing the necessary time and resources. The president's direct involvement brings a great deal of accountability, credibility, and visibility to fundraising activities (Miller, 1991). Strategic planning is a necessary precondition to successful fundraising, as college goals should always drive the pursuit of external funding. Ryan (2005) suggested presidents should invest in their development programs by hiring good development staff, recruiting loyal volunteers, and committing their precious time to vigorously pursue external dollars in the private and corporate sectors. Duronio and Loessin (1991), found that institutional commitment to fundraising is a strong characteristic of effective fundraising programs and can be identified through the following:

An institution's commitment to fund raising is evident in the resources allocated for

fundraising, the overall acceptance of the need for fund raising on campus, the definition

and communication of the institution's niche and image, and the accomplishment of

certain institution wide tasks that facilitate fund raising (such as planning and goal setting

for fund-raising priorities and policies). (p. 200-201)

Because of their natural link to their surrounding area, community colleges have often

placed considerable value on the establishment of strong relationships within the community.

The increasing awareness of the impact of community colleges on the local economy has

encouraged presidents to seek support from business and industry, as well as through individual

philanthropy. "Presidents, trustees, and resource development professionals have relied on the

college-community relationship to encourage public and private support for the college"

according to Hall (2002, p. 47).

According to Chitwood and Jones (2007), "without strong community-oriented

presidential leadership and commitment, little can be accomplished in private fundraising" (p. 9).

Referred to as the "living logo," it is imperative for college presidents to be visible in this

process because they are most likely to encounter those capable of providing monetary support

or establishing partnerships; therefore, it is necessary for them to have the political and

philanthropic acuity to recognize such gift opportunities (McGee, 2003). According to Wenrich

and Reid (2003) "presidential commitment to fundraising, donor development, and partnerships

signals that these activities are paramount for college success" (p. 29).

The Role of Institutionally Related Foundations

An active foundation can play a pivotal role in helping the college achieve its current

needs and long-term desires by generating funds, raising friends, enhancing the image of the

college, and increasing its visibility in the community (Babitz, 2003; Glass & Jackson, 1998).

The integration, the degree to which the foundation is governed by the institutional priorities, remains relatively important to ensure the college's strategic agenda is the driving force behind these efforts. Successful community college foundations maintain a close working relationship with their institutions and require commitment and nurturing by the administration. Brumbach and Villadsen (2002) found "dollars from private and public sources will permit goals to be reached sooner as well as provide greater capacity to meet college and community needs" (p. 80).

According to Hedgepeth (1993), institutionally affiliated foundations can be advantageous for the colleges they serve, offering flexibility for partnerships and ensuring donor confidentiality. As the fundraising arm of the institution, foundations also build trust, respect, and confidence with the external community. They provide colleges with flexibility in fundraising, contribute to entrepreneurial ventures, engage the private sector, and highlight the college as the vital link between today's students and tomorrow's workforce (Babitz, 2003; Flannigan, Greene, & Jones, 2005; Smith, 1993). As an internal source of support, foundation-sponsored programs can also be an excellent way to improve campus morale (McGee, 2005). Envisioning ways to generate additional revenue can result in funds to purchase classroom equipment, provide scholarships and emergency assistance to students, and construct new facilities to accommodate enrollment growth. Cash awards for exemplary efforts and endowed teaching chairs in recognition of faculty excellence encourage entrepreneurial thinking by faculty and staff about fundraising efforts.

Now more than ever, foundations have the opportunity to develop new solutions to alleviate funding pressure by making it clear to their communities that they are supporting public needs. According to Babitz (2003), the essential building blocks for success include a motivated

president, an active and engaged foundation board, and a comprehensive fundraising plan that integrates the foundation's mission with that of the college. An effective advancement program has defined roles for each segment of the campus community, including the academy; however, the major responsibilities are relegated to the president, chief advancement officer, and foundation board. As the personification of the institution, active participation by the president is crucial to the long-term success of a foundation in the solicitation of private support. The League for Innovation (2012a) expressed the following:

> College presidents are increasingly reliant on their associated foundations, tasking them
> to develop new external income sources from the private sector and to find measures to
> invigorate existing ones . . . truly, the challenge before community college presidents and
> their development officers has never been greater and more consequential. (para. 1)

An efficient and successful institutionally affiliated foundation is essential for effective fundraising; however, the community college president must be involved in the fundraising process to assure it's success by knowing the community, networking with local leaders and potential donors, and articulating the college's needs (League for Innovation, 2012b).

President as Chief Fundraiser

With respect to fundraising success, findings in the literature consistently identified the college president as an active and engaged participant. Ryan (2005) indicated that as the institution's chief development officer, the community college president's external activity could yield phenomenal fundraising results if coordinated and mined appropriately. Miller (1991) confirmed the president's role as "chief actor" in cultivating and soliciting gifts, appearing at social events, and lending his or her name to giving campaigns for increased credibility. Furthermore, Glass and Jackson (1998) qualified that fundraising success depends upon the

president's capacity to provide strategic leadership in the advancement area. In an era of scarce resources, and until a history of trust develops among community partners, the president should expect to play a leading role in nurturing these new relationships from conception to full implementation (Pierce & Pedersen, 1997; Wagoner & Besikof, 2011). While the role of fundraiser has been added to the job descriptions of many college presidents, Jackson and Keener (2002) believed little data had been collected to guide them in performing this increasingly important task.

According to survey results from the Career and Lifestyle Survey conducted by Weisman and Vaughan (2002; 2007), in 2006 participants indicated that they spent 34% of their time on external relations, including fundraising, whereas in 2001 external relations only accounted for 30.9% of presidential time. In a recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, one current community college president reflected how when he became president 18 years ago fundraising wasn't even on the radar screen; however, he pointed out as the traditional sources of funding became scarce, it was one way his college could get the necessary support (Gose, 2006). The 2007 edition of the American College President produced by ACE (2007), which is a comprehensive source of demographic data of college and university presidents from all sectors of American higher education, highlighted fundraising as the number one area expected to occupy more of presidents' time (78.2%) while academic issues was ranked as the number one area to occupy less of their time (37.1%). Even still, community colleges lag behind four-year institutions in terms of fundraising and have only begun the pursuit of major gifts within the past decade; however, in many cases resource development has moved from a peripheral activity to a strategic effort seeking to address the resource gap. According to the senior vice president for the Clements Group, a consulting group that specializes in community college resource

development, "fundraising is no longer something that community colleges think about as an 'add-on,' it is a necessity for all community colleges now" (Gose 2006, p. 2). A quick review of research studies tells us that the state of fundraising in community colleges is an increasingly important vehicle for organizations to use as part of their overall advancement strategy.

In a study on presidential fundraising at independent colleges in the Midwest, Goddard (2009) outlined the evolving role of contemporary presidents as chief fundraisers for their institutions, a role for which they are typically underprepared. Even though the study's participants came from academe, student affairs, and the ministry, the researcher found that eight of the 10 had explicit fundraising experience or had been groomed by a mentor or supervisor, which contributed to their success.

A mixed methods study by Boyd (2008) focused on presidential characteristics and practices related to fundraising success in South Carolina's two-year technical colleges. Employing various methods of data collection, the researcher found that even though these presidents primarily followed an academic career path to the presidency, their commitment of time and resources to fundraising resulted in success. The participants who placed more emphasis on strategy and planning, hired a fundraising consultant, and committed their time to fundraising appeared to be more successful than those who did not.

According to Wenrich and Reid (2003), this evolution of roles has prompted community college presidents to take a more proactive approach in the fundraising enterprise to winning the hearts and dollars of potential donors. As a result, fundraising has become a critical component of fiscal leadership (Chitwood & Jones, 2007; Jenkins & Glass, 1999). Jackson and Glass (2000), in their quantitative study using 42 individuals with development backgrounds from North Carolina community colleges, examined emerging trends and critical issues affecting private

fund-raising at community colleges. The researchers concluded that community colleges would not successfully be able to compete for private donations without strong leadership. They also found that modern leadership contexts require the ability to forge collaborative partnerships, which Amey (2010) found directly contributes to additional forms of sustainable support through resource sharing, joint programming, and technology enhancements.

A new focus on external fundraising efforts has thrust community colleges into an era marked by public and private partnerships, resulting in mutually beneficial outcomes. Duronio and Loessin (1991) and Kozobarich (2000) agreed that a better margin of discretionary dollars would allow presidents to explore creative opportunities, making the difference between adequacy and excellence and allowing the college to go above and beyond mere day-to-day operations. With ample state and local funding gone for the foreseeable future, Daniel (2005) indicated "resource development is a must for today's community college president" (p. 100). The future can be bright for colleges whose leaders realize the potential of a comprehensive development program. The researcher stressed the importance of the role of the entrepreneurial president in the procurement of external funds. The president is expected to lead the friendraising and fundraising efforts for major campaigns and other philanthropic activities.

As fundraising becomes more important within the scope of the presidency, it is ironic that a majority of candidates accepted into open presidential positions still come from the academic arena where they had little to no training in fundraising (Kubala, 1999; Kubala & Bailey, 2001; Vaughan, 1986). In his quantitative study surveying a nationally representative sample of community college presidents appointed between 1995 and 1997, Kubala (1999) found that 72.2% of presidents came through the academic route; whereas, a qualitative comparative study by Kubala and Bailey (2001) reported the findings from a group interview

with community college presidents, which showed that 56.4% came through academe to the presidency. Although a variety of other pathways have been noted including "continuing education, administrative services, institutional development and even the board of trustees itself" (Kubala & Bailey, 2001, p. 795), a strong academic background has historically characterized the most well-traveled path to the presidency. Stewart (2006) conducted a survey of 57 community college presidents to examine their involvement in fundraising. He specifically examined professional background and found that 90.2% of the presidents participating in the study had no previous fundraising experience even though they spent anywhere from 10 to 20 hours per week on fundraising activities. The current environment is such that community college leaders "can no longer ignore or pay little attention to fundraising . . . this is not a responsibility that can be assigned to someone else" (Phelan, 2005, p. 94). Most academic presidents will disclose that they are uncomfortable asking for money or that they are not properly trained. Kaufman (2004) confirmed this finding stating "presidents whose careers have been built as scholars with sterling academic credentials are often unprepared for the [fundraising] task" (p. 50). Regardless of the paths they followed to the presidency, Bornstein (2011) asserted the chief executive officers of today's colleges are expected to serve as the lead fundraiser and primary advocate for private support and investment.

Skills and Competencies

Facing a cadre of complex and challenging decisions the instant they accept a presidential position, new community college presidents do not have the time or luxury to gradually learn the fundamentals of a college presidency. Rather they must immerse themselves in the position, provide leadership, and formulate actions that immediately impact the college. While fulfilling the role of the modern community college presidency may seem like a daunting task, existing

literature has demonstrated sound advice for modern leaders related to the development process, suggesting that fundraising skills and competencies might be a beneficial prerequisite of the presidency.

According to Glass and Jackson (1998), a qualified fundraising leader requires four main competencies: (a) articulating the college's mission and vision, (b) creating a climate of support from key stakeholders, (c) devoting significant time and making significant personal gifts, and (d) development planning and implementation. The researchers also found that while development is primarily the function of the president, it depends upon harmonious team effort of the governing board, foundation board, and resource development professionals. As the team leader, the president is responsible for creating an organizational culture that is sensitive to fundraising opportunities.

In his qualitative research study, Miksa (2009) interviewed six new community college presidents to identify challenges, understand methods of gathering information, and present strategies for addressing these challenges. The study's findings indicated four main competencies for today's presidents: (a) fundraising, (b) building trust, (c) sharing the vision, and (d) building relationships. Breaux (2006), in her qualitative multiple case study, produced similar findings outlining fundraising skills, sharing the vision, and relationship building as essential competencies for aspiring presidents to attract external revenue sources.

Eldredge (1999) studied the leadership styles and management characteristics of 10 college presidents in their capacity as the institution's chief fundraiser. The majority of these participants came from academic backgrounds; however, each was actively involved in the college's fundraising initiatives. Even though not everyone enjoyed the process of raising money, they did see it as their responsibility. The researcher asserted that individuals whose prior

careers have been in development, advancement, government relations, alumni relations, or fundraising are well-positioned for the modern presidency because of the unique characteristics and skills they have developed: forge significant alliances, network in the community, think strategically, and cultivate donors to support the mission.

Duronio and Loessin (1991) found "as fund-raising success becomes critical to institutional prosperity, presidents of colleges and universities have been required to assume a greater direct role in fund raising, as well as greater responsibility for leadership of the entire fundraising program" (p. 198). They are responsible for articulating the mission and case for support, as well as achieving consensus among key stakeholders and constituencies.

The American Association of Community Colleges [AACC] (2011c) has collaborated extensively with its many constituencies to identify and endorse a set of core competencies for community college leaders. Unanimously approved by the AACC Board of Directors in 2005, this framework was intended to help emerging leaders gauge their own leadership status and now serves as the cornerstone of many leadership programs, as well as the focus of many research studies (Bechtel, 2010; Breaux, 2006; Curphy, 2011; Duree, 2007; Eddy, 2010; Hassan, 2008; Hassan, Dellow, & Jackson, 2010; McNair, 2010; Reid-Bunch, 2006; Schmitz, 2008). The six core competencies recommended by AACC for community college leaders included the following: (a) organizational strategy, (b) resource management, (c) communication, (d) collaboration, (e) advocacy, and (f) professionalism. In a recent quantitative study, Hassan (2008) surveyed 30 presidents and 29 trustee board chairpersons from New York and Florida to further validate these competencies. While there was a consensus among those surveyed that all six of the competencies were very or extremely important for successful community college leaders, seven of the presidents offered additional competencies for consideration: fundraising,

technology, political sensitive, negotiation skills, ethics, and legal skills. In a similar study, McNair (2010) asked California community college leaders to identify which core competencies were essential for effective leadership and to describe the way leaders best develop these competencies. Overall, respondents consistently agreed or somewhat agreed that the six core competencies were essential to the effective performance of administrators at their college; however, the participants also identified fundraising as an additional essential competency for community college presidents. Although it might be argued that fundraising is a component of resource management, respondents in both studies highlighted it as a separate, essential competency.

Christopher Shults pointed out in his 2001 research brief on community college leadership that new presidents feel underprepared to deal with key aspects of their job, including fundraising, financial management, and working effectively with governing boards. Although there is no specific blueprint for college leadership, the aforementioned skills have been identified as important for effective presidents. "In order to gain the skills and traits important to effective leaders, those senior leaders in the pipeline must have access to appropriate professional development" (Shults, 2001, p. 9). Shults found that the most frequently cited complaint about the presidency was that they had not fully understood the overwhelming and multifaceted nature of the job; however, according to Vaughn (1986), no one could ever fully anticipate the responsibilities and expectations of the college presidency.

Although community colleges are relative newcomers to fundraising, their close tie to business and industry, as well as the community offer promising opportunities for garnering private support. The president, with the right combination of fundraising skills and clear understanding of the mission, vision, and potential of the college, will be the one leading this

quest for adequate financial resources to enhance and transform their institutions. With both challenges and opportunities, advancement professionals are well prepared for certain aspects of the modern presidency; however, those traveling the traditional academic route will need proper training on effective fiscal leadership and fundraising in order to build their competencies. Because the president's role is critical to private endeavors, the primary concern is getting future leaders effectively prepared for this role or finding professionals who already possess the necessary skills and competencies to address these modern challenges.

Leadership Development and Preparation

According to the American Association of Community Colleges [AACC] (2012b), "the development and availability of well prepared leaders is vital to the continued success of community colleges and their students" (para. 1). A greater sense of urgency to prepare the next generation of leaders has arisen as turnover among current community college leadership escalates and the leadership gap grows. According to Hockaday and Puyear (2000), leadership is more like an art than a science and rests on the talent of persuasion rather than precision. So, in order to develop the necessary proficiencies crucial for effective leadership in an increasingly complex environment, individuals in the leadership pipeline must have access to the appropriate professional development. Since there is no one way to learn about leadership, a broad spectrum of opportunities will enhance the learning experience (Eddy, 2005).

Professional Development Programs

Community college leadership programs may take a variety of forms, including university-based programs and leadership institutes, according to Friedel (2010). Although the literature reveals that roles and responsibilities of community college leaders have changed over a period of 30 years, researchers are concerned with the lack of documentation regarding the

restructuring of higher education leadership programs to become attuned to the current realities faced by these executives (Boggs, 2003; Brown, Martinez, & Daniel, 2002; Nevarez & Wood, 2010). As holds true in any profession, skills and abilities required of successful presidents must be "constantly enhanced and applied if they are to serve the president and the college to the fullest," according to Vaughan and Weisman (1998, p. 126); therefore, a re-envisioning of these programs must occur to meet the societal needs of the 21st century and ensure the relevancy of this training. What are needed now are programs that specifically address the skills, competencies, and behaviors unique to the contemporary community college environment.

Taking into consideration the changing demands and requirements of the community college presidency, Hammons and Miller (2006) called for the "academic community to reflect critically on what community colleges need in terms of training, and to develop a response that is both professionally responsive and academically responsible" (p. 374). Hammons and Miller examined the needs and satisfaction of current community college presidents with graduate-level preparation programs. Findings from this study indicated structural and content changes based upon recommendations from 396 sitting presidents. Flexibility, targeted recruiting, and more practical real-world, case-study focused approach were among the structural changes recommended, while content-based suggestions included leadership, marketing, budgeting, and fundraising. These findings are applicable in a number of settings and embrace the changes reflected in the evolving nature of community colleges.

