While the year 2020 started with the usual flurry of activities at College of DuPage, the impact of a worldwide pandemic dictated how we operated for much of the year.

Our initial decisions were focused on keeping our students moving successfully toward course completion. This meant faculty, staff and administrators needed to pivot quickly in order to help our students with remote learning and to provide the resources they needed to succeed.

It did not take long for the COD community to come together. Our student trustee, Samiha Syed, started #ChapsUnite, and with the added tagline of “Distance Does Not Divide Us,” we formed a network that continues to help us navigate through these remarkable times.

While the initial focus was on academics, the College quickly found new ways to partner with the community to help those in need. For example, the College received numerous requests from health care organizations seeking personal protective equipment and other supplies. In response, a number of our programs—including Nursing, Surgical Technology, Ultrasound, Emergency Medical Technician, Chemistry, Dental Hygiene and Art—donated hundreds of gowns, masks, gloves, head coverings, hand sanitizer and shoe coverings to local agencies. In addition, four much-needed ventilators were loaned to Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Rush Copley Hospital.

The College responded in other ways due to the pandemic, including the creation of the Contact Tracer Training program. Offered by our Continuing Education Department and in consultation with the DuPage County Health Department, the program was bolstered thanks to a generous $12,000 gift from Edward-Elmhurst Health to support scholarships and encourage program enrollment, particularly among underrepresented populations.

The community also came together to support our students. The College of DuPage Foundation, in coordination with the COD Office of Institutional Advancement, raised more than $250,000 through the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund to provide crucial support to students who struggled to pay rent, buy food or pay for their education.

The Business Development Center at the College spent thousands of hours working with business owners to identify resources and develop strategies for survival. Their tireless efforts continue to make a positive impact on our regional economy.

What we learned from 2020 is that College of DuPage can respond to a large-scale emergency by taking a proactive and creative approach to how we operate. Because of strong relationships with our District 502 partners, together we made a difference in the lives of our students and the welfare of our community.
**BY THE NUMBERS**

Government officials, medical experts and business professionals say COVID-19 is a numbers game. While these numbers can reflect a grim reality, other numbers illustrate the inventiveness, ingenuity and resiliency of the people—especially those at College of DuPage and in Community College District 502.

### Education

Along with remote learning came an increased demand for online educational resources. The College of DuPage Library never closed; it just shifted its delivery system. Between March 17 and Oct. 1:
- More than 10,000 questions answered via chat, phone or email by reference and circulation staff
- 2,304 new library cards issued to faculty, staff, students and community members
- 350 laptops added to the Library’s inventory for loan to students
- 100 hotspots added and checked out
- 50 percent increase in research appointments using the Philanthropy Collection

COD answered the need for personal protective equipment. Donations from the College included:
- 200 isolation and 200 surgical gowns
- 11 boxes of N95 masks
- 20 boxes of face masks with shields
- 65 boxes of exam and 20 boxes of surgical gloves
- 35 boxes of head coverings
- 12 quarts of hand sanitizer

Supplies directly helped VNA Health Care, a community health center serving more than 72,000 patients across the Chicago suburbs, and Choose DuPage, the regional economic development organization for DuPage County helping businesses in need.

### Financial Resources

Because the pandemic created hardships for many COD students, the College of DuPage Foundation mobilized donor support to answer student financial needs:
- More than $250,000 raised in support of COVID Relief via the Student Emergency Fund, supporting more than 550 students’ personal and educational needs
- A $350,000 match of its investments allocated by the Foundation in support of the Student Emergency Fund and the COD Succeeds Scholarship Fund
- $25,000 raised—including a $12,000 gift from Edward-Elmhurst Health—to support scholarships for Continuing Education’s Contact Tracer Training program
- A donation of 50 laptops from Wynndalco Enterprises, LLC, and $25,000 worth of hotspots purchased by the Foundation supported students

### Business

The Business Development Center (BDC) at College of DuPage quickly prepared to deliver client services remotely. In the first six weeks after March 16:
- 450 hours of advising services delivered to 150 small business clients and 85 non-clients (compared with 274 hours for 114 small business clients during the same period in 2019)
- 61 webinars offered with 286 participants

