

On the surface, Lane Community College and Bushnell University might seem radically different institutions. But, as City Club members learned at the November 18th program, they have many similarities in both their approach to education and the results they produce. At the end of this article you will find links to the slide presentations by our speakers, Dr. Margaret Hamilton, President of Lane Community College and Dean Angela Doty, Dean of Career and Academic Resources at Bushnell University.



Dean Angela Doty

Bushnell, recently renamed in honor of their founder, established in 1895 as Northwest Christian College, is a private for year institution, founded with an intentionally religious *raison d’etre*. It now has about 700 students about half of whom are traditional residential students, according to Dean Doty. By contrast, Lane is a public community college offering certificates and associate degrees with as many as 21,000 students, a large number of whom take only occasional and focus classes and then enter the workforce or transfer to a four-year institution according to Dr. Hamilton.



President Margaret Hamilton

Bushnell describes its goal as to produce “purposeful graduates” noting that 83 percent of their graduates are at work within six months of graduation. LCC describes their objective as to get students to the workforce.

Both institutions have some focus on programs that tie directly to employment. President Hamilton noted that it is important to follow labor demand and focus on programs that relate directly to employment. “We are preparing the middle class,” she said. “We must meet them (students) where they are and prepare them for high paying jobs. We get people to the next step – get them a job and some security.” Part of this involves find skilled experts in the field and bringing them in as lecturers. It is no longer adequate to rely only on teachers trained as academics.

**Role:
Commitment to
Access, Equity, and
Inclusion**

- Resource allocation based upon labor demand
- Identifying and interrupting patterns of inequity in training and education
- Strengthening systems to remove barriers
- *Meeting students where they are*
- Being “student ready”




Dean Doty echoed many of these views and also pointed to Bushnell’s development of internships and practicums to connect students to work experience before their complete their degrees. She said that all their traditional residential students have at least 135 hours of field experience before graduation. President Hamilton concurred and observed that getting students intentional exposure to the workforce through coops with business and industry is vital to success.

As Vice president Grant Matthews said at the previous program, LCC has a diverse set of programs focused on specific professions and job opportunities. Bushnell, while it has a traditional mix of 19 undergraduate programs and six graduate programs, and a robust program in intercollegiate athletics, also has developed programs in software engineering and an accelerated bachelor’s in nursing

programs. Bushnell also has an articulation agreement with LCC which facilitates the easy transfer of LCC credits to Bushnell for students who seek to go beyond the associate degrees offered by LCC.

At each institution, the speakers said, the existing academic culture needs adjustment to make the institutions more responsive to change. “If the world is no longer making widgets,” President Hamilton said, “we should stop offering programs in widget making.” At both institutions there is sometimes resistance to “sundowning” long established programs, but the nimbleness to adjust to the demands of the work world is essential if the institutions are to fulfill their missions.

In the question and answer period, much discussion was devoted to how to address the costs associated with post-secondary education. While Dean Doty noted that Bushnell has the lowest average annual cost among accredited regional universities, finding ways to mitigate those costs remains vital. At LCC, President Hamilton said that their an important task is to find funding partnership and federal funds to support students while they learn.

When asked how legislative consideration of investing money in wraparound services and training, President Hamilton said that a primary concern is the reality that many entry level jobs for certificate holders and graduates do not pay enough to sustain a minimal standard of living – in particular, she noted that pay for those working in childcare and healthcare are simply inadequate. This compounds the problem because it means that the supply of childcare opportunities for their students and graduates simply is not enough.

The institutions are also trying to control student costs by adjusting their tuition policies. At Bushnell students pay a block tuition rate which allows them to take anywhere between 12 and 189 credits, making it possible for those who can take on the extra load to shorten the time it takes them to get to graduation. LCC had been considering that before the pandemic hit, President Hamilton said, and probably be moving in the direction in the future.

The speakers were asked directly how they had applied the federal funds that have been provided as a response to the pandemic. In response they indicated that the CARES 1 and CARES 2 money had provided quick relief for added expenses triggered by the pandemic. President Hamilton said that LCC will expect about \$16 million in ARPA funding, 50 percent of which must go directly to students. The balance will be used to replenish losses related to COVID – including the need to upgrade their information technology systems rapidly to enable a quick switch to online learning.

Dean Doty said most of the CARES money was used to prevent employee layoffs, and that future funds will be devoted to students to make it possible for them to complete their programs.

[President Hamilton’s Presentation](#)

[Dean Doty’s Presentation](#)