Other authors have also researched ways these graduate-level preparation programs can become more responsive to the needs and structure of community colleges. In her report on community college leadership programs of the 21st century, Amey (2006) commended newly created university-based programs for providing flexible scheduling and innovative delivery

methods, as well as alignment with the core competencies identified by AACC for effective community college leadership. As one might imagine, presidents are well educated with nearly 90% holding doctoral degrees (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). Considered the passport to community college leadership, the doctoral degree holds significant value for aspiring presidents regarding their competitiveness in the field, so effective training put forth by these programs must be grounded in knowledge and research that will truly prepare them for the unique settings in which they operate.

In contrast to doctoral programs, leadership institutes represent another facet of professional development that facilitate the transmission of relevant and practical application of skills. Vaughan and Weisman (1998) commended short-term skill-building programs as a means of helping to "fill in the gaps in experience of those aspiring to the presidency for those who do not have direct work experience at the senior administrative level" (p. 117). AACC has cataloged multiple short-term non-degreed leadership development programs, which address current and future challenges of the modern presidency. A newly announced collaboration between the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of Community College Trustees will focus on presidential leadership and community college governance. A new leadership training program for CEOs, "Surviving the First 120 Days in the Presidency," will address board relations, communication and goal setting, faculty relations, and effective community engagement. In conjunction with these efforts, AACC will also launch a training program for those who have taken nontraditional routes, but are interested in community college leadership.

The Future Leaders Institute prepares mid-level community college administrators who are ready to move into a higher level of leadership and focuses on topics like entrepreneurial

leadership. The New CEO Institute was designed specifically for first-time CEOs and covers essential topics such as board relations and finance as part of their workshop. For the more seasoned professionals, the Presidents Academy Summer Institute offers annual professional development for existing leaders through intensive focus on current challenges, emerging trends, and opportunities unique to that position. The Executive Leadership Institute hosted by the League of Innovation in the Community College addresses expectations of the presidency, board relations, and resource development.

Based on recent research findings, fundraising has been targeted as a specific area of development for current and aspiring community college leaders. Wallin (2010) surveyed 106 technical and community college presidents regarding their professional development needs. While fundraising curiously was not one of the areas to rate, participants identified fundraising as the primary skill to improve. It seems as though presidents are aware of the importance of this aspect of their careers and that fundraising training may be an important pre-presidential and presidential staff development need. Recognizing this need, the Council for Resource Development designed the Presidents Fundraising Academy, a workshop conducted for community college CEOs by their peers to create an emerging generation of community college presidents who are successful fundraisers for their institutions.

The aim of each of these aforementioned forms of specialized leadership development is to provide current or aspiring community college leaders with the tools and education to meet modern challenges, in addition to providing exposure and foundational training in these areas.

Mentoring

Mentoring can play a key role in developing future community college leaders, and while not having a mentor does not preclude one from the presidency it can lessen the overwhelming

nature of the modern presidency (Rabey, 2011). Because presidents no longer have the luxury of a grace period, Floyd, Maslin-Ostrowski, and Hrabak (2010) recommended they build a network of support of sitting and former presidents with whom and from whom they could learn. This novice-expert interaction can take place in informal as well as formal settings because solicitation and people skills are important in all settings. Insights gained from these relationships can provide self-awareness and valuable perspective for the participants. Fortunately, current presidents are reaching out to help others. According to Shults (2001), 76% of the CEOs who had been in their positions for more than three years had served as a formal mentor, while Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) found that more than 56% of survey respondents had "long-term, professionally centered relationships between themselves and another person in which the more experienced person provided career guidance to the person with less experience" (p. 13). Not only were these administrators receiving mentoring, the researchers also found that 60% of the respondents also served as a mentor to one or more persons.

Duree (2007), in his study on preparing community college leaders for the new millennium, found that 50% of respondents had participated in a mentoring relationship prior to their first presidency. In addition, 85% of his respondents strongly supported and have employed both formal and informal mentoring practices on their campuses. Rabey (2011) found that mentoring could enhance leadership and opportunities. The researcher recommended future presidents would greatly benefit from mentoring programs centered around resource development and relationship building since these challenges are characteristic of the modern presidency.

George Vaughan (2000) discussed enhancing presidential leadership in a new century. He recommended that new leaders should harness the talent of former presidents. Viewing them as a

valuable resource, he suggested finding ways to capitalize on their energy, talents, expertise, and experience. In these financially challenging times, former and current presidents are also offering their professional expertise to current leaders through published articles and books specifically related to fundraising advice. In 2011, Rita Bornstein, a former community college president and fundraiser, released a book entitled *Fundraising Advice for College and University Presidents: An Insider's Guide*, which guides chief executive officers in honing their fundraising skills in order to help their institutions prosper. G. Jeremiah Ryan, who has served in various capacities including the presidency and vice presidency for advancement, published a book in 2005 entitled *Community College Advancement: The Role of the President*, which details the crucial roles chief leaders play in the fundraising process. Mentoring creates better awareness and understanding of the emphasis placed on filling the pipeline to the community college presidency with diverse and qualified candidates who are prepared to lead amidst the complexity of the 21st century.

Leadership Pipeline

As the job of CEO becomes more complex, colleges are having a tougher time finding qualified people, according to a recent article by Ellie Ashford (2011) in the Community College Times. The reality that these jobs are ever more difficult to perform, especially with the increasing pressure to devote time and energy to matters removed from the core educational enterprise, is leading many who might otherwise aspire to these positions to shy away (Mead-Fox, 2009). Many authors have agreed that there is a significant and unprecedented turnover of current community college leadership on the horizon leaving an enormous gap in the collective memory and leadership of the college (Boggs, 2003; Duree, 2007; Ebbers, Conover, & Samuels, 2010; Garza Mitchell & Eddy, 2008; Shults, 2001). Shults (2001) reported nearly 70% of

community college presidents planned to retire by 2011; however, as Ashford (2011) pointed out the sluggish economy prompted many leaders to delay retirement based on declined investment income. Regardless, one of the best ways colleges can cultivate new leadership is to develop the talent they already have. Ebbers, Conover, and Samuels (2010) recommended succession planning. This dynamic dichotomy creates challenge and opportunity: a challenge to identify qualified professionals to replace those individuals who are retiring, and an opportunity to identify people with a new vision, a vivid sense of what the college should look like and where it is going in the near and intermediate future, that fits the needs of the modern community college. These massive retirements will create extensive leadership opportunities for a new generation, but the question remains whether there will be an adequate pool of qualified professionals to satisfy the shortage.

To effectively address this modern challenge, community college administrators and governing boards must identify new leaders and provide them the opportunity to acquire and practice the skills they will need to lead colleges into the 21st century. This changing of the guard, evidenced in recent study by Garza Mitchell and Eddy (2008), highlights a need to think differently about how community colleges recruit leaders. The profile of the traditional college president has remained fairly consistent for many years, a fact that has been highlighted by two recent reports: The American Council on Education (ACE) On the Pathway to the Presidency Study and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) 2006 Career and Lifestyle Survey. Both research reports demonstrated the continued prevalence of white males with doctorate degrees as leaders of these colleges. However, while the AACC report described a leveling off of female presidents (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007), ACE reported a proportional increase in women leaders at associate degree institution with 29% in presidencies and 52%

senior administrative roles (King & Gomez, 2008). With regard to pathways, both research studies confirmed that academic affairs was still the most common trajectory, representing nearly 40% of all presidency hires; however, ACE reportedly found that 23% of those in their first presidency held senior executive positions in non-academic areas such as finance, development, or student affairs.

As colleges determine how to fill the leadership gap, they must find ways to increase the pipeline of aspiring leaders who embody the necessary qualifications for the role. Vaughn (1986) alluded to the path of the presidency changing over the years, especially during period of crisis, to include persons with specific talents who may not normally be considered for such a position. Vaughan and Weisman (1998) stated that even though the most common pathway to the presidency has been through academic administration, gaining access to the presidential pipeline will require holding a doctorate degree, demonstrating leadership skills, and understanding the college from a broad perspective. They further proposed rethinking access to the pipeline in order to improve the odds of finding successful candidates. Hockaday and Puyear (2000) suggested developing a new generation of leaders at all administrative levels by identifying and encouraging those beyond the typical profile is imperative if community colleges are to be successful in an increasingly complex environment.

The advancement professional has become the subject of recent investigations as a possible pathway to the presidency. Buchanan (1997) pointed out that advancement professionals are in an extremely advantageous position to assume the presidency due to their high degree of relationship building, collaboration, and strategic planning required by their current position. Murphy (1997) edited a series of essays authored by presidents who entered the field through advancement. The chapters provide an overview of the leadership principles of an effective

advancement president. The presidents examined issues related to teaching, strategic planning, board development, and partnerships. Chitwood and Jones (2007) also illustrated the close parallels between advancement professionals and presidents, citing the high transferability of skills between the two positions:

Advancement/Development Professionals have always had to articulate and promote the shared mission, vision, and values of both the internal and external audiences. They've always had to maintain open communication with campus and community constituencies regarding resource needs, priorities, and expectations for the future. Being able to listen actively, understand, comprehend, and analyze those needs have made advancement/development officers successful at writing and managing grants; interacting with industries, foundations, and state and federal agencies. (p. 2)

Chitwood and Jones (2007) anticipated an increasing number of community college development professionals moving into presidencies as the climate requiring presidents to possess fundraising credentials reaches a critical point. The researchers found "in today's community colleges, fundraising is not an option; it's a necessity, vital to the current existence and the future of the colleges" (p. 2). Considering the highly transferable skills of college development officers, the emerging pattern is a perfect fit. Payton (1989) said, "For presidents of all sorts of institutions, fund raising is an inescapable fact of life . . . in an increasing number of cases, fund-raising effectiveness is the key to the office – both getting in and staying in" (p. 33). A recent article from *Inside Higher Ed* confirmed the evolving role of the community college president is changing in terms of how they spend their time, why they are hired and how long they spend in the job (Redden, 2007, para. 8). For instance, Steven Budd, president of New Hampshire Community Technical College at Claremont came to his current presidency by way

of an assistant vice president for advancement position at Massachusetts' Springfield Technical College. Budd believed institutional development is becoming a pathway to the two-year college presidency. Gaskin (1997) believed presidents should capitalize on their own unique talents and experiences to enhance college operations, so leveraging skills and competencies from their previous fundraising experience may prove of great value to the modern presidency.

For the last decade, many authors have suggested that the career path to the presidency is now open to development professionals (Besikof, 2010; Eldredge, 1999; Jones, 2010; Payton, 1989), as they bring the skills that are central to the president's responsibilities. Shults (2001) advised presidential hopefuls who are not currently in the academic pipeline to develop their skills in a breadth of leadership competencies, including strategic planning, human and financial resource management, collaboration, and advocacy, which will make them competitive with academic administrators. Payton (1989), however, argued that higher education professionals whose jobs include fundraising, brand management, and alumni relations are, in essence, serving as "mini presidents" already. These professionals have always had to articulate and promote shared mission, vision, and values to both internal and external audiences, as well as maintain open communication with various constituencies making college presidency a natural fit. Buchanan (1997) ascertained that advancement professionals who are seeking to lead an institution could not be better suited to the challenges of institutional leadership based on their acquired skills and attributes.

Boggs (2003) postulated that "future leaders will be selected because of their demonstrated knowledge and skills . . . they will need opportunities to learn, to develop, and to practice these skills through simulations, internships, and mentorships" (p. 20). The issues that future leaders will face will be different and more complex than those faced by their

predecessors. Presidential searches have always had high stakes, but today's selection committees are challenged with finding a leader to meet the needs of today and tomorrow. New views are emerging about the dynamics of this position, leading more committees to strongly consider development and advancement vice presidents over academic vice presidents. Higher education experts say search committees are looking for candidates with experience working with external constituencies as college presidents play a more public role (Masterson, 2010).

Bornstein (2011) agreed finding that governing boards typically include fundraising effectiveness as one of the specific areas for which they hold their presidents accountable. According to John Thornburgh, senior vice president of Witt/Kieffer which conducts about two dozen president or chancellor searches each year, "it's all about being in a position that allows a person to get full exposure to both the internal and external skills about ability that equip someone to be president" (Ezarik, 2010, p. 48). Presidential searches have always had high stakes, but today's campus search committees and search firms have a more challenging task than ever. To help meet the leadership needs of today and tomorrow, new views are emerging about what it means to be at the top and how to get there (Ezarik, 2010). With continued budget reductions and increasing enrollment demands, it stands to reason that boards seeking a leader to hit the ground running as a knowledgeable fundraiser will need to look beyond academic credentials and conduct a more effective assessment of prior fundraising experience and willingness to learn.

Modern presidents will need opportunities to learn, develop, and practice these skills, so leadership programs should be structured to provide such opportunities for professional development. A collaborative spirit coupled with an in-depth understanding of need to invest in external relationships will characterize the modern presidency. Individuals aspiring to this role

must be willing to perform strategic goal setting, set a future vision, exhibit passion for the institution, and inspire the community and potential donors through storytelling.

Summary

Community colleges are constantly challenged to find new ways to meet the needs of multiple constituents, and yet traditional funding methods are not keeping pace. Therefore, a quest for external resources has led to the recognition of fundraising as an important part of fiscal leadership. This course requires visionary leadership that looks beyond traditional practices to find a sustainable revenue stream that will allow the college to achieve its mission. As the "living logo," it is the college president who has been tasked with leading this charge, which requires a greater focus on externally oriented relationships, partnerships, and collaborative ventures. With the right leadership, public two-year colleges have inherent capacity to effectively solicit and secure external dollars.

The reliance on alternative resources for support has become a reality, which means further diversification is imperative for the future. The increased competition for private resources cannot wait for on-the-job-training to prepare future leaders for the challenges ahead; therefore, professionals interested in pursuing a presidency at the community college level should come prepared for a newly defined role. With the "graying" presidency and threat of leadership deficiencies, filling the pipeline with qualified leaders has become a major concern. Leadership development programs need to reflect the current status of community colleges and better prepare them with relevant information about leadership in the 21st century.

While a plethora of information exists on community college presidents, these studies only illuminate those who have arrived at the most senior leadership position. There are few empirical studies that thoroughly examine the evolution of unconventional career paths or what

organizational strategies might be appropriate for supporting alternative trajectories. Considering the evolving nature of the presidency, resource development has been identified as a good training ground for the presidency. The skills and competencies that these professionals acquire as a result of their development experiences appear to be highly transferable to the modern presidency. Based on the literature, this study aims to provide evidence that there are relatively few higher education professionals better prepared for the modern presidency than the one who has mastered the skills acquired in a college resource development office.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research inquiry was to examine community college presidents with former full-time fundraising experience and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. A collective case study was employed to gain a thorough understanding of the professional experiences of these presidents.

Research Design

This study was grounded based on the research methodology, which were the principles and ideas guiding the procedures and strategies. A form of educational research, a qualitative approach to research focused on meaning and understanding of the central phenomenon using the researcher as the primary instrument for collecting and analyzing data. This type of research allowed the data to have primacy. The theoretical framework was not predetermined, but derived directly from the data, and provided the structure and framing on which this study was built. The research design was not strictly predefined before the start of the research, as to permit the data to generate new theoretical ideas.

Qualitative research is "best suited for research programs in which you do not know the variables and need to explore" (Creswell, 2008, p. 53). According to Merriam (2009), the rationale behind this investigative, inductive methodology is to achieve an understanding of how people make sense of their lives and to interpret those meanings using inductive approach. For the current study, a qualitative approach was appropriate because the intent was to explore the impact of previous fundraising experience on the community college presidency. As a process of inquiry, qualitative research seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative, rich description to inform the researcher's understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon (Creswell, 2008). Today,

qualitative research has gained widespread acceptance as a credible form of inquiry and researchers recognize its usefulness to investigators. It's emerging and interpretive design allows researchers to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within a natural setting (Creswell & Miller, 1997).

Case Study

This inquiry was guided by a qualitative research design known as case study. Case study, a type of ethnographic research, was employed to explore the bounded system of individuals through extensive data collection. According to Stake (2008), case studies have become one of the most common forms of qualitative inquiry. "Case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and pays close attention to the influence of its social, political, and other contexts" (p. 120). As an empirical inquiry, the theoretical underpinnings of this design allow investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. According to Yin (2009), this method has a "distinct advantage when 'how' or 'why' questions are being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control" (p. 13). The descriptive nature of this design provides a comprehensive understanding of the situation and the meaning involved. Merriam (2009) described a case study as "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40).

A multi-case study, also known as a collective case study, was best suited to illuminate the topic of inquiry by focusing on individual stories rather than the broader picture and norms allowing for exploration into the lives of individuals on a very deep and personal level (Creswell, 2008). Through a rigorous sampling procedure, a group of community college presidents was identified as a collective case. This design was particularly well suited for this study because the inquiry focused on this group's ability to facilitate an understanding of the impact of prior full-

time fundraising on two-year college presidents. Additionally, the design simplified the process of integrating multiple types of data into the analysis (Merriam, 1998). Through rich, thick description and analysis, the case studies helped to further investigate common themes. The results are intended to inform current and future presidents, as well as demonstrate to the two-year college community that the traditional career route of academic affairs may not best serve the modern presidency.

Sampling

The target population consisted of current sitting presidents of public two-year colleges with a fundraising background. Well-defined population parameters established criteria for sampling and included participants who held presidencies at public two-year colleges, regardless of size and setting, for a minimum of one year and formerly served as full-time fundraisers in a community college setting. Recognizing that professional titles and job duties vary among institutions, the study was not limited to a specific range of titles such as Vice President for Advancement, Foundation Executive Director, Director of Development, etc., but rather on the fundraising experience itself. Community college contexts were limited to those with institutionally affiliated foundations.