From July 1 through Sept. 30, the BDC numbers increased exponentially:
- 1,181 clients advised
- 6,796 hours
- 12,275 advising sessions
- 176 webinars offered
- 1,349 participants attended

Economic impact reported from clients who were assisted by the BDC:
- $56,758,084 in contracts
- $2,511,034 in loans/capital/grants
- $15,700,859 in export revenue

Innovation DuPage, a nonprofit venture that supports the startup community, helped members move forward with their visions during the pandemic:
- 62 current member companies being served
- 300 personalized business consultations conducted

### The Community

The College’s responsibility to react to the changing needs of the community also meant changing the way volunteer services were provided:
- COD partnered with the Glen Ellyn Park District to collect more than 3,600 pounds of food during a holiday food drive and distributed more than 4,600 pounds of food to over 110 different clients in December alone
- COD’s annual Up to S.N.O.W. (Serving the Needs of Others in Winter) Good community giving campaign provided more than $31,500 in support for nonprofit partner agencies and families in DuPage County, including $11,000 donated by COD Cares to DuPage Pads, Bridge Communities, Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans Services, Family Shelter Services and the College of DuPage Fuel Pantry
- The Dia de los Muertos drive-by event, hosted by the Cleve Carney Museum of Art and McAninch Arts Center, collected more than 100 bags and 10 cases of non-perishable food items, diapers, baby wipes and first aid supplies
While the year 2020 unfolded like a work of unimaginable science fiction, College of DuPage never lost sight of its primary purpose—to help students succeed in their educational pursuits.

After a robust start to the new decade, COD students, staff and faculty found themselves in an unprecedented situation when COVID-19 quickly forced colleges and universities across the country to shift classes to alternative instruction. The COD community was forced into the virtual realm in March and the College campus took on an eerie silence.

Instead of accepting this new reality with stunned confusion, the College made it a priority to help students during this time of upheaval. Partnering with the College’s student trustee, Samiha Syed, the College launched a unity campaign, #ChapsUnite, that embodied shared experiences during the pandemic.

The accompanying tagline, Distance Does Not Divide Us, became the sentiment in all College and community outreach.

“There is much power, meaning and a world of beauty to be found in the spirit of multiculturalism and unity; that is what inspired me to create ChapsUnite,” Syed said. “I wanted to unite our community, our multiple perspectives, backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures as one so we could help, support and empower each other during a time when we needed each other the most.”

Ensuring the success of student learning was the faculty and leadership across campus. College of DuPage President Dr. Brian Caputo hailed their creative mindset, which facilitated the transition to alternative instruction.

“For many of our faculty, moving to online course delivery was easy. For others, this presented a real challenge—not only in terms of learning new technology but also in figuring out how to deliver courses that don’t lend themselves easily to an online format,” Dr. Caputo said.

“I have been truly energized by everyone’s willingness to help each other and to make sincere efforts to connect with our students by providing them the resources they need to be successful in their educational pursuits.”

Associate Professor of Human Services Andrea Poiles was unsure whether the online environment would work well for her group dynamics class. However, she was thrilled to find that her class served to support students during exceptionally challenging circumstances.

“The class helped them manage their anxiety about the pandemic by enabling them to virtually meet and interact with each other,” she said. “Our interaction really helped to keep them connected to their peers and the COD community.”

In what could have been an uphill battle, staff across campus worked around the clock to keep the College connected by providing current and prospective students with such valuable resources as virtual information sessions, tutoring and webinars. In one week, for example, College Library staff prepped more than 100 laptop computers as long-term loans to students in need.

While the College had to cancel in-person events, faculty and staff were quick on their feet to move student celebrations online, including the first-ever virtual commencement. Within the first 24 hours, more than 21,000 people viewed the ceremony remotely, far exceeding projections. Other online events included COD’s Got Talent, Animation Night, College Theater and College Music performances, art gallery exhibits, and a virtual speakers series. The Continuing Education department continued to offer its free Lunch Break Lectures and Sage Series community courses online, while Science and Technology Week virtually invited high school students and their parents to explore STEM careers.

