HISTORY AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

History

Elaine P. Nunez Community College is a unique institution of higher learning with an equally unique history. The College bears the name of the late wife of the Honorable Samuel B. Nunez, Jr., President of the Louisiana State Senate from 1982-1988 and from 1990-1996; it was the first public institution of higher learning in Louisiana to be named for a woman. Elaine P. Nunez was a lifelong resident of St. Bernard, where she was educated. She was extremely interested in and actively supportive of public education. When Mrs. Nunez died, St. Bernard lost a civic-minded and dedicated individual who helped set the stage for growth and improvement in local education.

In recognition of Mrs. Nunez's support of public education, the 1992 Louisiana State Legislature passed Act 341, establishing Elaine P. Nunez Community College. The Act merged Elaine P. Nunez Technical Institute and St. Bernard Parish Community College to form a comprehensive community college, offering both vocational and technical programs and arts and sciences programs. The new College was placed under the management of the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities, effective July 1, 1992, and Dr. James A. Caillier, the president of the Board of Trustees, acted as the College's first president.

True to its heritage, Elaine P. Nunez Community College experienced a unique beginning in that Hurricane Andrew struck the New Orleans area on the day registration for classes was scheduled to begin. With strong support from the local community, however, the College was able to open three days later.

In the spring of 1993, Elaine P. Nunez Community College was accredited by the then named Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees, certificates, and diplomas. This accreditation was reaffirmed for ten years in 1997, in 2009, and in 2017.

On July 1, 1999, the management of the College, along with five other community colleges, was transferred to the Board of Supervisors for the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. At the same time, the title of the College's chief executive officer was changed from "president" to "chancellor."

On August 29, 2005, Nunez Community College and its entire service area were struck by Hurricane Katrina, in what would become the greatest natural disaster to affect the United States in recorded history. St. Bernard Parish, the home parish of the campus, was almost completely decimated. The College took a direct hit and suffered flood waters which, in many areas, did not recede for weeks. The first floor of every building on campus was flooded more than seven feet.

Despite dire predictions, the College presented a fall "mini-mester" within weeks of the disaster, enrolling students in online classes, classes at Slidell High School, and other locations. By the end of December, the Facilities Department along with volunteer crews and others, had gutted the first floors of the buildings and had electricity, water, and sewer connections in the Arts, Sciences & Technology Building. The College became an oasis in the ravaged parish and catalyst for business with industry revitalization as it opened the campus for business in January of 2006 and resumed classes *on campus* on January 25, 2006.

Beginning in 2006, the College experienced unprecedented growth, exceeding its pre-Katrina enrollment in 2010. The College continues to grow and expand programs in career and technical education, transfer degrees, non-credit and workforce programs, and strives to serve the entire community, including a significant number of dually enrolled high school students from surrounding parishes.

Dr. Tina Tinney, a native of St. Bernard Parish and a former instructor at Nunez, was installed as Nunez chancellor on January 4, 2018, succeeding Chancellor Emeritus Dr. Tommy Warner. Her return as chancellor brought a focus on student-centered instruction, community partnerships and workforce development. Nunez Community College has expanded programming offerings to support community partnerships and workforce, which include but are not limited to Paralegal Studies, Coastal Studies and GIS Technology, and Wastewater Plant Operator. In 2018 Nunez Community College began offering Aerospace Manufacturing Technology, the only program dedicated to Aerospace Manufacturing Technicians in the state of Louisiana.

Academic Growth

Since its origin, Nunez Community College has shown steady progress in its quest to become an institution of higher learning that will have a tremendous impact on the future of its service area and the State of Louisiana. By the end of the 1993-94 academic year, the student body had an annual growth rate of approximately seven percent. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the College served approximately 2,400 students each semester in credit courses. Enrollment in continuing education courses added to that number. Enrollment in Fall 2010 exceeded pre-Katrina numbers.

Nunez continues to provide dynamic program offerings, from credit courses to complete certifications, technical diplomas and associate degrees, as well as workforce credentials, value-added certifications, noncredit courses, and dual enrollment. Working constantly with businesses and industries, Nunez provides quality workforce training and with four- and two-year colleges to provide consistent and accurate articulation of course credit. To enhance transfer opportunities for students who wish to continue their education, the College has developed articulation agreements with four-year institutions throughout the region.

In addition to the growth in programs and articulation, Nunez has pursued community support in the form of its *Investing in Educational Excellence Capital* Campaign. Nunez received funds for eight Endowed Professorships from various businesses and individuals in the community and raised over one million dollars in the Capital Campaign. The College continues to pursue development opportunities, both through the Nunez Community College Foundation and through outside funding agencies. The Foundation usually sponsors events to raise funds for the College's programs and services. In addition to Foundation funding, Nunez currently averages over 20% of budget from grants and contracts.

To further develop the institution and provide service to the community, Nunez Community College and the St. Bernard Economic Development Council have formed a partnership through a resolution establishing that group as the Advisory Council to the Chancellor for Workforce Development. This partnership strengthens the mission of the College to serve the economic development needs of the community and the career development needs of its students. In every area, Nunez continues to expand, thus continuing its history of growth and diversity and establishing itself as the educational leader in its service area.