Homogeneous sampling was employed to purposefully select the community college presidents to obtain rich information and ensure they each embody the defining characteristic of a fundraising background. Creswell (2008) recommended this type of sampling when looking for similar traits or characteristics. Qualitative research emphasizes the quality of data over quantity, ultimately providing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon; therefore, I focused on three case studies.

I consulted several resources including national organizations like the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), and the Council for Resource Development (CRD) and found no evidence of a comprehensive means of identifying, tracking, or assessing the professional credentials of community college presidents nationwide. However, the Executive Director of CRD expressed a personal interest in helping me identify participants for my study. Because of her in-depth knowledge of the field and continuous involvement with community college resource development professionals, she inherently had connections with community college presidents nationwide who entered the position by way of the development field. She provided me with the names and contact information for active community college presidents whom she knew personally or encountered through their professional involvement with her organization.

Initially, I sent email correspondence (Appendix A) to these 10 presidents who were identified by CRD as coming through the resource development field to ensure a target population existed for my study. In that communication, I introduced my research topic and inquired about their experience with full-time fundraising prior to their presidency, the extent of their direct involvement with fundraising activities, title held, the type of the organization for which they raised funds, and the length of tenure in that role. I received six positive responses indicating their eligibility for the study with only one who responded negatively, as she indicated she had mostly worked with grants, marketing, and public relations for her institution with no direct one-on-one fundraising experience. After determining the existence of an adequate target population, I requested official approval to conduct the study through the University of Arkansas' Institutional Review Board (IRB), which guaranteed minimal risk to participants by ensuring the use of safe, ethical practices in my research. In the interest of time and due to the

initial success communicating with the target population via electronic correspondence, email continued to be the main mode of communication with the subjects.

After receiving official IRB approval to begin my study, a formal letter of participation (Appendix B) was emailed to each of the six candidates in the target population, which included those who had responded to the initial email and self-identified as meeting the criteria. Follow-up protocol included a second email within three days to those who had not yet responded. After a week's time, the five subjects who responded positively and agreed to participate composed the initial sample. From there, secondary criteria of an institutionally related foundation helped to narrow the sample from five to three case study participants. I confirmed with the selected participants via email, attached an informed consent form to be completed and returned as shown in Appendix C, as well as began setting dates for site visits and interviews. The signed informed consent form included a detailed synopsis of the study and a description of what was expected from the participants. Completion of this paperwork was necessary before commencing the study to ensure their full understanding of the nature of the study and willingness to participate. As part of this site visit, I also planned to visit with the director of the institutionally related foundation as a supplementary source to corroborate evidence and triangulate the data. The two presidents who were not selected were notified via email, but thanked for their interest in my research. Throughout the study, I changed the names of all participants, places, and people mentioned in order to maintain confidentiality and privacy. I selected pseudonyms to identify each of the participants in order for them to retain their anonymity.

Data Collection

Each case study was performed onsite within its natural context. In this qualitative study, in-depth, open-ended interviews served as the primary method for data collection, as well as

observational field notes, document collection, and journaling to ensure the credibility of the study. Interviews with the foundation directors at these institutions served as the secondary data source. These methods were selected because they facilitated the close examination of the presidents and the degree of impact their previous fundraising experience had on their current position.

Researcher as Instrument

My interest in this topic resulted from a five-year career as a professional fundraiser at my local community college. The lens through which I viewed this topic was my own fundraising experience. This shared background helped me gain access to the participants' experiences and develop an initial rapport. The participants modeled a career track to which I aspire, confirming for me the realistic opportunity that exists for my professional future.

As a qualitative researcher, I served as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Because my unique perspectives and views could not be kept completely separate from interpretations, my personal reflections about the meaning of the data were included in the research study. However, according to Creswell (2008), I was well positioned to reflect and remark on the larger meaning of the data based on my immersion during the site visits and personal interaction with the participants.

Field Tests

Prior to conducting the interviews to be used for this study, the interview questions were field tested with two current college presidents: a community college president who had been heavily involved in institutional fundraising and a four-year university president who had risen through the ranks with a successful career in development prior to his presidency. Due to the study's relatively small target population, it was not feasible to capture an audience that matched

the exact characteristics of the participants; however, the two field test subjects were selected because of their expertise and familiarity with fundraising in the higher education arena, as well as their close proximity to the researcher. Their confidential interviews were conducted on-site at each of the subjects' respective institutions within the hour allotted time period. The researcher noted concerns or questions presented by the field test subjects and made changes to the instrument accordingly, including minor modifications to the phrasing of two of the questions. The field test strengthened the study by ensuring the interview questions were clear and concise, as well as provided an added measure of confidence for the researcher.

Interviews

I performed one-day site visits at the participants' campuses. During each visit, I conducted a face-to-face, semi-structured interview with the president to engage them in open-ended discussion about their experiences. According to Creswell (2008), face-to-face interviewing is ideal for "participants who are not hesitant to speak, are articulate, and who can share ideas comfortably," (p. 226). In their role as chief administrators and executives, community college presidents are accustomed to sharing their perspectives and ideals with ease in front of an audience. One week prior to the interview, I sent them a profile sheet for the purpose of gathering demographic data (Appendix D). In addition, I also sent them an electronic version of the interview guide (Appendix E) to review, so we could make the best possible use our interview time.

The face-to-face interview helped set the stage for my study with a series of questions regarding the participant's skills and competencies and previous fundraising experiences. I informed each participant of my plan to tape record the interview, as well as make notes, all of which remained confidential. A high-quality recording device, Sony Stereo Digital Voice

Recorder ICD-UX512, was employed to ensure the accuracy of the data collection and to permit the researcher to be more attentive to the respondents' answers. A hard copy of the interview guide was furnished to the participants for reference during the interview. During the interviews, the researcher took notes by recording key phrases and comments made by the participants on the interview guide. Two of the interviews lasted approximately one hour each and were conducted on-site in the president's office. The other participant was able to allocate two hours for the interview; however, there was less time to shadow so the interview was crucial in order to gather an appropriate amount of data.

Using a set of open-ended questions that I prepared in advance, the one-on-one interviews allowed me to explore the previous experiences that shaped each participant's current role as leader of their institution and the impact of that experience on their current role. A standardized format was utilized to ensure that the same set of questions was posed to each participant. The use of unrestricted response questions enabled the participants to voice their personal experiences without an undue influence from the researcher (Creswell, 2008). Use of the interview guide ensured that every question was posed and answered to the degree necessary to meet the study's research objectives. Unscripted, follow-up, and clarification questions were also used to gather more in-depth descriptions from the participants and to answer any remaining questions that emerged from the shadowing process, campus tour, or the document collection conducted prior to the site visit. I was able to gain significant insight during the focused one-on-one interviews conducted during the day. As a method of follow-up, I sent each participant a handwritten notecard (Appendix F) expressing my thanks for their time.

I also had the opportunity at each campus to visit with the person responsible for the operations of the college's institutionally related foundation for about an hour. I requested access

to this person prior to my visit, hoping it would help me triangulate my data through corroboration with another individual (Creswell, 2008). At each campus, this person held the title of Executive Director of the Foundation. As my peers, I was able to establish an immediate connection through our common bond and shared interest. I prepared questions ahead of time that would allow me to explore the interrelationship between the college and foundation and the overall importance placed on development operations by the president. I did not provide a copy of these questions to the informants, but rather used them as a guide for our conversation: How does the foundation fit into the overall organizational structure of the college? Has that organizational structure changed under the current president's leadership? To what extent is the college president involved with the foundation? How does the foundation fit into the overall strategic plan of the college? What philanthropic projects have you completed under the leadership of the president? What can be seen as a result of her leadership in fundraising? I took prescriptive field notes during the conversation and recorded them in my journal.

Transcription of the taped interviews began immediately following the interviews upon my arrival back home. I began the transcription process by listening to the full tape in its entirety and then typing sentence by sentence, which helped me be re-familiarized with the data. Next, each participant was emailed a transcribed copy of their interview and asked to validate the accuracy of the information as it was presented that day. A copy of the member checking correspondence is included in Appendix G. Each interviewee was asked to reply with their comments within two and a half weeks or the researcher would assume there were no changes. Audio files, interview forms, transcriptions, and member checking responses generated during the inquiry were stored in a secured location by the researcher.

Observational Field Notes

During each campus visit, I shadowed the participant for as much of the day as possible and compiled field notes. According to Creswell (2008), "observation is the process of gathering open-ended information, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site" (p. 221). Observation, which was conducted as part of this study, was an advantageous form of data collection because it allowed the researcher to gather information and study individual behavior as it occurs in a natural setting. Due to the nature of their business, community college presidents engage in daily activities that include privileged content; however, my shadowing was never limited during the day. I followed two of the presidents during a typical day and was given full access to their activities, which resulted in meetings both on and off campus, leadership team meetings, community board meetings, executive-level discussion concerning human resource matters, conference calls regarding funding, etc. One of these presidents also invited me to attend their annual holiday reception the evening before my site visit, which was an added measure observation. I was only able to spend a half-day with the first case study participant, which resulted in an expanded interview of two hours followed by a personalized tour of the campus.

For the most part, I took on the role of a nonparticipant observer, which Creswell (2008) defined as "an observer who visits a site and records notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants" (p. 222). For the meetings and activities I attended, I sat on the periphery and recorded extensive, descriptive notes in my observational and self-reflexive journals. I also became familiar with each campus, including a tour of the facilities and grounds to get a better feel for the overall operations and condition of the campus environments. I tried to make myself known, but primarily remained unobtrusive so as not to disturb the natural habitat or subjects within it.

Journal Entries

Throughout the research process, I regularly reflected on my personal accounts and recorded those thoughts and impressions in a reflexive journal. My personal reflections on the interviews and all aspects of the study let me capture all my experiences in the field. Such reflections assisted me in understanding my perceptions of the presidents' interpretations of their experiences and the context in which those experiences were described. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), this methodical process allows the researcher to fully understand why they make certain decisions and reflect upon them in relation to their own values and interests.

Document Analysis

In addition to the other methods of data collection, I also gathered documents that pertained to each participant's professional development and journey to the presidency. "Collecting personal documents can provide a researcher with a rich source of information," according to Creswell (2008, p. 231). Participants provided me with a variety of documents, and I also conducted internet searches and research to produce the following compilation: vitaes, strategic plans, organizational charts, press coverage of their fundraising success, campaign materials, and self-authored articles on fundraising. Before the site visit, I studied the background information on each participant and became very knowledgeable about their professional journey, which proved helpful in establishing a rapport with each one and validating the information obtained during the interviews.

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Data Analysis

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Qualitative research uses inductive analysis. "Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980, p. 306). Data

collected for this study, which included interview transcripts, observational notes, and pertinent documents, were analyzed and interpreted in order to make sense of the information and form answers to the research questions. Following the six steps set forth by Creswell (2008) to analyze and interpret the qualitative data, the researcher performed the following: "preparing and organizing the data, exploring and coding the database, describing findings and forming themes, representing and reporting findings, interpreting the meaning of the findings, and validating the accuracy of the findings" (p. 243).

I initially prepared the data for analysis by organizing the information into computer files with a dedicated folder for each participant. I also developed a matrix, which helped organize the material by type: interviews, observations, documents, and other visual materials. I transcribed the audio files from the interviews and converted them to text data. I got a general sense of the data by reading each of the transcripts carefully and jotting down ideas in the margins.

Coding

Through the process of "hand analysis" (Creswell, 2008, p. 246), a line-by-line review was performed multiple times before marking it by hand and dividing it into parts. A "preliminary exploratory analysis" (p. 250) allowed me to make sense of the data and obtain a greater understanding of its organization. Next, I further analyzed the text by dividing it into segments and labeling the segments with key words and phrases in the left margin. In vivo coding, the use of participants' own words to label the text was utilized. In the right margin, I made notes using a color-coding method with each color representing an emerging theme. After coding the text, I created a master list of all the codes for examination and then grouped them based on similarity.

Themes

As suggested by Creswell (2008), I used the master list of codes to develop themes or categories that best described the major ideas within the research. The recurrence of certain words and phrases served as the basis for generating the study's themes. Codes with the most evidential support were also included in the development of the themes. An analysis of themes within each context across each of the individual cases was performed multiple times until no new insights were revealed. Describing and developing themes from the data allowed me to answer the major research questions and begin forming an in-depth understanding of the central phenomenon.

In order to validate the findings, I performed member checks with the help of the presidents. To ensure the accuracy of each account, I sent the case study participants an electronic copy of their unique interview transcript and requested verification of the information as it was presented to me that day. In my correspondence, I provided a specific date by which to respond with any comments or changes and explained if I did not receive a response then I would assume there were no changes. Two of the presidents responded with minor adjustments, which I made with no hesitation; however, I received no response from the second president so as I had indicated in my email I assumed there were no necessary changes.

Research Rigor

In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings and achieve an added measure of validation for my study, I determined its accuracy through a number of measures. Qualitative researchers such as Creswell (2008) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) have shared these ideas: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

The researcher's credibility was established through an extensive literature review, preparation and training for the study, as well as professional experiences. Two types of data were systemically analyzed in this case study to improve the inquiry's quality: interviews and documents. The inquiry's data were obtained from in-depth interviews with three community college presidents. Credibility was maximized by the use of triangulation and member checks. Data triangulation is the process of "corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection," (Creswell, 2008, p. 266). By conducting informal interviews with secondary sources on campus, the researcher was able to triangulate the data and confirm the participants' accounts. Additionally, a reflexive journal was maintained that included personal notes and reflections to enhance the study. Member checking guaranteed the legitimacy of the study by providing the participants with an opportunity to review the account to ensure its accuracy.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized to other contexts or settings. It is usually the responsibility of the reader to determine whether the results are applicable to their specific situation. This study's transferability was enhanced through the rich, thick description of data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A considerable amount of data related to participants' experiences were collected, analyzed, and presented in this study. This study's results included detailed demographic and situational descriptions, as well as multiple perspectives surrounding a common phenomenon.

Dependability

Dependability or consistency of the results is another important factor in trustworthiness of a study. While there is no prescriptive way of perfectly replicating a study in qualitative research, the researcher made her best attempt at representing and communicating protocol while maintaining transparency. Patton (2002) stated that the research must take precaution to "fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study (p. 433). A major technique in establishing consistency of a study is an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using a portable filing system, a well-documented audit trail was established, including all of the study's raw data: a thorough record of significant events, email correspondence with the participants, interview transcriptions, collected documents, and field notes. The audit trail made it possible for an external check to be conducted to confirm and strengthen the dependability of this research.

Confirmability

The final trustworthiness construct, confirmability, addresses the researcher's ability to remain neutral during the study and considers the extent to which the findings are shaped by the researcher versus the participants. "An inquiry is judged in terms of the degree to which its findings are the product of the focus of its inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Qualitative research inherently presumes that the researcher brings a unique perspective to the study; however, the researcher made every attempt to avoid premature bias and allow the results to unfold based upon the participants' experiences. A close examination of the data collection methods and analysis procedures allowed the researcher to determine the source of the researcher's interpretations, recommendations, and conclusions.

Summary

This study utilized a qualitative, case study theory methodology as its basis. The purpose of this study was to examine community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. Purposive, homogeneous sampling was used to intentionally select individuals for the study. A semi-structured interview format was selected for the primary method of data collection. Utilizing the hand analysis procedure, the researcher identified key terms, which were then grouped into codes. Through the connection of threads and patterns within the codes, broader themes were developed. A set of criteria addressing the rigor of qualitative research design was utilized to evaluate the trustworthiness of the study.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data collected and analyzed in this qualitative inquiry are presented in this chapter. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. The initial interviews were executed during a two-week period in December 2011; however, the comprehensive data collection occurred over a 12-month period. It should be noted that personally interviewing and observing three community college presidents face-to-face onsite at their college within a short timeframe is a logistically challenging task. These executives, all purposefully selected, have extremely busy schedules. Most, if not all, work seven days a week and travel extensively; however, not one declined to participate, which demonstrated their commitment and dedication to helping further research in the development field.

The chapter presents collective biographical and professional profiles of the participant cases studied, as well as methods of data collection and analysis. In-depth interviews served as the primary data source for this study, in addition to written materials obtained through document collection, observational field notes, and journal entries performed by the researcher. As a part of the case descriptions, substantial narrative provides the setting context, as well as a detailed portrait of the individual participants.

Description of Participant Cases

In this inquiry, a sample of three community college presidents was identified. Qualitative samples are characteristically small in size because they yield rich information. According to Creswell (2008), "the overall ability of a researcher to provide an in-depth picture

diminishes with the addition of each new individual or site" (p. 217); therefore, sample sizes must be kept relatively small in order to thoroughly understand the complexity of the data. In order to appropriately categorize each institution, the researcher consulted the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education framework (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2011). At the time of the study, all of the participants were serving as first-time chief executive officers of a Carnegie-classified public, single-campus two-year college with an institutionally related foundation. Although the study focused on presidents who had full-time fundraising experience at some point in their professional career, each participant intriguingly ascended to the presidency directly from their fundraising role. Each respondent exhibited a strong interest in the study and offered personal anecdotes and valuable insights that contributed to the complexity of the case.

Pseudonyms, which are fictitious names given to study participants, were assigned to protect each contributor's identity. Participants were assigned a pseudonym in Table 1, indicated by Community College President 1 (CCP1), Community College President 2 (CCP2), and Community College President 3 (CCP3). The same pseudonyms were maintained throughout the study, including in the biographical narratives. The timing of the researcher's visit to each campus determined the assigned numbered pseudonym. So for example, CCP1 was the first campus visited, and so on. The numbering does not represent any type of hierarchical order or order of importance.