While COVID-19 Student Relief Fund provided aid for a variety of expenses, including education-related costs; food, toiletries and medications; and unmet expenses due to loss of employment. The Foundation raised more than $250,000 for more than 500 students in need.

“Each applicant had a different story of how COVID-19 was impacting them,” said COD Foundation Executive Director Karen Kuhn. “Many have been hit hard and as the crisis continues, they need help, oftentimes with basic expenses. We didn’t hesitate to rally around these students so they could continue their education without roadblocks.”

Financially, the COD Foundation took the lead in helping students who were adversely affected by the pandemic. Designed to adapt to students’ needs, the COVID-19 Student Relief Fund provided aid for a variety of expenses, including education-related costs; food, toiletries and medications; and unmet expenses due to loss of employment. The Foundation raised more than $250,000 for more than 500 students in need.

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Continued on next page
A Long History of Giving Back

Even with the challenges of a global pandemic, the College still continued its mission to support District 502 residents.

In response to DuPage County’s need for trained workers to help limit the spread of COVID-19, COD created the new Contact Tracer Training program. A subsequent $12,000 gift from Edward-Elmhurst Health allowed the College to offer scholarships for the four-week online program. The generous gift is encouraging program enrollment, particularly among underrepresented populations.

The Illinois Small Business Development Center at COD continues to play an integral role in helping business owners around DuPage County locate resources and take steps toward financial recovery. In the month of April alone, the SBDC offered more than 30 webinars and served hundreds of clients with more than 500 hours of free consultation.

COD’s Fuel Pantry continued to donate food to COD community members through drive-up, contactless pick up, serving more than 73 clients and distributing 685 pounds of organic fresh vegetables in the summer alone.

“The majority of our clients now report that they are supporting other family members, so we have seen a sharp increase in the number of non-traditional-aged students we are serving,” COD Coordinator of Student Life Shannon Hernandez said. “We have new clients every week who are learning about the Fuel Pantry and accessing the service. During the colder weather, we are continuing to grow vegetables in aquaponic towers that will allow us to continue distributing fresh produce to those in need.”

COD Cares continued its outreach by adapting its initiatives to keep all involved safe while providing help for those in need. Through the annual Up To S.N.O.W. (Serve the Needs of Others in Winter) Good campaign, COD employees and staff members provided more than $27,500 in support for 20 nonprofit partner agencies in DuPage County.

Creating Meaningful Dialogue

This year also saw the emergence of a national discussion on racism. COD took the opportunity to begin a community dialogue by launching Chaps Unite Against Racism. The academic-year-long initiative incorporates social media, videos, photos and forums to examine the ways that racism exists in today’s society and how COD and the surrounding community are working together to create a better world.

By partnering with DuPage County Chairman Dan Cronin and many others, the College created an open dialogue to strengthen diversity efforts in DuPage County.

“This collaboration with College of DuPage is incredibly valuable because it allows our entire community to explore what diversity and inclusion really means in each of our daily lives,” Cronin said. “Working with the College faculty, staff and students, we believe this collective effort will strengthen our community and allow DuPage County to set a positive example for productive dialogue.”

A Future of Hope

It remains uncertain how long the College will need to exercise extreme distancing precautions. But if the year 2020 has proven anything, Dr. Caputo said, COD is more than ready to adapt to meet the needs of its students and community.

“COD pride runs deep, and we will continue to support one another with our characteristic courage, confidence and hope,” he said. “I have never been prouder of College of DuPage.”

College of DuPage

ON THE FRONT LINES OF COVID-19

Sabine Gonzalez
COD Justice Studies student Sabine Gonzalez worked at a COVID-19 testing site in Chicago with her National Guard unit while studying online.

“Before my unit got activated, I felt like I was helpless and there was nothing I could do. In a couple of years from now, I’ll look back and be able to take this experience with me in my next endeavor.”

Anthony Acevedo
COD Biology alumnus Anthony Acevedo is using his expertise as a clinical laboratory scientist at the Illinois Department of Public Health to assist with the state’s response to the pandemic.

“When I heard that Illinois was expanding testing to help contain the spread of the virus, I wanted to do my part to assist in any way I could.”

