



Spring 2021

Joliet Junior

College

President's

Report

# Community Impact



Together  
We are JJC

Desmond Tutu once said, “Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.” Those words and that perspective have become especially meaningful to me as our institution evolves from this life-changing year. I want to thank you for the light I saw from you, our partners, despite the darkness surrounding us.

I am honored to highlight the incredible strides we have made despite significant external barriers. You will see this progress in our U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeships program and the Illinois Small Business Development Center at JJC, redefining career paths and helping local businesses thrive. You will meet our new police chief and learn his vision for the future of law enforcement at JJC. Our new solar field is a living laboratory that supports sustainability and new learning opportunities.

I want to reiterate the importance of our work together. We are here for you. Our collaboration now shapes the JJC of the future. It shapes our collective future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy'.

Judy L. Mitchell, Ed.D.

# President's Column

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**Mike Wilczynski,  
Manager of  
SBDC at JJC**

The relaunch of the Illinois Small Business Development Center at Joliet Junior College in summer 2020 has not only helped stabilize local businesses amid a challenging economic climate, but supported new growth.

The SBDC at JJC is one of 40 such Illinois centers that provide no-cost management assistance and advice to aid emerging and existing small businesses. Funding comes from the Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and JJC.

“Successful small business owners learn how to pivot as market conditions change,” said Mike Wilczynski, manager of the SBDC

at JJC. “Since last summer, we’ve helped businesses create strategies on staff size, financials, and how to grow marketing and sales. Together, we are building plans for success in 2021 regardless of the situation.”

Among its more than 100 clients and counting, the SBDC at JJC offers weekly webinars to support businesses and entrepreneur development. Its one-on-one sessions are future focused toward growth opportunities, and through survey responses the SBDC at JJC can assess local trends and next steps. Campaigns such as Ready to Order, a weekly themed menu guide, also encourage community support of local restaurants.

# Growth and Support for Small Businesses

100+

Clients Served  
During Pandemic





**Alexis Travis,  
Suncast Corporation  
Apprentice**

Joliet Junior College has received a grant through the American Association of Community Colleges/ Expanding Community College Apprenticeships initiative to develop a pipeline of skilled workers to serve as apprentices at local businesses.

JJC has apprenticeships in 11 industry-approved occupations through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in a variety of sectors, including advanced manufacturing, culinary arts/hospitality, healthcare, information technology and transportation/logistics.

Once a student completes their apprenticeship, they will receive a nationally recognized credential

from the U.S. DOL to show they've mastered the skills in their respective occupation. 94% of students who complete an apprenticeship program retain employment.

The apprentice's responsibility is to learn and gain on-the-job experience in a field of their choice. For Alexis Travis, an automation maintenance technician at Suncast Corporation, she is learning how to install, maintain and repair production equipment.

"First and foremost, it is a steady job, which is of course valuable in and of itself. In addition, while classroom learning is absolutely beneficial, real-world, hands-on experience is simply invaluable," said Travis.

# Expanding Apprenticeships

\$70,000

Average annual salary  
of those that complete  
an apprenticeship





**Brandon Campbell,  
Police Chief**

**Why did you choose JJC?**

I took this position for several reasons. First, I really did my research on the institution and saw that JJC's Core Values align with my values as a person and as a leader. I really like the fact that humor is one of the college's core values, which is often overlooked. Second, the structure of the police department fit a structure that I have a great deal of experience with, and I saw it as an opportunity to make lasting changes that can make the police department more effective.

**In what ways has the department been involved in the community?**

The officers have done a great job of taking the initiative to lend

themselves to the community.

They have organized fundraisers for several charitable causes. We just recently did the first "Shop with a Cop" in the department's history, which was a huge success.

**What new initiatives are you hoping to implement throughout the JJC Police Department?**

There are some community engagement initiatives that I am passionate about bringing to the JJC Police Department. Among those initiatives will be a community outreach unit, implementation of engagement and inclusion officers, and I will create a Chief Community Advisory Board which will be comprised of faculty, staff and students.



New Chief  
Focused on  
Community  
Engagement





With the activation of a new 1.3 megawatt onsite solar array in January, Joliet Junior College took yet another step toward a more sustainable campus. Over the next 25 years, the college will save more than \$1.6 million in electricity costs, while expanding clean energy education opportunities for students.

The 3,542 solar panels, installed by national solar developer Pivot Energy, were made possible through the generous contribution of retired Joliet oncologist Dr. Sarode Pundaleeka with Sunlarge Industries. Over the first 10 years, JJC will pay a reduced rate for the energy generated by the panels, after which they will be donated to the college.

“JJC has consistently invested in sustainable practices since our first college campus was completed in the early 1970s,” Dr. Judy Mitchell, JJC’s president, said. “Not only are we grateful for Dr. Pundaleeka’s investment in our institution and sustainable values, but we are ready to take this to the next level, supporting renewable energy and building academic and training opportunities around it.”

The college will also plant a pollinator habitat mixture around the panels using native grasses and forbs, which will support bee and butterfly habitats and aid in drought and stormwater mitigation. Since 2000, JJC has completed over 50 sustainability projects.

A More  
Sustainable  
Future





# Solar Stats

## JJC Solar Array

**1.3** megawatts

**\$1.6 million**

saved over 25 years

**3,542** panels

**22.5%** energy offset

## Savings Equivalent over 25 years

**5,045** clean energy homes

**96 million lbs.**

of CO<sub>2</sub> pollution avoided

**48 million lbs.**

of coal not burned



**JOLIET**  
JUNIOR COLLEGE  
— 1901 —