Table 1 illustrates the selected biographical data of study participants including: gender, age, race or ethnicity, number of years in their current position, and percentage of time spent on fundraising in their current position. The American Association of Community Colleges published two studies by Weisman and Vaughan (2002; 2007) presenting the results of a 2001

and 2006 survey of the community college presidency. Presidents responding to the 2006 survey were slightly older with an average age of 58 than was the case in earlier surveys. The average age of the current study's participants was 60 years of age. All of the current study's participants self-identified as White, which was consistent with data from the aforementioned studies. With regard to gender, one of the most important findings of 2001 study was the increase in the proportion of female community college presidents. The study's participants closely reflect the existing data, as they were all females. The average presidential tenure in both the 2001 and 2006 studies was seven years; however, the current study's participants had extreme varying lengths of service with an average tenure of nine years. Weisman and Vaughn also explored the percentage of time presidents spend on various tasks. They found that presidents spent 9.5% in 2001 and 11.5% in 2006 of their time on fundraising as part of their presidential tasks. Following this upward trend, the current study's participants indicated a proportionately higher percentage of time committed to fundraising activities than the previous research: 15%, 65%, and 20% respectively.

Table 1

Selected Biographical Data of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Age Range	Race/Ethnicity	# Years in Current Position	% Time Currently Spent on Fundraising
CCP1	Female	55-60	White	1–5	15
CCP2	Female	60-65	White	6–10	65
CCP3	Female	60-65	White	16 +	20

Table 2 illustrates a compilation of professional characteristics exhibited by the participants including: current position, former positions held, and earned academic credentials. In likeness to the 2001 and 2006 survey results from Weisman and Vaughn (2002; 2007), all of

the current study's participants have terminal degrees with fields of study in education. In contrast with the survey data, the current study's participants were only in their first presidency and ascended to their position from a vice presidency in advancement. According to Weisman and Vaughn (2007), even though the pathway to the presidency has many entry points, the most traveled route has been through academics. Previous survey data indicated that the presidency was not typically comprised of professionals drawn from the development field; however, the current case studies represent a deviation from the norm. Chitwood and Jones (2007) reported that the catalyst for today's emerging trend of more non-academic administrators could be attributed to the "business approach" of running a college. The authors also found that these nontraditional presidents typically come from the areas of finance, institutional advancement, or student affairs.

Table 2

Selected Professional Profile of Study Participants

Participant	Higher Education Career Path	Educational Attainment
CCP1	Community College President Other Positions Held: Vice President for Advancement, Planning and College Relations; Vice President for Advancement and Student Services; Executive Assistant to President; Director of Marketing and Communications	Ph.D. Doctor of Philosophy *Higher Education Leadership* M.B.A. Master of Business Administration B.A. Bachelor of Arts *Arts, Communication, Spanish*
CCP2	Community College President Other Positions Held: Vice President for Institutional Advancement & Executive Director of Foundation; Associate Head of School for Institutional Advancement & Acting Head of School; Director of Resource Development; Director of Planning and Development; Executive Director for Foundation; Assistant to Interim CEO; Special Assistant to the President; Director of Development; Director of College Advancement; Director of Admissions; Registrar; Director of Financial Aid	Ed.D. Doctor of Education *Educational Administration and Leadership* M.A. Master of Arts *Educational Administration and Leadership*
CCP3	Community College President Other Positions Held: Vice President for Development & Executive Director of Foundation; Provost; Dean of Student Services; Director of Student Services; Speech/English Instructor	Ed.D. Doctor of Education *Higher Education Administration* M.A. Master of Arts *Communication* B.A. Bachelor of Arts *Speech* A.A. Associate in Arts

Community College President One (CCP1)

Community College President One had worked in the community college world for the last 24 years. She started her career in higher education as the director of marketing and communications and then became executive assistant to the president where she took leadership of the institutionally affiliated foundation, launching the college's first-ever external fundraising efforts. She then moved into the role of vice president for advancement and student services, which later evolved into the vice president for advancement, planning, and college relations where she led efforts to raise nearly $30 million. Her prior development experience included capital projects, endowments, and public-private partnerships where she was involved in everything from planning to implementation and stewardship. She enjoyed the variety of development work and the exposure to other functional areas of the college. In addition, she felt it was a good training ground for the presidency because of the high degree of relationship building involved. CCP1 has been actively involved in CRD and CASE, presenting at their respective conferences, as well as publishing articles all related to the topic of community college fundraising.

Initial contact with CCP1 requesting participation in the study was made by email with positive return correspondence late that same evening. My first observation was that CCP1 was direct, punctual, and organized. The remaining correspondence was conducted via her assistant who agreed to follow up on the president's availability to help schedule my site visit, as well as get the necessary paperwork completed and documents collected prior to my visit.

When I arrived on the campus, I first noticed the sprawling landscape of rolling hills scattered with established, mature trees. As I traversed the winding road to find my destination, I found that the building for which I was looking was named for the institution's first president. I

made note that the president's office was located in the student services building, an initial impression of a student-centered focus. As I entered the building, a portrait of the founding president greeted me in the foyer. CCP1 has served in this role for the last three years and is only the second president of this medium-sized urban institution since it transitioned from a technical college to a community college to better reflect the college's mission. The campus seemed quiet, but I was later informed that finals were over and most of the students were gone for the holiday break and the college closes at one o'clock on Fridays. I was a little early for my appointment, so I toured the building only to happen upon a faculty and staff holiday party in the multi-purpose room. I introduced myself to the campus security officer who was visiting with another staff member nearby. After inquiring about my study and site visit, the vice president for information technology introduced herself and offered to escort me to the president's office. She was very friendly and very complimentary of their current president. After checking in with the President's assistant, she escorted me to my first meeting with the person responsible for their institutionally related foundation. His office was located one floor down from the president's office, and I had one hour's time with him.

The executive director of advancement and foundation was a distinguished gentleman who was no stranger to the development field. He was eloquent and polished with an impressive array of fundraising experiences, which obviously made him a desirable candidate for his current position. His position reported directly to the president, an arrangement that had been in place during CCP1's tenure. He confirmed the president's mastery of the field and commented "she's like carrying the ace of spades with you" when referring to their fundraising calls to donors in the community. He also described her willingness to be out there with him, as well as her natural ability to know when to come into the conversation to make the ask. The president actively

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engages with the foundation and its board of directors. As an ex-officio member of their board, she provides college updates and reports at their bimonthly board meetings. Under her leadership, the foundation has celebrated major fundraising successes, including scholarships and capital projects.

After finishing our conversation, the executive director accompanied me back to the president's office. The rest of the office was quiet as it was after one o'clock and everyone else had gone for the day. CCP1 had just arrived from an off-campus lunch with her son who had just returned home from overseas with the Air Force. She greeted me with a smile and invited me to join her in her office quarters. My initial impression was that she was extremely friendly and inquisitive, which put me at ease right away. The interview with CCP1 was conducted in the private conference room just adjacent to her office. Her communication style was very direct and personal. When she answered the interview questions, she would find ways to relate to me, the interviewer, with comments like, "I don't know if that's how you do it at your college," or inquire about my professional journey. She was very deliberate in her comments, taking her time to think as she spoke with thoughtful pauses delivered by a soft tone of voice.

With 24 years of community college experience, CCP1 felt she was ready for a presidency once she finished her doctorate degree. She had waited until her children were grown before she pursued her terminal degree because she had gotten her M.B.A. while her twin boys were small and did not want to go through that again. She was very open and honest about her work schedule and the fact that she is constantly connected to the office via technology. "As presidents our time is so short. I work probably on average at least 60 hours a week – that's a minimum. I really don't know because I don't know where my day begins and ends. It's

impossible to say; it just never ends, first thing in the morning to the very last thing at night."
Maintaining a balance between personal and professional lives can be very hard, she commented.

Upon completing our interview, CCP1 took me on a guided tour of the main campus. We walked through each of the buildings and she explained that most had been upgraded or built within the last five years, which was why they were in such good condition. I noted several naming opportunities in the various facilities, indicating strong donor relations. She also pointed out the outdoor gardens and seating areas, which had been developed and cared for by their horticulture students. After finishing our campus tour, CCP1 asked me to follow her back up to her office where she gave me a collegiate mug wrapped in cellophane and tied with a ribbon boasting the school's colors.

Over the holiday break, I discovered that CCP1 had been appointed to the presidency at a community college in her hometown. I followed up via email to congratulate her and inquire about the hiring process, specifically if fundraising had been a consideration. In response to my email, she left me a voicemail and responded to my email. She mentioned I was on her list to contact regarding this news and that she was thrilled and delighted for the opportunities of the new position. She also confirmed that fundraising success has been a key qualification for this new presidency.

Community College President Two (CCP2)

Community College President Two's career in higher education started as a part-time clerk in the Registrar's office at a four-year private liberal arts institution. Like CCP1, CCP2's career in development started when her chief executive officer took her out of student services and asked her to help with fundraising efforts. She worked with resource development activities for several years, until she had the opportunity to become executive director of a community

college foundation. She worked very closely with her president on special initiatives until he became ill, at which time she took over as interim president. A 30-year college stop-out, CCP2 has dedicated nearly 40 years to higher education with resource development accounting for the majority of her professional experience. This atypical journey to the presidency has been shaped by a profusion of fundraising activities: grants, capital campaigns, annual giving, planned giving, and alumni campaigns. An avid participant in CRD, CCP2 has participated as a faculty member in their fundraising leadership programming and has also been honored by them with a lifetime achievement award in recognition of her dedication to the resource development profession.

CCP2 responded affirmatively to my initial request for participation in the study late that same evening. She was on the road for the following three weeks and had a very busy schedule; however, we traded a few additional emails to find a common date. I was very impressed by the fact that all of my communication was directly with her and that she took great interest in my study. She was very cognizant when setting a date for my campus visit to look for opportunities that would provide me with the most observational data for my study for which I was most grateful. We settled on a day when she had an executive leadership team (ELT) meeting followed by an ELT holiday luncheon, as well as a president's council meeting, which is a cross-sectional group of college employees who meet once a month to discuss continuous improvement efforts. In preparation for my visit, CCP2 mailed me a copy of the book they were reading in the president's council, *Teaching the Elephant to Dance: Empowering Change in Your Organization* by James Belasco, so I could have a reference point for their discussion. I was touched by the personal attention and thoughtfulness she offered me prior to and during my visit to her campus.

When I arrived on campus, I was struck by how many students there were coming and going; the parking lots were mostly full. I found my way to the president's office, which was located in the student services center. Similar to CCP1, my initial impression was this could be indicative of or at least gave the appearance of a student-centered focus. CCP2 is the fourth president of this medium-sized rural institution in its nearly 50-year history, a role in which she has served for the last nine years. As I entered the suite of offices, the president's executive assistant greeted me and showed me into the presidential suite. CCP2, who was gathering items for the morning meetings, stopped to greet me. We visited for a few moments and went over the day's schedule, which she described as quite typical. Moving into the conference room located adjacent to the president's office, CCP2 introduced me to the leadership team members and provided me with a seat on the perimeter. I observed the interactions between the president and the 11 staff members and made note of the robust communication and interaction among the team. It is a sizeable team; however, CCP2 remarked that she's tried it several ways and the larger team seems to promote better communication flow throughout the organization. After the meeting, we all headed to the country club just down the street for a holiday luncheon hosted by the president. This was an annual event hosted by CCP2 as a thank you to the members of the ELT for their leadership to the college. In addition to treating them to lunch, she also gave each of them a holiday compact disc and some chocolates as a small token of her appreciation. Since I was observing the group that day, CCP2 wanted to be sure I didn't feel left out and presented me with the coveted "star," which was given to employees who provide exemplary service to students. Accompanying the handcrafted star-shaped porcelain figure was a handwritten note that said, "This star is for you and your efforts to improve higher education."

Upon returning to campus, I met with the executive director of the foundation for about an hour's time. She was a direct report of the president and part of the executive leadership team, which meant she had taken part in the morning's activities. The executive director indicated that the president's technical fundraising knowledge made things easier because of her natural comfort with donor relations and stewardship. There was great sense of collaboration between the college and foundation evidenced by the executive director's direct access to the president's calendar. The executive director commented that it makes relationship building easier with the community when she can schedule appointments for the president. As an ex-officio member of the foundation board, the president attended their quarterly meetings. She also assisted in the identification, solicitation, and stewardship of donors. The college has received numerous grants and state contracts because of the president's leadership, which were beneficial not only for the college's national reputation but also resulted in new facilities and cutting-edge technology for the campus.

After visiting with the foundation's executive director, it was time for my one-on-one interview with CCP2. We gathered around the small conference table in her office and proceeded through the interview questions. The president was very accommodating and willing to help with my research because she told me she remembered what it was like. She has been heavily involved with the Council for Resource Development and felt it was her turn to give back. As we moved through the interview questions, I was struck by her laser focus on relationship building and resource diversification, which were common threads running throughout her responses. Just as we were finishing, her executive assistant notified her of a phone call from a fellow community college president regarding state funding. She excused herself from our interview and took the urgent call.

Next came the president's council meeting, which was in its third year of existence. This feedback mechanism allows the college employees an opportunity to share their ideas and perspectives with the college administration. The president spurred the conversation by asking, "What are you hearing in your area?" One of the staff members commented that the administration and board are certainly strengths; having a hands-on president with a personal touch who is everywhere creates opportunities that benefit the college.

CCP2 had also planned for me to visit with the vice president for advancement and resource development, a newly defined role she created by moving one of her vice presidents over from student services to focus on resource diversification through public-private partnerships and other special projects. One of the other reasons she moved him was to help him become more well-rounded in his professional experiences as she was aware of his future aspirations of becoming a college president. She told him if he wanted to become president, he would need resource development on his resume.

We finished our day with a brief follow-up to answer some questions that arose as a result of my observations throughout the day; however, our time was limited because CCP2 was departing to join the spirit squad for dinner and then later that evening she was coming back to campus to take treats to the students as they studied for their finals.

Community College President Three (CCP3)

Community College President Three started in higher education as a faculty member. She began her career by teaching speech and English for the first two years at a small community college and then was asked by her president to consider the dean of students position at only 23 years of age. She then moved to the area's second largest community college to become provost and became the head of one of the campuses, which she likened to being president of a mini-

campus because she was over academics, business affairs, and student services. CCP3 started

fundraising in order to meet the needs of her campus, an act that did not go unnoticed. Her

president came to her four years later and asked her to assume a newly defined role – vice

president for development/executive director of the foundation – where she served for 11 years

until she needed a new challenge: the presidency. CCP3 has received national recognition as one

of the top community college executives in the country and has remained actively involved with

AACC, CASE, and CRD, serving in various volunteer leadership capacities. CCP3 also

contributes to the development field through her publications focused on resource development.

     My initial email correspondence with CCP3 received a confirmatory reply that same day,

indicating her interest in finding a date for the site visit that would work for both of us. CCP3 did

not respond to my request for dates, but was apologetic and explained she had been busy

receiving a multi-million dollar gift, hosting a donor's funeral, naming a building, and attending

an out-of-state meeting all within a week's time. We were able to settle on a date centered

around the activities she had planned during the coming weeks. Based upon the timeframe of my

visit, CCP3 invited me to attend their foundation's annual holiday party, which she thought

would provide a great observational opportunity for me to study her interactions with donors and

board members.

     I arrived the first evening in time for the holiday party, which was held at the home of

one of their foundation board members. The evening's hosts immediately welcomed me into

their home and inquired about my relationship with the president whom had invited me. I

explained that we had never met, but that she had been selected for my research study and I

would be observing and interviewing her the following day. The large number of guests who

joined the party included members of the college's board of trustees and the foundation's board

of directors. The president mingled with guests throughout the evening with ease interacting with each of them on a very personal level. The foundation's executive director called for the crowd's attention for some brief remarks, which was followed by the president's message in which she thanked individual board members for their involvement with specific projects, solicitations, and proposals throughout the past year and inspired them to help make a difference in the coming year.

The following morning, I met CCP3 at the local United Way office. She had recently been appointed to the executive board and this was her first committee meeting. She was recognized and thanked for the college's collaborative partnership. Immediately after, I followed her to a local restaurant where the college's academic deans were meeting over breakfast. She visited with them for about 20 minutes about various issues and requested updates from each of their areas. We then drove to the main campus where she dropped off a holiday gift to a friend and colleague who also helped raise money for the college's automotive technology center and then finally to the administration building where her office was located.

I got acclimated to the environment and toured around the office suite as she prepared for the rest of the day's activities. The first item on the agenda back at the office was a phone interview with the local business journal to discuss college's initiatives for the coming year. CCP3 was diligent in asking the reporter to set the stage for her comments and to get the context of the story and was able to share her vision and tout successes for what I am sure will be a great article. She is only the second president of this very large suburban-serving institution in its 40-year history. CCP3 has served in this capacity for the last 16 years, giving her a comprehensive view of the evolution of the college.

Over a nicely prepared lunch in her secondary office, I conducted the hour-long interview. CCP3 has two offices – the "working office" has papers strewn about the desk, a large number of personal photos gracing the walls, bookcases filled with the latest writings on leadership, innovation, and fundraising, and accolades lining the window seals, while the "community office" is neatly organized with a tidy executive style desk ready for public presentation. My initial impressions of CCP3 were that she was very eloquent, well respected, and exhibited high energy. Throughout the interview she used numerous anecdotal stories to describe her experiences, which I thought probably contributed to her success as a fundraiser and community liaison. A community college graduate herself, the president shared a unique perspective and had a natural affinity for the two-year school she now served. I was surprised by how open and honest she was about some of the challenges she had faced during her tenure, including unionization and votes of no confidence. CCP3 has received numerous awards, including national recognition as a top chief executive officer.