Abbey Canaday Howard
COD Nursing alumnus Abbey Canaday Howard was transferred to the critical care unit at Elmhurst Hospital due to the influx of COVID-19 patients.

“This is uncharted territory for everyone, but I’m always amazed at how our hospital and community have been able to come together and support one another at such a difficult time.”

Michelle Binet
COD Architecture alumnus Michelle Binet helped transform Chicago’s McCormick Place into an alternative care facility for COVID-19 patients.

“I’ve never worked on a project quite like this. It has been incredibly rewarding to see a project come to fruition quickly with the help of so many hardworking and passionate people.”

Adrian Raygoza
COD alumnus Adrian Raygoza joined University of Illinois at Chicago’s COVID-19 vaccine trial team.

“I can’t let the pressure of what this might mean for our future seep into my work. I have to focus on the task at hand: Where can I help?”
When the COVID-19 pandemic forced College of DuPage to switch to remote learning, faculty and staff responded quickly and creatively with new initiatives and delivery modes as well as assistance for students.

COD Foundation Provides Funding, Equipment for Students

The College of DuPage Foundation raised more than $250,000 via the Student Emergency Fund. Designed to be adaptable to students’ needs, the fund provided aid for a variety of expenses, including educational-related costs as students moved to online classes; food, toiletries and medications; and unmet costs due to loss of employment. So far, the fund has supported more than 550 students’ personal and educational needs.

In addition, David Andalcio, Founder and CEO of Wynndalco Enterprises, LLC and College of DuPage Foundation Board member, donated 50 laptops that were gifted to COD students who demonstrated need as identified by student success navigators and staff members in the Financial Aid office and the Library.

COD Launches Contact Tracer Training Program

Offered through COD’s Continuing Education Department and in consultation with the DuPage County Health Department, the College launched a Contact Tracer Training program to help fight the spread of COVID-19. More than 300 students have completed the noncredit four-week program and a total of 20 sections have been offered since the program began.

Through a $12,000 gift from Edward-Elmhurst Health, the College also offered scholarships to encourage program enrollment, particularly among underrepresented populations.

COD, County Create COVID-19 Archive

In partnership with DuPage County, College of DuPage created the DuPage Community COVID-19 Digital Archive, a compilation of unique stories about finding togetherness while separated, along with strategies to cope and heal in one historical account made available for future generations.

COD Events Go Virtual

With in-person events at COD canceled, milestone events for students shifted to the virtual realm. Online events included Commencement, COD’s Got Talent, Animation Night, College Theater (including its annual presentation of “A Christmas Carol”) and College Music performances, art gallery exhibits and national transfer week. The Continuing Education department continued to offer its free Lunch Break Lectures and Sage Series community courses online, while Science and Technology Week virtually invited high school students and their parents to explore STEM careers.
Giving Initiative Tops $27,500
College of DuPage staff and faculty donated more than $15,000 in much-needed items for families and children through the annual Up to S.N.O.W. Good community giving initiative. DuPage Pads, Bridge Community, Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans Services, Family Shelter Services and COD’s Fuel Pantry also received a collective $11,000 in support from COD Cares.

Chaps Unite Against Racism
College of DuPage’s Dean of Students Office launched Chaps Unite Against Racism, a College-wide effort to examine the ways that racism exists in today’s society and how COD and the surrounding community are working together to create a better world. The campaign encompasses a web platform that includes COD stories and videos through the eyes of community leaders, faculty, staff and students; virtual lectures and panel discussions; and a new blog, “Speak Your Truth,” that highlights personal perspectives on race and diversity.

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—Dan Cronin
DuPage County Board Chairman

New Program Supports Hispanic, Black, Female and Veteran-Owned Businesses
In partnership with the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA), Innovation DuPage launched the Construction Industry Owner-to-CEO Business Accelerator, a program designed to support Hispanic, Black, female and veteran-owned businesses. The 12-week program guides participants as they scale their businesses, capitalizing on the knowledge of industry experts serving as instructors.

“This customized curriculum led by industry experts is a high-value way to extend HACIA’s mission and to help grow the pool of qualified minority- and women-owned firms that will shape the future of the construction industry.”