Following lunch, I observed a meeting between the president and the interim chief academic officer to confer about spring enrollment projections before the holiday break. CCP3 is currently serving as the interim vice president for academic affairs until they hire someone. An impromptu meeting followed regarding a confidential human resources issue concerning a faculty member. The associate vice president of human resources and the executive vice president of administrative services joined the president in her public office to discuss the situation and determine an appropriate course of action. Unfortunately, the president had to join a conference call regarding the AACC Presidents Academy, a summer institute she was helping to plan. After the call concluded, she rejoined the other two administrators to finish the personnel discussion.

During the afternoon, I was allotted time to visit with the foundation's executive director. As in the other case studies, he also was a direct report of the president. The president had to leave campus for a personal engagement, so her assistant escorted me to the foundation office located just down the hall. The executive director of the foundation, whom I had met the night before at the holiday party, had a vivacious personality that made me feel welcome immediately. He affirmed the president's emphasis on fundraising as a presidential priority, as well as her ultimate goal to get the foundation on solid footing: "she understands, appreciates, and supports fundraising, and she is the key to success with regard to the donors." As a result of her leadership, the foundation not only has a history of raising money, but using those dollars to improve the overall teaching and learning experience. As an ex-officio member of the foundation board, CCP3 provided a college update at each of meetings. In addition, the president has one of her trustees serving as a liaison to the foundation board in order to enhance the flow of communication between the two boards.

Research Questions

This study was developed to address the following three research questions:

1. How did previous full-time fundraising experience impact the modern presidency?

2. What specific fundraising skills and competencies were perceived as valuable for community college presidents?

3. What advice was offered to aspiring community college presidents to adequately prepare for this role?

During the interviews, the researcher asked each study participant a total of nine open-ended questions listed on the interview guide in Appendix E. The open-ended interview questions were followed by general probing questions to clarify the participant's responses.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research employs various methods of analysis; therefore, there are multiple approaches. In this inquiry, the research questions spanned three broad categories, which served as the framework for coding and analyzing the data. The categories included: (a) impact of full-time fundraising experience; (b) fundraising skills and competencies perceived as valuable in community college presidency; and (c) advice for aspiring community college presidents. As recommended by Patton (2002), informal analysis and organization of the data began immediately following collection. The researcher made note of significant themes or recurring ideas that surfaced during the interviews and campus visits. Observations were recorded during and after each encounter and transcription of the interviews was completed immediately following the site visits.

Although there are no set guidelines for the coding process, Creswell (2008) provided some general guidelines, which were utilized as a model for this study's analysis. By conducting a preliminary exploratory analysis of all transcripts, documents, and field notes, I was able to obtain a general sense of the data and made note of ideas in the margin. Next, a line-by-line examination began the coding process, which involved "segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data" (Creswell, 2008, p. 251). Using a short phrase consisting of two or three words, I developed a list of codes that more precisely described the meaning of the text to facilitate the reduction of the larger body of text into a more manageable size. After working through the entire text, a master list of codes was generated. Using the refined code list, the analyst returned to the transcriptions multiple times to sift through and compare the data to the existing codes. Then, reducing redundant codes and combining similar ones produced a narrowed list of codes also known as themes. Creswell (2008) defined themes as

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"similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea" (p. 252). Merging main ideas for each case and finding areas of common ground resulted in overarching themes for the entire study.

Coding Results

This inquiry's research questions produced the framework for reporting the study's findings. Participants were asked nine questions to gather their perceptions on the modern presidency and the impact of their previous fundraising experience on their current role. The interview questions can be found in Appendix E.

Bracketing is utilized in the transcript data to clarify information obtained during the interviews, guarantee the respondents' anonymity, and assist the study's readers. Every effort was made to safeguard the responses and accurately reflect them without altering their true meaning. All references made to a particular person, institution, or location that might give way to the participants' identities were reflected by use of professional title or replaced with bracketed words, such as [institution] or [colleague]. For clarity, this section of Chapter IV was organized by research question, emergent themes, and sub-themes, followed by delineated responses from the participants' interviews pertaining to that specific topic, and answers to the research questions.

Research Question 1: Impact of Previous Fundraising Experience on Presidency

One major theme emerged from the interviews to describe the impact of prior fundraising experience on the modern presidency: financial stability. A discussion of the findings is presented in this section. As illustrated in Table 3, one theme and three sub-themes emerged from the data.

Table 3

Emergent Themes and Sub-Themes from Research Question 1

Research Question 1:	How did previous full-time fundraising experience impact the modern presidency?
Theme:	Financial stability
Sub-Themes:	Higher education as a business Funding Resource diversification

Financial stability. The first theme to materialize from the interviews was creating long-term financial stability. Funding is a growing concern for all institutions of higher education, so long-term fiscal management will require modern presidents to secure alternative sources beyond traditional modes of funding. This theme produced three sub-themes that related to events and circumstances experienced by the study's participants during their presidency.

Higher education as a business. This notion of colleges acting more like a business is appealing to campus leaders, especially during times of financial uncertainty. Finding ways to cut costs and streamline operations has become the new norm for these institutions of higher education. With calls for increasing transparency, leaders are expected to be more responsive to stakeholders' demands for increasing accountability. Each of the participants described their views on this model.

Community College President One:

> I like to say that it is like the for-profit model. It's all bottom lines and it's all about efficiency and effectiveness . . . I mean two years of 25% declines in our state funding created exigencies that we didn't have to worry about before. Now, we didn't do massive layoffs because our enrollment stayed pretty strong, but we had to look at people who were nearing retirement. We looked at attrition as a way to reduce. We were growing so we had to add faculty. Through attrition we reduced staff and we added full-time faculty.

> So, all of us who do the day-to-day work tend to start unfortunately – and I think it is a mistake to ever think of what we are doing as a business. Now yes, it is and of course we have to watch the bottom line, but we are in the business of developing human beings.

We cannot forget the human element and aspect, which again to me goes back to the sensitivity about fundraising and relationship building.

Community College President Two:

And I think that is what presidents are going to have to do; both to their internal stakeholders and their external stakeholders because higher education is going to be held more accountable than they've ever been in the past. At the same time, funding is going to be hard to get than it's been in many many many years. The competition is really stiff with all the online technology available to students to go to any institution they want to go to in the country. We are going to have to change the way we do business; there is just no way about it. One of the biggest challenges is getting your institution to understand that you've got to change the way you do business. It really has to be student focused, and while we say we are student centered, we are still institutions that are very much institutionally driven and that really needs to change if we are going to be competitive.

Community College President Three:

I'm a manager and at the end of the day I'm responsible for efficiency and effectiveness. I see things more from a business point of view – this is a business. Now, this is a $90 million a year business, and if you add the financial aid money on top of it it's a $200 million a year operation plus all your building money. So, I look at it as – it is a business. It needs to be a viable business you know, we want to balance our books; we need to have a reserve fund.

I mean the faculty fight back when they say they're not clients, they're not customers, they're just students. And my response is those students have a choice of where they're going to attend school, you know, and we have got to work to earn their loyalty, to earn the fact that they want to come here; the bus doesn't pull up every Monday morning with the kids getting off saying I want to be in [colleague's] political science class; you know we've got to recruit them and then we've got to retain them.

Funding.

All of the interviewees emphasized the importance of funding as it relates to the future of the community college, signaling that it would be one of the most pressing issues faced by future leaders. Each respondent discussed the particular challenges they face with regard to state funding, while confronting increased demands for accountability. Because community colleges pride themselves on being affordable keeping tuition low continues to be a delicate balancing act.

Community College President One:

I'd say the funding issues are getting more and more challenging. We really have to look at what we do in more of a balance sheet way. We have to be as efficient and effective as possible to keep tuition low so students keep coming.

Ten years ago most of us at community colleges probably received more than 50% of our funding from the state. Well, that has continued to decline. I think we are going through a huge change right now. Well, first of all state funding – I mean the minute the safety net is taken away, who cared about enrollment? State funding remained the same anyhow.

We have to be self-sustaining enterprises; we don't have enough state funding to really support what college presidents used to face, which was enrollment could do a little bit of this – up and down, up and down, but you had enough state funding that generally you could predict things from year to year.

If you look at a real economic or financial analysis of the cuts we've taken in state funding, there's no way tuition increases can make them up . . . needless to say with the big gap in funding we had to look at what is our core revenue.

Community College President Two:

I think the most pressing issue is going to be funding, for sure. So, I think the issue of competition for students and for funding is going to be one of the biggest things presidents will have to deal with.

I think they are looking at five-year degree programs for four-year colleges and universities, so with 80% of your students needing remedial work and then the governor saying your funding is going to be based on [laughter] getting students out of your institution in three years, we are really going to be between a rock and a hard place to figure out how to make this happen.

Community College President Three:

I think it's more outwardly focused than it used to be because we have to be all about partnerships, and we have to be all about fundraising, and we have to be all about marketing.

Resource diversification. Resource diversification entails establishing a flexible funding base from multiple sources to ensure long-term stability. All of the interviewees acknowledged the need to address the funding gap by way of alternative funding methods.

Community College President One:

Every year the state tells us how much we can raise tuition, and we are always below that ceiling. But, if we don't do an increase every year we lose ground, and if you get behind you can't catch up. If you look at a real economic or financial analysis of the cuts we've taken in state funding there's no way tuition increases can make them up.

Community College President Two:

I really think that [my development legacy] will be the fact that we were able to diversify our resources and broaden our funding base during a time of real economic challenges, both statewide and federally. We've really been able to get focused on resource diversification.

If I hadn't had those [fundraising] experiences and I became a president of a college and would be facing what we're facing now in terms of resources for the college, I would be absolutely panicked because I wouldn't know where to start or what to do.

You know I hadn't really thought about it, but I've been working with that same agency on other state contracts. We're doing an online program for them for inner-operability communication. But that state contract has generated a lot of extra revenue for the college. We are buying all kinds of wonderful things for tracking enrollments and registrations, but we would never have been able to do that without the administrative overhead that's coming through that grant.

Community College President Three:

I think the presidents of old used to look inward mostly, and I think now with the lack of resources the need to raise more money, they need to be entrepreneurial; we've got to be very involved in our communities.

Analysis of the interview texts suggested that the study's participants were in agreement that funding is of primary concern for current and future community college leaders and that diversifying the resources through private fundraising, collaborative partnerships, and entrepreneurial ventures will be key to the longevity of their institutions. Armed with progressive thinking skills, these professionals understand the current fiscal challenges faced by two-year colleges and have taken an active role in providing solutions through fundraising in their previous positions.

Research Question 2: Valuable Skills and Competencies

Two themes emerged from the interviews with regard to skills and competencies that interviewees brought with them to the presidency as a result of their former fundraising experience: personalized communication and building relationships. A discussion of these findings is presented in this section. As illustrated in Table 4, two themes and seven sub-themes emerged from the data.

Table 4

Emergent Themes and Sub-Themes from Research Question 2

Research Question 2:	What specific fundraising skills and competencies were perceived as valuable for community college presidencies?	
Themes:	Personalized communication	Building relationships
Sub-Themes:	Communicating effectively Telling the story Stewarding donors Interacting with the board	Key stakeholders Collaborative partnerships Social demands

Personalized communication. Communication skills help express ideas and connect with others. Personalized communication is the most intimate form of expression that results in relationships based on trust and understanding. This theme produced four sub-themes that related to events and circumstances experienced by the study's participants.

Communicating effectively. Two of the three participants shared a common a background of educational training in the field of communications, which they both credited as serving them well during their presidency. As a result of this acquired skill set, they felt they were able to practically summarize, share critical information with the college administration and community partners, and had confidence in their public speaking and active listening skills. Community College President One:

My undergraduate studies were in English, communications, and Spanish . . . I'd say the skill that has been most useful to me in the presidency is my communication skills and that means written and verbal.

So, for the president to be able to write, communicate, tell the story, certainly understand fundraising, be able to build those relationships. The relationship building really does become the core part of it.

Community College President Three:

My background is in speech and English, and my mother used to say, 'what are you going to do with a degree in speech?' and it's turned out to be the best thing, other than law, that I could have majored in.

Telling the story. Being knowledgeable about the college's history and telling the

college's story were common threads throughout the interviews. Two of the presidents primarily

see it as their responsibility, while the other participant utilizes students to testify as living

examples of the important work they are doing and the lives they are changing.

Community College President One:

People ask how can you do fundraising; it is just so hard. Well, part of it is you do a lot of research before you ask. And you know a lot about the people you are visiting with. You know your story and the needs of the college. You pull that data together into a compelling case. It's a method and a process.

I have students with me all the time. I take them on fundraising calls. When we have people come to our campus I have students all the time telling their stories. We are using horticulture and culinary to engage our donors . . . Our culinary students also cater our monthly commission meetings, board meetings. Board members don't often get to see students and hear from them.

Community College President Two:

It's the same process – building those relationships, building that trust, telling your story, sharing your mission, and sharing your vision. People love to be told what the vision is, and they love to understand or tell you how they would like to be part of it.

Community College President Three:

I think the background in fundraising and in the people skills has been really critical to the presidency because when I got here my joke was 120 days and 120 speeches and that wasn't far from being accurate because the community was hungry to learn about the

college, to get reconnected with the college, and I was anxious to get them reconnected with us. So, I took every opportunity – every breakfast, lunch, dinner, and cocktail party to get out there and talk about the college. So, I think those kinds of skills that you are used to doing as a development officer.

Stewarding donors. A critical element of any successful fundraising program is proper

stewardship, which each of the participants thoroughly understood as a result of their previous

full-time fundraising experience. The intent of stewardship is to build lifelong relationships with

major donors through communication about the use of their gift and expressing continual

appreciation before making the next ask. Participants shared how they actively contribute to this

process through meaningful interactions with their donors.

Community College President One:

> I can only talk to donors if I have personal, hands on experience with our students because then I really care and I have these personal stories I can share. When I can personalize the story, it is much more meaningful to the donor.

Community College President Two:

> The donor acknowledgements and recognition are done on a personal basis. I mean some donors don't want a portrait in the hall or a plaque on the wall; they are happier to have a warm fuzzy sweater for their puppy. And so that's really what I try to do.

> I try to get a personal, handwritten note for every gift – I don't care if it's a gift from an employee for twenty-five dollars or from someone external to the campus for ten dollars, or it's a thousand dollars or five hundred thousand – to make a phone call or write a handwritten note within twenty-four hours keeps me hopping on most days.

Community College President Three:

> I mean if you were following me in the car today and watching me at all, you saw I was on the phone. One of the phone calls I made was to someone who sent us a check for five hundred dollars this week; it was the former mayor of [city]. I haven't talked to her in over a year, and so I called her to say, '[Donor], thanks! What a surprise, how would you like us to use it?'

Interacting with the board. Two of the three presidents directly addressed the importance

of interacting with the board, while the other president made a brief remark regarding her

working relationship with the board when discussing the college's strategic planning process, as well as her annual evaluation.

Community College President One:

> That's another thing that is very important in the presidency that I may not have mentioned, and it is a place where the development officer has experience – that is working with the board. Most of our foundations have boards, so working with that foundation board [as a fundraiser] is great preparation for working with a board of governors or commissioners or board of trustees [as a president].

Community College President Three:

> So, in terms of my skills out of the development bag, I would say board development and as a president – you saw some of my board last night – that's been a very good piece of my toolkit, knowing the care and feeding of a board and how to relate to them.

Building relationships. Connectivity, or the ability to build lasting relationships with the internal and external campus communities is vital for chief executive officers. Establishing a culture of trust and respect and being able to relate to various constituencies is a critical component to the presidency. This theme produced three sub-themes that related to events and circumstances experienced by the study's participants.

Key stakeholders. Presidents represent the face of the institution to the community; therefore, it is essential that they understand the dynamics and politics of the region. Stakeholders are people who have a vested interest in the institution, such as students, board members, employees, donors, business and industry, as well as legislators. Community college presidents need to identify, communicate, and build relationships with each of these constituency groups.

Community College President One:

> Obviously, understanding how important relationship building and fundraising are, but to me those are the same skills the president uses in talking to parents and students. I feel like I am a recruiter all the time. They are the same skills I use when I am in the community building relationships with businesses. So, you know, those are skills that

have a lot of application to a president. I would say development is a good breeding ground for tomorrow's presidents and today's presidents.

Community College President Two:

>Building relationships is not about asking for someone to give us money; it is about creating relationships and opportunities for donors to support the college's mission.

>It was learning that [fundraising and resource development] really is about the relationship building and it is about sharing the vision and working with people on a personal basis. I think that helped me more than anything.

Community College President Three:

>I think relationships with people is still the most important part of the presidency – and those can be faculty, or those can be business leaders, or they could be legislators.

Collaborative partnerships. Collaboration is the process of working together to achieve a common goal, a skill in which community colleges have become proficient. Investments in job training programs are essential to the nation's prosperity and community colleges must play a significant role in preparing workers for emerging jobs by partnering with business and industry, as well as other community entities. Additionally, community colleges are becoming more entrepreneurial, seeking out public-private partnerships as creative business solutions. The modern presidency requires a leader who knows how to balance program objectives with resource realities and find ways to address college needs.

Community College President One:

>It is unique in that we do have more of our business partnerships there. We have a center for business and entrepreneurial development – our CBED. We have something called [program]. Because this is a big site, we can actually let a manufacturing company that wants to locate to our county come into that center and stay for up to 18 months paying utilities only to get a good start. The agreement is that they will lease or purchase space for their operation in [county]. It is an economic development center more than anything else.

>The fundraising skills of partnership-building and telling the college's story are effective in lobbying state and/or county officials for funding.

We have conversations taking place in all of our service areas about how do we do a better job of connecting with our secondary education partners through dual enrollment and other programs.

Community College President Two:

But the wonderful thing about having the resource development background, while we're working on that strategic plan and all of the objectives, I'm already thinking about, 'ok what does that mean in terms of where we are going to need the support? Who do we need to partner with? Where can we go to share resources? To gain additional resources?' I'm already prioritizing what the fundraising needs are going to be.

Community College President Three:

You are used to looking for partnerships with the business community. You are used to looking at donors and trying to figure out what their intent is or what their desire is. And those are all transferable skills that, you know, you bring into the presidency that serve you well.

Social demands. As one would imagine, the presidency can be extremely demanding of one's time. Presidents are expected to be the face of the college in the community. Weisman and Vaughn (2007) offered prescriptive measures for how presidents interact in the community, such as sitting on other nonprofit boards, doing volunteer work, and attending community events. Even though there was no direct question regarding the social aspect of the presidency, all of the presidents commented on the social and emotional demands placed on their personal and professional lives by their career.

Community College President One:

I would describe it as emotion and social energy. Social energy is exhausting, to be around people all the time. But that's what the college president's role is. When I'm in my office opening emails and signing checks and doing anything the president does: reviewing HR issues, agenda for meetings, I'm not out with people and I feel like those are the tasks I need to do in the evening and I need to spend as much of my working day and business day as I can out with people because that's such a big part of the job. Socially, it is a very demanding job. So, that's another reason I like to think the development background fits so nicely.

Community College President Two:

I try to participate at all levels of fundraising, while my time – my 24/7 job as president – makes that more difficult, I really still try to do it.

Community College President Three:

Good interpersonal skills are always important in this position, speaking skills, and a high energy level. Being knowledgeable and telling your story in the community, but also the energy and being able to go 24/7 because you are always connected and there's always an expectation.

The reality is that fundraising has become part of the whole responsibility, and in many ways the fundraising skills and competencies surrounding personal communication and relationship building are critical for the modern presidency. Each of the participants indicated that fundraising success was a key qualification in their presidential selection. In many ways, the mastery of development skills and competencies such as partnership building, telling the college story, working with the board, and stewarding donors are the same skills presidents use when lobbing legislators, recruiting students and parents, or soliciting business and industry.

Research Question 3: Advice for Aspiring Community College Leaders

Two major themes emerged from the interviews to describe the impact of prior fundraising experience on the modern presidency: organizational leadership and professional preparation. A discussion of these findings is presented in this section. As illustrated in Table 5, two themes and seven sub-themes emerged from the data.

Table 5

Emergent Themes and Sub-Themes from Research Question 3

Research Question 3:	What advice was offered to aspiring community college leaders to adequately prepare for this role?	
Themes:	Organizational leadership	Professional preparation
Sub-Themes:	Strategic planning	Proper credentialing
	Developing priorities	Practical experience
	Advancement leadership	Teaching
		Mentoring

Organizational leadership. Community college presidents are expected to be competent leaders for their institutions. Organizational leadership is about management, which requires transformative, action-oriented leadership. Leaders must set the direction and tone based around specific and achievable goals. Each of the participants suggested ways for current and future presidents to actively engage in these processes, as well as highlighted key concepts for the modern presidency. This theme produced three sub-themes that related to events and circumstances experienced by the study's participants.

Strategic planning. Simply put, strategic planning is the process of anticipating trends and determining the best course of action to achieve organizational goals and objectives. According to Craft and Guy (2003), an institution-wide strategic plan is essential to educate and inform key stakeholders about the college's strategic direction for the future and can serve as a springboard for fundraising, stewardship, and volunteer engagement. There are a variety of approaches utilized in strategic planning; however, the development and implementation of the plan depends heavily on the organizational culture. Long-range planning can also involve succession planning, which helps identify and build on existing talent critical to the organization's success. Two of the three case study participants addressed their involvement in the planning process.

Community College President One:

> This is the college's first real all college strategic plan . . . so, we ended up with our mission and vision, our five goals, our objectives, and then these measures. We measure everything we do.

> There's nothing more valuable than a good vice president of advancement who can set the stage. By that I mean really have good data on donors and really set up campaigns so that the president's job is much easier. And a lot of that too is based on strategic planning, knowing where the college is going and what the college's needs are.

Community College President Two:

We take our strategic plan really seriously. We've tied key performance indicators to every objective in the plan. We benchmark ourselves against ourselves and against community colleges statewide and then nationally. We are members of the national community college benchmarking project.

It's almost like you need to be clairvoyant to a degree. But to be thinking strategically – there's a great book called *Thinking Out of the Box* that we talk about at our executive leadership team – is thinking strategically, acting audaciously, and communicating aggressively.

Developing priorities. College leaders are tasked with developing priorities in order to

steer their college in the right direction and keep everyone motivated. In the absence of a clear

mission and shared vision for the future, quality decision-making and strategic planning may

give way to conflict among those with competing interests. By identifying and prioritizing goals,

presidents are able to make informed decisions while considering all of the other demands.

Cultivation of external resources was a high priority for each of these respondents.

Community College President One:

Being a president is definitely a juggling act and you have to figure out which ball is most important at a particular time.

Community College President Two:

To understand that there are gifts out there and there's also grant opportunities out there, and it does require, I believe with all my heart, it requires presidential leadership. It requires a focus on resource development because there are so many other things you have to get done on a daily basis.

But, I think presidents need to get the pulse of their institution and to work on what's most important at that point for their college.

Community College President Three:

We've got to be very involved in our communities; we've got to be very outwardly focused, even as we try to keep our eyes on what's going on at the college to make sure the college is moving in the right direction.

Advancement leadership. When initially hired, each of the participants indicated that

their board was looking for someone who had fundraising experience. Currently, all of the

presidents maintain active involvement with their college's fundraising efforts; however, due to their extensive involvement in fundraising trenches, they had to modify their approach and tailor it to the presidency. Each explains their philosophy on the president's involvement in fundraising activities.

Community College President One:

> In reality, fundraising has to be part of the whole responsibility. And in many ways the fundraising skills of partnership building and telling the college story, those are the same skills we are using when we are lobbying legislators for funding.

> As we both know, fundraising is really the president's job. It really is; there's no question about it. I see that [fundraising] skill set as something we use in everything we do as presidents . . . you would learn it over time, but it sometimes takes a long time to learn that [fundraising] lesson if you haven't had that experience. As presidents our time is so short.

> Putting the right people in place. It really is about all the right people on the bus in the final analysis. Everybody thinks it's about the president, but it's about the team. And so getting the right people here has been, in my mind, the greatest legacy. And in development, the right people to set the stage, develop our donor base, and help cultivate those donors.

> As you know, presidents historically have come through the academic ranks. And I think some of them have certainly evolved into wonderful relationship fundraising presidents and I think others don't like it. It's not what they really thought of as the president's role. We have our vice presidents for academic affairs who take care of the internal, but we have to look at sort of everything and lead the college in the direction that needs to go. And obviously leadership is always about people.

Community College President Two:

> But it was a learning experience for me to back away and let someone else kind of be the front person, the forward person. I kept thinking that I need to do that, I need to get to that, and I need to do these things. So, I had to learn kind of the presidential level without letting go of building all those relationships.

Community College President Three:

> For me, I knew if I wanted to be a college president, I needed that piece [fundraising] in my toolbox.

Well, the guy who proceeded [colleague] as the executive director of the foundation was fond of saying that he had the easiest job in the college because all he had to do was stand behind me and not say something stupid. And I'd say [colleague], that's not true because I counted on him to do the research and set up the ask. So, I think coming out of a fundraising background I know what should happen. I know the sequence of events, I know what to look for, and so it really makes it possible for me to be chief fundraiser . . . out in the community looking for potential board members, looking for opportunities to partner with business, looking for private donors that are searching for a place to have an impact.

Professional preparation. The case study respondents provided recommendations to future community college leaders in the way of educational and professional training to effectively prepare for the modern presidency. Based on their own experiences, each participant was very prescriptive in their guidance to future professionals.

Proper credentialing. Focusing on the needs of aspiring community college leaders, all of the presidents agreed that a terminal degree would be mandatory. Despite the fact that many search committees still list doctoral degrees as preferable, having earned a doctorate from an accredited degree program will give future leaders an edge on their competition. It also demonstrates their commitment to the academy.

Community College President One:

My goal was to become a community college president, and I knew the Ph.D. was a prerequisite . . . The board at the college I came from said you couldn't be the president here without a Ph.D.

So, I would probably say the Ph.D. is mandatory. I know everybody says Ph.D. or the equivalent in presidential ads, but there are a few recent hires without Ph.D.'s, but not a whole lot . . . I think it is the standard and makes you competitive. Let me say I have not heard of any women becoming community colleges presidents without a doctorate. I have heard of a few men doing it.

Community College President Two:

I certainly think presidents need a Ph.D. or Ed.D. They need that experience, they need that opportunity to experience academics – the academy – they need to have gone through that; they need to understand that.

And I have been very involved with the Council Resource Development for many years. I have to say with their support and their encouragement, and the activities and the networking and all of that, it has probably been more helpful to me than any degree that I have achieved over the years.

Community College President Three:

I do [believe a doctorate is necessary]. In part because it's discipline, it just requires you to take more coursework and to learn more. I would like to see more law, you know, and the political piece. About the only way you can do that is to go do like an internship for a legislator or something so you can see the inner workings.

Practical experience. Each of the interviewees described themselves as someone who is always striving for more, wanting to do more. Their intrinsic drive and motivation has contributed to their ability to obtain a presidency. When considering advice for the next generation of community college leaders and reflecting back on their path, each participant described their journey and the types of experiences and education they would recommend.

Community College President One:

I would actually think that a good business background is really critical for any aspiring president, quite honestly. A really solid business background is very helpful, only because again the funding challenges are there and one needs to really understand them. I would try to get as much experience in different areas of the college as one can get. That's a hard thing to do in a college setting . . . So probably the best thing is to look for some opportunities to work on special assignments and projects that would give one a window to another world in the college, and to volunteer to serve on as many things because that helps to broaden the campus experience and campus knowledge.

I'd say the advancement leadership from my perspective is huge and very difficult to find. So, you are in a really good field. You'll be able to write your own ticket . . . if you are an advancement professional you really have quite a figure. I am dead serious, there are not many. Forever [will that skill set be marketable].

Community College President Two:

While there are a lot of strengths, I do think it is good for presidents to have kind of the comprehensive, generalist experience in their bag of skills and competencies. And so, I was and continue to be to some degree challenged about that.

And I do think that one of the most important things that people who want to be a president should be doing is that anytime they are offered to take on a new responsibility

or maybe just a different assignment, something that is completely out of their realm of understanding or experience that you need to say yes. You need to do it because it broadens your experience.

You're going to see more resource development; you're going to see more search committees looking for presidents who have fundraising experience, whether it's in the public or private sector because institutions have to have it. It is a new day for us, and the new day in higher education is not just for this moment, it's with us.

Community College President Three:

So, my path was community college graduate, and then speech and English teacher at a community college, and then dean of students so I got the student affairs background, and then provost for a campus so then I was over everything; it was kind of like being campus president, and then moving into a vice president for development so I was over fundraising, and then moving into the president . . . I think the generalist background that I have kind of all across the college is good.

Teaching. Following a nontraditional path to the presidency, the consensus among the interviewees was that teaching experience continues to be an expectation of community college presidents. In order to command the respect of the faculty, presidents should have a deep understanding and appreciation for what faculty members do. All of the respondents expressed a concern over having more time on the academic side of the institution for better awareness of the complex dynamics.

Community College President One:

The academic world and the fundraising world to me become very integrated in most of our projects. We are rarely building just a building; we are building a building to develop and expand programs, to provide more program outreach, and so we have to think about the academic part of that the whole time. So to me, the academics were not a mystery, but again I had been in the community college for 22 years when I came here.

I really think it's important to teach before you become a president so you really understand – teaching is a really hard job, it's an incredibly hard job. I'd say one develops tremendous respect for the job our faculty do by teaching, and it's an imperative.

Community College President Two:

> I wish that I'd had more time on the academic side of the institution. I had a lot of time in student services, so I really understand student and academic support services. I think what I really missed is that seeing the institution through the perspective of the faculty, through their lens and how they see an institution because they see it very differently than the administration does.

Community College President Three:

> I wish I had more of an academic background so that I understood more about where [faculty] are coming from in their attitudes in how they look at things.

> *Mentoring*. Whether formal or informal, mentoring is an important aspect in the development of any current or aspiring professional. All of the interviewees have gleaned sage advice from their mentors and felt this positive influence was an important piece of their professional development. One of the presidents made note that she had several mentors along the way, but that it is something she currently lacks at this stage in her career. However, she is hesitant to reach out to anyone at this point because she does not have aspirations to go any further in her career.

Community College President One:

> Both of the presidents I worked for had encouraged me to consider the presidency. I had many friends who mentored me, as well as presidents who mentored me.

Community College President Two:

> It does, it does [play a key role in your personal and professional development]. I had a lot of wonderful mentors along the way and actually every president I worked for from [institution] forward, whether we referred to them as mentors or not, they really were.

Community College President Three:

> So, having mentors, having people who were interested in your success. One of the things I say to people is make sure whoever you think should be your mentor really wants to be your mentor. Not only that they have the right experiences and the right skills, that they're somebody who really wants to be doing that with you.

Analysis of the interview texts demonstrated the emergence of organizational leadership and professional preparation as major themes related to advice for future presidents. Through the development of priorities and strategic plans, the president is able to determine what resources will be necessary to carry out the institutional mission. Additionally, their ability to provide advancement leadership, connecting and communicating with donors has been especially beneficial. The participants also offered advice for future leaders based upon their own personal journey to the presidency, recommending aspiring professionals to obtain a doctorate degree, gather as much experience as possible in the community college environment, gain significant classroom experience and exposure to the academy, and find a mentor devoted to helping you succeed.

The purpose of ordering and labeling the data is to facilitate summarization. Such a display summary aids in the interpretation of the data. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), matrix displays are an extremely useful in detecting patterns emerging from the data. Table 6, which contains direct quotes from each of the interviews, presents the principal findings from the research and matches them with the appropriate research question. The table is structured so that the study's participants are identified in the first column and the corresponding research questions and accompanying themes are displayed across the first and second rows.

Table 6

Summary Table: Descriptive Matrix of Selected Participant Responses

THEMES

Participant	Research Question 1	Research Question 2		Research Question 3	
	Financial Stability	Personalized Communication	Building Relationships	Organizational Leadership	Professional Preparation
CCP1	"If I were to say what's the most important thing I've had to worry about it is the funding of the college."	"I'd probably say the skill that has been most useful to me in the presidency is my communication skills, and that means written and verbal."	"The relationship building really does become the core part of it."	"Being president is definitely a juggling act and you have to figure out which ball is most important at a particular time."	"I would try to get as much experience in different areas of the college as one can get."
CCP2	"I really think that [my legacy] will be the fact that we were able to diversify our resources and broaden our funding base during a time of real economic challenges . . ."	"People love to be told what the vision is, and they love to understand how they can be a part of it."	"I've spent a lot of time and a lot of thought, a lot of reflection on building relationships and what that means."	"So, our strategic plan drives our fundraising plan; it drives our resource diversification plan."	"I think new folks coming into the presidency are going to have to be very focused on thinking strategically for their institution."
CCP3	"Resources, I mean that's got to top the list as one of the most pressing issues."	"The community was hungry to learn about the college, to get reconnected with the college, and I was anxious to get them reconnected with us."	"I think relationships with people is still the most important part of the presidency."		"For me, I knew if I wanted to be a college president, I would need [development] in my toolbox."

Summary

In this study, three research questions served as the framework for the presentation and analysis of the data: (a) impact of previous full-time fundraising experience on the modern presidency; (b) valuable fundraising skills and competencies for the community college presidency; and (c) advice for aspiring community college leaders to adequately prepare for this role. Three sets of common themes materialized from the in-depth interviews with the three community college presidents who had full-time fundraising experience immediately preceding their presidency.

The central theme related to the impact of fundraising on the modern presidency was financial stability. Discussions with the respondents brought to light their extensive familiarity with funding mechanisms beyond the traditional methods. These former advancement professionals recognized the need to diversify resources and understand the impact of these resources on the future of the institution.

The principal themes related to the fundraising skills and competencies were personalized communication and relationship building. Presidents recommend maintaining close contact with donors, boards, and the community, and taking advantage of every opportunity to tell the college's story and share their vision for the institution. Although the presidency can be very demanding and requires a high degree of social energy, it is also very rewarding.

The major themes related to advice for aspiring community college leaders were organizational leadership and professional preparation. The respondents focused on the need to provide advancement leadership for the institution, in addition to letting the college's strategic plan drive fundraising goals. The case study participants also provided future presidents very

specific advice on credentialing, practical experiences, teaching, and mentoring, as well as

discussed their thoughts on what the future holds for the next generation of leaders.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine community college presidents with former full-time fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. The study's participants offered advice for the future generation of leaders and forecasted the major challenges modern day presidents should be prepared to face. The participants selected as case studies for this research included three community college presidents from single-campus institutions with institutionally related foundations. A major objective in presenting this research was to provide readers with rich findings regarding the preparation of future leaders in light of the growing expectations of fundraising, as well as encourage college hiring committees to consider advancement professionals when filling executive positions. This chapter will analyze, interpret, and discuss the inquiry's findings, making connections with the existing literature and offering conclusions. Limitations related to the methods of the study will be highlighted, and the chapter will conclude with recommendations for future research and implications for improved practice.