—Jorge Perez
HACIA Executive Director

Project Hire-Ed Meets Employer Demand
College of DuPage’s robust apprentice program, Project Hire-Ed, is working to close the skills gap in DuPage County. With recent Illinois Community College Board approval, students walk away from the program with not only training and a job but also a 30-credit hour certificate. Since 2019, COD has partnered with dozens of community employers to offer students apprenticeship opportunities in manufacturing machining, manufacturing CNC operator, facility maintenance, industrial maintenance, HVACR service, welding and electro-mechanical mechatronics. In the past year, Project Hire-Ed added apprenticeship offerings in health care for medical billing and coding and is currently developing apprenticeships in computer and information technology, computer and information science, and cybersecurity.

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Serving Campus 
and COMMUNITY 

COD Celebrates the Life and Work of Frida Kahlo

Multiple events throughout the year celebrated the life of artist Frida Kahlo in preparation for “Frida Kahlo: Timeless,” currently scheduled to run June 5 to Sept. 6, 2021, in the Cleve Carney Museum of Art at the McAninch Arts Center. A comprehensive presentation of Kahlo’s life and works, the exhibit will feature 26 original pieces as well as an immersive historical exhibit that provides a framework of the life, circumstances and events that led to Kahlo becoming one of the most important painters of the 20th century.

The College of DuPage Foundation, in support of the McAninch Arts Center, the event highlighted the upcoming “Frida Kahlo: Timeless.”

To prepare for the three-month Frida Kahlo exhibit, the Cleve Carney Museum of Art underwent a $3 million expansion to transition from a gallery into a museum. COD Architecture alumnus Carmine Calabria had the unique opportunity to work on the design team for the expansion as an architectural designer at Wight & Company, where he works full time.

“It felt as if yesterday I was walking by the McAninch Arts Center while construction on the gallery started. Now I’m a part of the team helping bring life to the new addition. It’s my good fortune to experience a place, like the MAC, at different points in my life and use that as a measure of self-awareness and growth.”

– Carmine Calabria
COD Alumnus

Mariachi and colorful décor welcomed passersby at a drive-by celebration to mark Frida Kahlo’s 113th birthday. Hosted by the McAninch Arts Center, the event highlighted the upcoming “Frida Kahlo: Timeless.”

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– Carmine Calabria
COD Alumnus

Photos: “For the Love of Frida” benefit gala

Making NEWS

• College of DuPage Trustee Maureen Dunne (right A) was appointed Secretary to the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) for 2020-2021. Dunne began her one-year term on July 1.

• COD Student Trustee Samiya Syed (right B) was named a 2020 Lincoln Academy of Illinois Student Laureate and is the only community college student in the state to receive the Abraham Lincoln Civic Engagement Award.

• Psychology student Savannah Santos (right C) was awarded a Margaret Messer Student Research Grant from the Honors Council of the Illinois Region to support her work researching idiopathic hypersomnia, a disorder Santos has been battling since childhood. Santos earned a transfer scholarship through COD and is now pursuing neuroscience and biology at North Central College.

• Nursing alumna Julia Walczak (right D) was awarded the prestigious Albert Schweitzer Fellowship for her proposal to initiate cervical cancer and HPV prevention education classes for Polish women in Chicago. In light of COVID-19, Walczak volunteered to become the nursing coordinator for National Student Response Network, a group of nursing students across the nation working to support public health departments, community organizations and hospitals through the challenges of the pandemic.

• English Professors Brian Brems’s (right E) and Michelle Moore’s (right F) recently published “ReFocus: The Films of Paul Schrader” explores the director, screenwriter and critic’s groundbreaking achievements. The book received kudos from industry leaders, including Academy Award-winning director Martin Scorsese.

• College of DuPage students Bridget Kingston (right G) and Natalie Brandy (right H) were selected as Chicagoland Transfer Award recipients by Columbia College Chicago. Each received a $12,000 scholarship while Kingston is the first student to take advantage of COD’s Columbia Transfer program.

• Art program alumnus Jason Mack (right I) built the world’s largest glass tree in Champaign, Ill. Made from steel and recycled glass collected on-site during construction, the tree measured 31 feet in height with a circumference of 52 feet at the base and weighing in at approximately two tons.