Overview of the Study

Qualitative research methods were utilized to collect data for this study. Interviews, observations, and written documents were employed to triangulate the data, strengthen the study's findings, and ensure trustworthiness. The findings of this inquiry were organized according to the study's research questions. This section presents each of the research questions and a summary of the findings that emerged during data analysis.

Research Question 1: How did previous full-time fundraising experience impact the modern presidency?

In response to the study's first research question, one core premise emerged: financial stability. The analytical results suggested that familiarity with funding beyond the traditional methods of tuition and state revenue has been a tremendous asset to presidents in light of the current economic situation. The respondents have increasingly viewed higher education as a business centered around bottom lines and cost effectiveness, as well as increased accountability measures; however, CCP1 insisted on looking at it not only as a business, but a business of developing human beings. The impact of the presidents' previous full-time fundraising experience can be observed in their forward-thinking abilities, as well as their immediate focus on alternative resources. CCP2 discussed the benefit of having a fundraising background, which allowed her to simultaneously set goals and objectives related to the strategic plan, while forecasting what her college will need in terms of partnerships and resources to make it happen. By leveraging new and emerging opportunities, these professionals are accustomed to a culture characterized by the solicitation of external resources as a means to satisfy institutional needs.

All of the participants highlighted funding as the most pressing issue facing higher education. There was consensus surrounding the gap that exists between existing revenues and expectations placed on two-year colleges, which will result in long-term changes in how business is conducted. So, seeking alternative revenue sources and engaging in strategic partnerships was determined necessary for survival. The presidents expressed a desire to get their institution on solid financial footing by diversifying the resource base through collaborative partnerships, fundraising, and alternative sources of revenue such as state contracts. As noted in the previous chapter, CCP2 had restructured the organization to include a new vice president focused solely

on resource diversification and strategic initiatives. It was evident that resource development was a priority for each of the participations because of their engagement in numerous forms of resource diversification.

Research Question 2: What specific fundraising skills and competencies were perceived as valuable for community college presidencies?

In addressing the study's second research question, the participants highlighted two valuable competencies stemming from their prior fundraising experience: personalized communication and relationship building. The respondents felt their mastery of these skills put them ahead of the curve in terms of their ability to connect with the community and communicate on a personal level with external stakeholders, such as donors, board members, legislators, as well as the internal college community. Interacting with the college's governing board was also identified as essential to the presidential role. Working closely with the board members on a shared vision and ensuring the sound operations of the institution was of utmost importance.

The possession of strong verbal and written communication skills provided for seamless dissemination of knowledge to administrators and stakeholder groups on various topics and a firm grasp on how to tell the college's story has perpetuated strong fundraising results for these leaders on behalf of their institutions. The study's participants specified the use of handwritten notes and phone calls as effective forms of stewardship, as well as sharing meaningful student testimonials as a way of connecting donors with the mission of the institution. Noting the ease of transferability of these skills and competencies, these presidents recommended development as a good breeding ground for the modern day presidency.

Research Question 3: What advice was offered to aspiring community college leaders to adequately prepare for this role?

The study's third research question was addressed through the inquiry's findings, which revealed two main tenets: organizational leadership and professional preparation. The demanding role required leaders to plan strategically, develop institutional priorities, and provide advancement leadership. Creating and implementing an institution-wide strategic plan with input from the various constituency groups helped educate and inform key stakeholders about the college's direction for the future. Utilizing the college's plan to drive fundraising priorities was a common practice among all of the cases studies. The interview data indicated the critical role of the president as lead fundraiser for the institution. As the face of the college in the community, the active involvement of the president in the cultivation and solicitation process has been key to their fundraising success.

With regard to professional preparation, the respondents offered four key pieces of advice for aspiring leaders in the following areas: credentialing, practical experience, teaching, and mentoring. The participants unanimously supported the first piece of advice for aspiring two-year college presidents. Earning a terminal degree was identified as a requirement for the modern day presidency. Not only was a doctorate degree recommended to make candidates more competitive, it was also described as a rite of passage. The second piece of advice relating to practical experience included the recommendation of broad-brush experience. Recognizing the difficulty to obtain such generalized experience in all areas of the college, the participants suggested taking on extra projects or agreeing to serve on various committees will provide professionals with some familiarity with and exposure to other functional areas of the college. The third piece of advice related to gaining academic experience. Each of the community college

executives interviewed for this study expressed the prerequisite of teaching before working in administration, and commented they wish they had more time in the classroom. Two of the three presidents had experienced tension with their faculty, which stemmed from a lack of understanding of the faculty's attitude, perception, and motivation. All of the respondents concluded that presidents should build strong relationships with their institution's faculty to ensure long-term stability. Finally, finding a mentor was proposed as a way for aspiring and current professionals to reach their full potential. Each of the interviewees felt mentoring had played an important role in their professional development and self-discovery process. They recommended finding a mentor who was willing to make a commitment to provide guidance and support, as well as make a personal investment in their mentee's future.

Discussion of the Findings and Conclusions

This study offers empirical research to assist in the understanding of the unique skills former fundraisers bring to the modern day presidency that sufficiently prepare them for this role. With an increasing number of two-year college presidents and senior-level administrators set to retire within the decade, this research provides a timely exploration of qualified leaders who could potentially help fill those vacancies. Based on the findings from each research question, a discussion of these findings and conclusions drawn from the interview data follows.

Research Question 1

The study's initial goal was concerned with identifying how previous full-time fundraising experience affects the modern presidency. Financial stability emerged as the primary finding related to the first research question. As indicated by the study and in the literature, community college presidents are in the business of educating students, but face mounting fiscal pressures and bottom lines as they seek to meet increased demands from their constituencies

while balancing a stressed budget. According to Boggs (2003), due to the insufficient funding of community colleges, presidents must understand how to address increasingly complex fiscal challenges. Across the board, the study's participants identified funding as the primary concern for today and tomorrow's leaders. Facing significant declines in state funding the past few years, the respondents have employed cost-saving measures as a result of fiscal stress: increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their institutions by adding more seats to classes already at capacity, reducing staff through attrition based on imminent retirements, and increasing recruitment efforts to include a more diverse population.

While fiscal leadership has always been part of the president's job, both the percentage of time dedicated to this function and the complexity has changed remarkably. According to Phelan (2005), "as long as community colleges are funded through states' discretionary budgets, and as long as there is increased competition for these funds, college leaders should expect instability in funding streams" (p. 89). Consequently, the researcher confirmed the need for modern community college presidents to be skilled in building relationships with legislators to keep their colleges in the forefront of these officials' minds. Anticipating and/or responding to rapid shifts in budget streams and possessing a firm understanding of the importance of diversifying their resource base are components of the sophisticated fiscal leadership that now characterizes the modern presidency. Raising tuition and fees has always been one of the tools available to community college presidents and their boards as they try to balance revenues against operational costs. However, with growing financial need due to increased unemployment and losses on savings invested in the stock market, higher education access is being threatened for many low-income students (Weisbrod & Asch, 2010). With state-controlled tuition increases, CCP1 said the annual increases helped them not lose ground, but that they were not enough to

offset the reductions in state funding. She also expressed trepidation with the changing public attitude toward higher education, and whether students and taxpayers believe there is a sufficient return on their investment in a college education. Recent concerns over escalating higher education costs and continued accessibility are resulting in closer public scrutiny and accountability; therefore, moving beyond traditional modes of funding to achieve a stable combination of sources is in the best interest of community colleges. Jones (2010) acknowledged the need for private funds to continue providing convenient, affordable, higher education to students and economic vitality to communities. This study confirmed the importance of external support by engaging in various forms of resource diversification and using it to leverage other community partnerships. This is a solution for which two-year colleges are well-positioned because of the long-standing commitment and relationship with the communities they serve.

Fundraising was highlighted in the present study as a significant form of resource diversification in which the respondents actively participated and engaged. Leveraging their increased visibility, community college leaders can expand their institutional revenue base beyond tuition and government tax support. According to Miller (1991), fundraising has been a legitimate alternative to state funding. This valuable form of external revenue requires a serious commitment of time and resources by the president, a change that symbolizes the evolution of this role. Throughout the last several decades, the literature has consistently identified the president as chief fundraiser for the institution (Glass & Jackson, 1998; Miller, 1991; Pierce & Pedersen, 1997; Ryan, 2005; Wagoner & Besikof, 2011), signaling the importance of their role within the development process. This study's participants echoed the same sentiments, demonstrating their integrated and strategic involvement in the development process at their respective institutions. Devoting a significant portion of their professional careers to fundraising,

the case study participants have an in-depth understanding and deep appreciation for external forms of support.

Research Question 2

The study's second goal was determining the specific fundraising skills and competencies perceived as valuable by community college presidents. Personalized communication and relationship building were the key findings related to the second research question. Personalized communication meant communicating effectively, telling the college story, stewarding donors, and interacting with the board, while relationship building addressed key stakeholders, collaborative partnerships, and the social demands of the modern presidency.

The interview data indicated that future leaders should be able to effectively communicate with diverse constituencies in a variety of settings, as well as engage in dialogue with their key stakeholders about their vision for the college. Since the president's role implicitly carries a high level of credibility and visibility, a strong community-oriented president can further enhance fundraising success through their external connectivity. The participants stressed the importance of their fundraising background and people skills as critical elements for the presidency because of their constant interaction with the internal and external communities. Dunn (1997), who traversed a similar career path to this study's participants, corroborated these findings attesting that presidents must know the key community players on a personal level in order to join the game. According to Hall (2002), the strength of these relationships is measured by trust, which is the willingness of the college and public to be open and honest with each other. Through a network of contacts, the president can reinforce and enhance the college's commitment to the community through meaningful involvement with the community. "Having the president involved in the community benefits the college in that it educates the community

about the college, raises the visibility of the president in the community, and creates goodwill" (Carlsen, 2003, p. 47). The study's participants were actively engaged in local organizations such as rotary club, chamber of commerce, advisory boards and area nonprofit organizations, which provided them with prime opportunities for face-to-face interaction with other key leaders to tell the college's story and promote their compelling agendas.

As a method of strengthening relationships, stewardship took place on a very personal level for these community college leaders in the form of handwritten notes, thoughtful gifts and gestures, and personalized phone calls of thanks for a recent donation. "Community colleges have traditionally placed a high value on the establishment of strong relationships with their communities" (Hall, 2002), so this type of personalized attention enhances cultivation for long-term support. Not only did presidents invest in relationship building with donors and the community, but also with their board. All of the case study participants mentioned a symbiotic relationship with the governing board as a necessary component of their leadership. According to Vaughan and Weisman (1998), the crucial relationship that exists between a president and his or her governing board has played a major role in how well the college functions. Since boards hire presidents, presidents serve at the pleasure of the board. Boards make policy; presidents implement policy; however, according to Vaughan and Weisman (2003), the positive working relationship between the president and the board has been essential for the college to operate efficiently. The researchers found the "team leads together in establishing, refining, interpreting, and communication the college's mission; the team sets tuition (although today the state legislators play an increasingly important role in this area); obtains resources; and approves programs, expenditures, appointments, and expenditures" (p. 53). Additionally, new presidents who suddenly find themselves working closely with a board often have little idea of how to act

or what to do; however, board relations are an area where the respondents felt they excelled based on their previous development experience of working with a foundation board. In their former advancement role they have networked, cultivated relationships, articulated the college's story, and spent quality time with this constituency, giving them confidence to interact in a knowledgeable and professional manner with their current board.

The social and emotional demands required by this position can be exhausting, and presidents are expected to take advantage of every opportunity to engage with the public at breakfast, lunch, dinner, and various social functions. The 24/7 connectivity of this position can be draining. Many of the participants could not pinpoint the number of hours they actually worked each week because they did not know where their day began and where it ended; however, direct contact with various constituencies was identified as crucial to their job, so fundraising was a good breeding ground for the position. Finding a personal/professional balance can be difficult in the community college presidency, but the participants also found it very rewarding.

Research Question 3

The final goal of this study was to obtain community college presidents' advice for aspiring leaders. Organizational leadership and professional preparation were the key findings. The study's participants provided their views on planning strategically, developing priorities, and providing advancement leadership. In addition, they offered guidance for future professionals in the areas of degree attainment, practical experience, teaching, and mentoring. The findings suggested that striking a balance among all of the demands of the presidency could present difficulty; however, organizational leadership and proper grounding bring rationality and direction to this daunting task.

Because of the changing landscape of higher education, the old ways of managing and organizing and leading are no longer effective (Wallin, 2010). The study's participants discussed the importance of integrating resource development with institutional planning. The strong connectivity between the college's strategic plan and fundraising goals, as well as the personal commitment of their time dedicated to fundraising, provided evidence as to the emphasis this study's participants placed on resource development as an institutional priority. This finding is consistent with the literature and confirms that college goals should always drive the pursuit of external funding. In a relationship-building mindset, fundraising priorities should be directly linked to the college's mission as it is materializes through short-term and long-term goals and through its mission and vision statements. The strategic planning process encourages guiding members of the college to forecast changes, formulate a vision for the future, and pinpoint areas where substantial private philanthropic investment will be needed, all of which improve credibility with donors and funding agencies.

The interview data indicated presidential leadership as essential to the establishment of relationships required for effective fundraising. As the living logo, the president plays a critical role as lead fundraiser for the institution, keeping the college in the forefront of the community's social consciousness. According to Budd (2012), presidents should embrace their role as the face of the institution and demonstrate hands-on commitment to fundraising and resource development that serves every aspect of the college. Bottom line, fundraising must be conducted and endorsed at the highest level. Community colleges may be at a distinct disadvantage as compared with their four-year counterparts, because they are relatively new to the "high-stakes fundraising game" (Milliron, de los Santos, & Browning, 2003, p. 81). However, according to Hall (2002), even though they are fairly new to resource development, community colleges have

nurtured links to their communities and created relationships based on the service they provide. Due to the visionary leadership of their leaders, community colleges leverage private funding to achieve their missions with the support of their local communities. The word "community" defines the major distinguishing factor that sets community colleges apart from all other types of institutions, an advantage on which they should capitalize. The president's job is to communicate, both internally and externally, the role the community college plays in community development. Several community colleges, including some of the case studies, have invested in community impact studies performed by outside consultants, which detail the relevance of the community college and the role it plays in economic development and overall health of the region. This report is a powerful vehicle for presidents to share with the community to demonstrate their institutions are investment-worthy.

The interview data also addressed advice for aspiring community college leaders. The next generation of leaders is persuaded to enhance their professional repertoire by gathering as much practical experience in various areas of the college as possible. All of the respondents felt aspiring professionals should become familiar with the multiple facets of a community college and recommended seeking opportunities for exposure to these areas. Multi-disciplinary programs, whether university-based or those offered through professional associations like AACC or CRD, provide for the solid development of leaders who can meet a myriad of challenges of the 21st century. The value of earning a doctorate was expressed as a major factor for entering the presidential pipeline. Weisman & Vaughan (2007) found that nearly 90% of current presidents hold terminal degrees, indicating that future leaders must follow suit and obtain proper credentialing to remain competitive; however, the literature also called for a

reformation of doctorate education, stating that current curriculum is no longer relevant for modern community college leaders (Friedel, 2010).

The case study participants indicated a strong desire for more exposure to the academy prior to their presidency. Whether in the community college or in a graduate school setting, they all had some classroom experience and highly recommended exposure to the community college teaching environment. Recognizing the vital role faculty play in educating students, the case study participants would have liked additional insight into the faculty perspective because their mindset can often differ from administration. Faculty represent the traditional ideals of the academy, as well as the institution's commitment to academic values so presidents must share a mutual respect with this group. Vaughan and Weisman (1998) cautioned presidents who ignore relationships with the faculty or take them for granted that they "do so at their own peril" (p. 131). Fisher (1997) asserted that in order to be taken seriously presidents must be viewed as a respectable academic. Additionally, this study confirmed that a solid understanding of the business of the college, which is teaching and learning, is what the president has to sell to potential donors. Their continual interaction with students and faculty is at the heart of this experience, so beyond selling bricks and mortar, the president must be able to articulate the institutional story, in part, from the academic perspective.

Effective mentors, according to Floyd (2009), have frequently been thought of as professionals in positions of significant authority who freely share professional knowledge, practical advice, and valuable coaching. The study's data indicated the significant value placed on mentorship by the participants as an important method of professional development. Each of the respondents credited formal and informal networks of support with helping to guide and encourage them through their professional career.

The principal findings from this inquiry have substantiated educational fundraising as an effective means of professional preparation for the modern community college presidency. In their efforts to prepare the next generation of community college leaders, AACC identified resource management as one of the core competencies, which includes taking an entrepreneurial stance in seeking alternative funding sources. While these competencies encompass the spirit of external resource acquisition, they do not specifically denote fundraising as a separate, essential component. However, two recent studies (Hassan, 2008; McNair, 2010) that aimed to validate the core competencies found that presidents suggested fundraising as an additional competency over and above resource management, highlighting it as a contributing factor for effective leadership. The five additional core competencies (organizational strategy, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism) were also endorsed by this present study.