• Physics Professor Tom Carter (right J) was one of only 58 instructors nationwide honored by the American Association of Community Colleges with the esteemed Dale P. Parnell Faculty of Distinction Award. The designation recognizes Carter for his willingness to support students inside and outside of the classroom, participate in college committees, and go above and beyond what is required to ensure student success.

• Black Student Alliance members (right K) accepted the DuPage County Board’s proclamation with commendations for their efforts to promote diversity, equity, inclusion and learning during Black History Month and throughout the year.
Outstanding Graduates

Pamela Campos and Areeb Kidwai were honored as the 2020 Outstanding Graduates at College of DuPage for their academic excellence and achievement inside and outside the classroom.

Campos earned her Associate in Applied Science degree and graduated from the Physical Therapist Assistant program. She plans to fulfill her dream of working as a therapist with the special needs population. Kidwai earned his Associate in Science degree and is now majoring in Psychology at the University of Minnesota. His long-term goal is to open a residential school and provide therapy for young men and women to develop healthy habits.

Outstanding College-Wide Full-Time Faculty

Professor of Justice Studies Theo Darden has been instrumental in the development of several Justice Studies programs at the College, in addition to forging partnerships with Lewis University, Illinois Youth Center-Warrenville and University of West London. Darden’s philosophy of education is immersed in a student-first initiative, which encourages students to open their minds and pursue a course of study that has the most practical meaning to their lives and the communities in which they live.

Outstanding College-Wide Part-Time Faculty

Patrick Iidzik, Speech Communication instructor, is a College of DuPage alumnus who was influenced in communication studies after taking his first speech class at COD. Iidzik approaches education with a focus on practical, need-based learning and ethical consideration. He also realizes that college can be a challenging time for students who are finding their identities, so cultural understanding and empathy are key components in all his classes.

COD, District 87 Sign Dual Credit Agreement

Students at all four Glenbard High School District 87 schools now have access to dual credit opportunities as part of a new agreement between District 87 and the Dual Credit program at College of DuPage. The memorandum of understanding is the first of its kind between the College and a local high school district.

Dual credit options previously only available at Glenbard South High School are available at Glenbard East, Glenbard North and Glenbard West. All Glenbard students now have the opportunity to jumpstart their college careers, earning college credits as part of their high school curriculum.

New Creative Writing Certificate

With approval by the Illinois Community College Board, College of DuPage is the only community college in Illinois to offer a Creative Writing Certificate program. The new program offers students an affordable option to develop writing and editing skills for publication across a variety of disciplines.

Breaking Down STEM Barriers

With a passion to make STEM a more inclusive and supportive environment, COD Engineering student Cierra Desmaratti, president of the College’s Chapter of the Society of Women Engineers, was invited to present at the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math divisional meeting in which she focused on the driving factors behind the lack of women and underrepresented minorities in the field. She was also given the honor of introducing Harvard Physics professor, physicist and cosmologist Lisa Randall as part of COD’s STEMinar speaker series.

Autismerica Goes Virtual

Autismerica has become a safe haven for hundreds of students and community members with autism to socialize, connect and learn about a variety of available support resources on the College of DuPage campus. In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, COD Counselor for Students with Disabilities Michael Duggan turned Autismerica meetings virtual to lend support and allow students to stay connected during challenging times.
Community College District 502

• Originally formed from 10 high school districts, District 502 has become the most populous community college district in Illinois outside of Chicago, now serving 15 districts.

• More than one million residents from all or part of 51 communities comprise today’s District 502, with boundaries encompassing parts of Cook and Will counties as well as a majority of DuPage County.

• If you divide District 502 into four equal quadrants—northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast—enrollment would be approximately 25 percent from each area.

• In addition to the main campus in Glen Ellyn, College of DuPage operates four centers located in Addison, Carol Stream, Naperville and Westmont that offer classes on weekdays and Saturdays.

• When the College opened on Sept. 25, 1967, classes were held in office trailers and at multiple leased suburban sites. Driving from class to class, the students, faculty and staff became affectionately known as road runners, hence the College’s mascot is the “Chaparral.”

*Only portions of these communities are in District 502.