Vaughan and Weisman (1998) recommended that individuals who enter the presidency should already possess most of the skills and abilities required for the position, so if fiscal leadership and fundraising wisdom are such strong components of the modern presidency then perhaps development professionals will earn a newfound respect for the value they can bring to this position. The findings from Weisman and Vaughan (2006) indicated that presidents averaged 11.5% of their time on fundraising, an increase of 2% over 2001. This study supported the existing literature noting fundraising as a key part of presidential tasks, but demonstrated a substantial increase in the percentage of time devoted to fundraising activities. Among the current study's three participants, fundraising accounted for 33.3% of their time. This increase could be attributed to the fact that these respondents were from fundraising backgrounds, whereas the Weisman and Vaughan survey participants were largely academically based, as well

as the changing fiscal environment that has characterized the new millennium. According to Dunn (1997), a proven fundraising record coupled with a strong academic background and a doctorate degree enhanced the capacity of leaders to think strategically about the college, its financial needs and its future. Each of the current study's participants highlighted the considerable number of transferable skills and competencies that have enhanced their presidency, which have been noted throughout the study.

One of many indications of the graying presidency, Eldredge (1999) predicted that an even greater leadership pool would emerge from the development profession because they are already well positioned to understand the mission of the institution and share the vision with various stakeholders. Their ability to "forge significant alliances," "cultivate prospects and donors to support the mission and goals of the institution," as well as "think and plan strategically" distinguished them from their academic colleagues (p. 143). Even though the path to the presidency has traditionally been through the academic route, Coll (1997) argued this conventional progression was occurring much less often and that governing boards have increasingly been concerned with the prerequisite skills, such as strategic planning, fundraising, and constituent relations. The prerequisite skills for these modern presidents are much more closely aligned with the professional track of the advancement professional. Governing boards are recognizing its value and placing a premium on this experience because it is often associated with continuing prosperity and growth of the institution.

A discussion of the findings revealed the relevancy of the data to the existing literature, validating the growing importance of external revenue as a contributing factor to the long-term stability of community colleges. With a growing percentage of the president's time now focused on external matters, their ability to communicate on a personal level and build lasting

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relationships with a variety of constituencies is essential to this role. Presidents must convey the importance of resource development as an institutional priority and utilize the college's strategic plan to drive fundraising efforts. Aspiring presidents should invest in their future by earning a doctorate degree, gaining generalized practical experience, identifying teaching opportunities, and finding a mentor.

Limitations

As with all research, this inquiry has limitations. The purpose of the qualitative inquiry was to provide a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon, the participants' experiences. According to Merriam (2009), qualitative research is "an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there" (p. 14). Because a case study focuses on one particular instance, the issue of transferability emerges; however, through rich, colorful description the reader can determine the applicability of the case to his or her own context.

Limitations also exist within the study's sampling method. Since there is currently no database or record keeping mechanisms to identify the professional backgrounds of community college presidents it was difficult to identify a target population of current community college presidents who met the study's criteria. Therefore, homogeneous sampling relied on the professional knowledge and personal experience of one individual who is well connected in field of community college resource development. This person's knowledge, however, only included those individuals who were involved at some point in their career with the Council for Resource Development. This narrowed focus may have eliminated eligible participants from the target population.

Additionally, the relatively small sample size may be considered a limitation; however, qualitative research specifies using an adequate number of participants to answer the question posed at the beginning of the study (Merriam, 2009). Utilizing foundation directors as secondary sources to corroborate findings from interviews with the presidents may also present a limitation. As direct reports to the presidents, the foundation directors may not have disclosed any negative thoughts or comments about their presidents for fear of retribution.

Recommendations for Future Research

The modern community college presidency is unlike any other position and continues to be subject of interest for many researchers. The evolution of the community college presidency has required today's leaders to evolve as well. In light of the changing fiscal landscape, additional research must be conducted to inform the profession and provide prescriptive measures for effectively preparing future leaders with practical information relevant to the 21st century. Yielding consistent results from a replication of this study could further validate the current study's assertions and be particularly useful for the next generation of leaders. A similar inquiry utilizing case studies of community college boards could be conducted. Performing case studies or even conducting surveys to get their perceptions on skill sets they are looking for in a chief executive officer would further supplement the current study and further define the value and role of fundraising in the presidency.

Additionally, a study of community college chief advancement officers might provide additional insight regarding their perspectives of their chief executive officers' fundraising skills and competencies, as well as their effectiveness in the community. The career paths of chief advancement officers themselves might also shed some light on the fundraising profession as a legitimate feeder into the leadership pipeline.

Since the last survey of the community college presidency conducted by Weisman and Vaughan was in 2006, it would be interesting to note what further trends or developments have resulted in the last six years. Much research utilizes this study as a basis; therefore, a revised study would be recommended in order to further examine the presidency in the new millennium.

One of the major challenges of this study was identifying a target population with specific characteristics related to professional background. Currently, there is no national record-keeping means for identifying the career path of communication college presidents. The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) produces a national registry for all higher education leaders who belong to their organization; however, this includes both two-year and four-year leaders and is dependent upon membership. Recommendations for future research would include identifying, tracking, and cataloging the professional trajectories of community college leaders, particularly those who become chief executive officers.

Implications for Improved Practice

This study offered insight and recommendations for various stakeholder groups within higher education, including: (a) national, regional, and state organizations offering continuing education and leadership development; (b) graduate-level preparatory programs; (c) institutional-level hiring governing boards; and (d) existing, new, and aspiring community college leaders.

National, regional, and state organizations such as AACC, CRD, as well as the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) are responsible for offering the majority of community college leadership training. By incorporating the findings from these case studies, trainees could engage in real-life scenarios in order to develop a more realistic view of the modern presidency by drawing upon the practical experiences of these presidents.

This study could strengthen graduate-level programs if program directors would

supplement their coursework and update their curriculum to reflect the findings. The recent literature, has called for a re-envisioning of these programs to ensure their relevancy in the 21st century by addressing the skills, competencies, and behaviors unique to the contemporary community college environment. As institutions of higher education, colleges and universities should be among the first to recognize the importance of research and utilize it to improve preparation of future professionals.

At the institutional level, governing boards, which are most commonly responsible for filling presidential vacancies, could utilize this study's findings to create appropriate job descriptions and selection criteria, identify successful candidates, and propose criteria for presidential evaluation. Recruitment and retention of strong leaders will remain critical in order to establish a sense of stability with internal and external stakeholders. Consistent with this study's findings, colleges should consider candidates outside the traditional pipeline for executive leadership positions based upon the transferability of their skill sets.

Seasoned, contemporary, and aspiring community college presidents could benefit from the expert advice presented in this study by fully comprehending the newly defined role in which they are currently engaged or aspire to achieve. Being knowledgeable about the challenges facing higher education, including the current fiscal climate and the leadership gap, will ultimately inform current and future practitioners about the changing landscape and help them avoid the associated pitfalls.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine three community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies. Three research questions guided the study and provided an in-depth

exploration of this phenomenon by investigating the impact of full-time fundraising experience on the modern presidency, determining which fundraising skills and competencies are valuable to the presidency, and soliciting advice for aspiring community college leaders to adequately prepare for this role. This multiple case study was significant because it addressed one of the largest challenges facing current and future leaders: funding. Identifying leaders who possess the necessary skills to successfully navigate the current fiscal climate is essential to the future of community colleges. The evolving role of the community college presidency signifies the need for new skills and competencies related to the increasing need for private support and growing external nature of the presidency.

A major objective in presenting this research was to provide readers with rich findings that could better prepare future leaders for the expectations of this modern role, as well as encourage colleges and their boards to consider advancement professionals when filling chief executive positions. Based upon the study's findings, it was evident that fundraising does impact the modern community college presidency. The natural familiarity of these presidents with fundraising allowed them to effectively address the stability and security of the institution's short-term and long-term financial future through the acquisition of external resources. The valuable skills and competencies illuminated by this study, personalized communication and the ability to build relationships, are already a part of the fundraising president's repertoire resulting in a smoother transition from development professional to chief executive officer. The self-reflection and advice offered by the study's participants with regard to their organizational leadership and professional preparation should be considered by future leaders as a means to better prepare for this role. This study complimented the existing literature, although it expanded upon the notion of fundraising as a presidential task and spoke to the increased expectation of

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community college presidents to actively lead the fundraising efforts for their institution. Additionally, it demonstrated the unique qualifications and transferable skills that presidents with prior fundraising experience bring to the position, presenting them as competent and capable candidates for the modern presidency.

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Appendix A

Initial Correspondence

From: Meredith Brunen
Sent: September 14, 2011
To:
Subject: Fundraising President

Dear [President],

My name is Meredith Brunen, and I am a doctoral student in the Higher Education Leadership
program at the University of Arkansas. In addition to my studies, I am also employed as a full-
time fundraiser for NorthWest Arkansas Community College in Bentonville, Arkansas.

I am starting my dissertation, which will be a qualitative study focused on community college
presidents who have previous full-time fundraising backgrounds. I want to examine the impact of
their former fundraising experiences on their current presidency. I am in the process of trying to
identify a target population that I will select my sample from for a multi-case study, which has
proven rather difficult with no national database or method of tracking for such credentials.

Before proceeding, I need to ensure I have an adequate pool of participants who would be
eligible for my study. I have been in touch with Polly Binns at CRD, and she was able to provide
me with a list of current community college presidents who she identified as having some type of
resource development background and you were included on this list. Would you be so kind to
confirm for me the following information:

- Do you have fundraising experience prior to holding your current presidency?
- Were you involved directly with fundraising efforts and to what extent?
- What was your title?
- For what organization did you raise funds (community college, university, other
  nonprofit, etc.)?
- How long did you hold this position?

Thank you so much in advance for your cooperation. I greatly appreciate your help and look
forward to making a contribution to our field!

Sincerely,

Meredith N. Brunen, M.Ed.
Graduate Student
University of Arkansas

Appendix B

Request for Participation

October 17, 2011

[President]
[Community College]
[Address]
[City, State Zip]

Dear [President]:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Higher Education Leadership program at the University of Arkansas and also serve as the Executive Director for Development at our local community college. As you know, community colleges are facing tremendous pressure to find alternative revenue sources to fill the resource gap since traditional modes of funding have not kept pace. Faced with shrinking revenues, growing enrollments, and greater demand for programs, the long-term fiscal health of community colleges depends upon the presidents who lead them. My dissertation, entitled "Raising the Bar: The Modern Community College Presidency," focuses on documenting the previous full-time fundraising experiences of current community college presidents and examining the impact of those experiences on the modern-day presidency.

Using specific criteria, you were identified for inclusion in this study along with a few others. I realize you have an extraordinarily busy schedule; however, I hope you will consider participating in order to further research in our field. My study will include a one-day site visit to each campus during which time I will conduct two interviews with each president that will last approximately one hour each. I will also request the opportunity to shadow each president during the day to the extent that his or her schedule allows. It is my desire to conclude all site visits by the end of this calendar year.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification regarding my study, you may contact me at XXX.XXX.XXXX or XXXXXX@uark.edu. Otherwise, I look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your sincere consideration.

Sincerely,

Meredith N. Brunen, M.Ed.
Higher Education Doctoral Student
University of Arkansas

Appendix C

Informed Consent Form

Raising the Bar: The Modern Community College Presidency
Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Principal Researcher: Meredith N. Brunen
Faculty Advisor: Dr. John W. Murry, Jr.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE
You are invited to participate in a research study about the modern community college presidency. You are being asked to participate in this study because hold the position of chief executive officer of a community college and have prior full-time fundraising experience.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Who is the Principal Researcher?
Meredith N. Brunen
(XXX) XXX-XXXX (cell)
XXXXXXX@uark.edu

Who is the Faculty Advisor?
Dr. John W. Murry, Jr.
(479) 575-3082 (office)
jmurry@uark.edu

What is the purpose of this research study?
The purpose of this qualitative study seeks to examine community college presidents with former fundraising backgrounds and to explore the impact of prior fundraising experience on their current presidencies.

Who will participate in this study?
The anticipated number of participants for this qualitative case study will range from 3–5, depending upon response rate. The study will focus on current community college presidents throughout the nation who have full-time fundraising backgrounds.

What am I being asked to do?
Your participation will require you to discuss your involvement as a full-time fundraising professional and the impact those experiences now have on your role in the presidency. There will be two one-hour interviews based on semi-structured questions, which will be audiotaped. The researcher will shadow you to the extent that your schedule allows during the one-day site visit.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?
There are no risks or discomforts anticipated for any participant.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
It is anticipated that the study will expand the body of knowledge on the topic of community college presidents and their role as institutional fundraiser.

How long will the study last?
The study will take place over a period of two to three months, but your involvement will be limited to a one-day site visit during which time the researcher will conduct two personal interviews lasting approximately one hour each. There will also be an opportunity for you to perform "member-checking," which will require a review of the interview transcript to ensure its accuracy.

Will I receive compensation for my time and inconvenience if I choose to participate in this study?
No, there is no monetary compensation for participation in this study; however, you will be offered a meal at the conclusion of the site visit and a copy of the study's results upon completion.

Will I have to pay for anything?
No, there are no associated costs for your participation in this study.

What are the options if I do not want to be in the study?
You are free to decline to participate in this study or withdraw from it at any time. A decision to withdraw will not result in any negative consequence or penalty to you.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
The Principal Investigator (Meredith N. Brunen) will make every effort to keep all information confidential to the extent allowed by applicable State and Federal law. All information will be recorded anonymously and the researcher will have sole physical control and access to the data, which will be stored securely. No data will be made available to anyone unless you specifically give written permission to do so. The researcher will select pseudonyms to identify each participant in written and oral reports with no references linking your identify to the study.

Will I know the results of the study?
At the conclusion of the study you will have the right to request feedback about the results. You may contact the faculty advisor, Dr. John W. Murry, Jr. at (479) 575-3082 or jmurry@uark.edu or Principal Researcher, Meredith N. Brunen at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXXXX@uark.edu. You will receive a copy of this form for your files.

What do I do if I have questions about the research study?
You have the right to contact the Principal Researcher or Faculty Advisor as listed below for any concerns that you may have.

Meredith N. Brunen, (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXXXX@uark.edu

Dr. John W. Murry, (479) 575-3082 or jmurry@uark.edu

You may also contact the University of Arkansas Research Compliance office listed below if you have questions about your rights as a participant, or to discuss any concerns about, or problems with the research.

Ro Windwalker, CIP
Institutional Review Board Coordinator
Research Compliance
University of Arkansas
120 Ozark Hall
Fayetteville, AR 72701-1201
479-575-2208
irb@uark.edu

I have read the above statement and have been able to ask questions and express concerns, which have been satisfactorily responded to by the investigator. I understand the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I understand that participation is voluntary. I understand that significant new findings developed during this research will be shared with the participant. I understand that no rights have been waived by signing the consent form. I have been given a copy of the consent form.

_____

Appendix D

Demographic Questionnaire
Presidential Profile

Name:

GENDER
   Female
   Male

RACE/ETHNICITY
Please specify your race:
   American Indian or Alaska Native
   Asian American or Pacific Islander
   Black or African American
   Hispanic
   White

Other:

AGE
Please indicate your birth date:
                  (MM/DD/YYYY)

YEARS IN CURRENT POSITION
   1 – 5 years
   6 – 10 years
   11 – 15 years
   16 or more years

Position Held Prior to First Presidency:

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND
Please indicate your highest degree earned:
   Master's
   PhD or EdD
   Professional Degree

Please indicate the field of study:

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

What percent of your time do you spend on fundraising activities?   %

Appendix E

Interview Guide

"Raising the Bar: The Modern Community College Presidency"

Participant Name: _____

Date of Interview: _____

1. Can you describe your career path?

2. What skills and/or competencies did you build during your time as a development

   professional (capital campaign, major gift solicitation, strong relationships, etc.)?

3. What value has your previous experience in development brought to your presidency?

4. How have your past development experiences specifically impacted the fundraising

   efforts of your current institution?

5. What development legacy are you most proud of during your tenure as president?

6. What challenges have you faced in your presidency that have come as a result of your

   path to your current role?

7. How do you think the community college presidency has changed over the last decade?

8. What do you see as the single most pressing issue facing the next generation of

   community college presidents?

9. What advice would you give to aspiring community college leaders on how to best

   prepare for today's presidency?

Appendix F

Letter of Appreciation

[Handwritten Notecard]

December 11, 2011

Dear Participant Name,

Thank you so much for taking time to visit with me and allowing me to conduct an interview for my qualitative dissertation study. I realize that you have an extremely busy schedule, so I appreciate your willingness to share your time and expertise with me. I really enjoyed our visit, and I feel that I gained a great deal of knowledge from it.

Sincerely,

Meredith N. Brunen

Appendix G

Member Checking Correspondence

From: Meredith Brunen
Sent: December 20, 2011
To:
Subject: Interview Transcript

Dear [President]:

Thank you so much for allowing me to visit your campus and conduct an interview with you for my qualitative dissertation study through the University of Arkansas. Your insights on the future of the community college presidency in terms of resource development and fundraising will be invaluable to me, as well as future leaders for many years to come.

I have attached a transcription of our interview, from which I will pull key quotes and ideas for my research. I want to ensure the accuracy of the information as it was presented to me that day, so please review and let me know if you have any changes. I want to stress that any of the key identifiers (names, places, etc.) will be kept confidential by either redaction or through use of pseudonyms.

I would like to receive any feedback by **Monday, January 9, 2012**. If I do not receive a response from you by that time, I will assume you have no changes. Thank you, again, for your support of my research study, and I look forward to sharing with you the final product next spring.

I hope you have a wonderful holiday season!

Sincerely,

Meredith