

## Chippewa Valley Technical College

**A case study in leading a community in identifying its needs and using advanced technology to train its residents for tomorrow's jobs**

When Bill Ihlenfeldt took over as president of Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) in 1994, he asked local leaders their impressions of how well the West-central Wisconsin school was meeting the needs of the community.

"What they told me was: 'You're a reactive college. You respond to the needs of the community. You need to become a proactive college and lead this community instead of just responding,'" said Ihlenfeldt. "The other thing they told me was that we couldn't do it by ourselves, that we should reach out for the support of the community."

That advice became Ihlenfeldt's strategy for building CVTC into a regional learning center capable of anticipating the needs of the community and preparing local residents to fill those skilled positions. During the past decade, the college has developed state-of-the-art simulation facilities in a number of diverse occupations that allow its more than 4,100 full-time students to learn practical hands-on skills as well as to gain knowledge in their chosen professions.



Along the way, Ihlenfeldt and his CVTC leadership team have learned some valuable lessons about re-position-

MCS-004 (07/06)

ing their college and forging partnerships to leverage institutional performance.

"When we began in 1994, the college was at its lowest enrollment and highest taxing rate ever," he said. "We knew we had to change if we were going to make progress, and we also knew we couldn't follow the traditional education model to make it work."

Ihlenfeldt recruited an advisory board of regional business leaders to guide them in the process. He and his staff also set about creating a "quasi-business" planning model that served as the vision for transforming the college.

"We put together our thoughts and, working with staff, went out in town hall meetings all across the 11-county district, small town to small town, and talked with people," said Ihlenfeldt. "We asked: 'what do you want from us? Where do you want us to go? What should we be?' We took their suggestions and implemented them into what we called an environmental scan. It became our working strategic plan, not some 50-page document that would sit on the shelf, but a brief document that really laid out our goals."



**Bill Ihlenfeldt**

President of Chippewa Valley Technical College

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# SUNGARD HIGHER EDUCATION



Chippewa Valley Technical College, located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of approximately 23,000 students who comprise a total of 4,000 FTEs. CVTC meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the larger community. A member of the Wisconsin Technical College System, CVTC serves an eleven county area. CVTC is one of 16 WTCS colleges located throughout the state, and was recently named one of the fastest growing technical colleges by the US Department of Education.

The four goals that came out of that strategic planning process were:

- Meet the dynamic training and education needs of the industry
- Meet emerging student needs
- Create a seamless transition between systems
- Be fiscally responsible

Initial steps called for cuts of some management staff as well as a reorganization that was more closely aligned with the college's new direction. Leadership also needed to identify ways of improving the educational delivery process while containing costs. The use of technology and simulation in the classroom emerged as a solution.

"We couldn't find enough classroom space," said Ihlenfeldt. "We also couldn't find enough condemned buildings, for example, to use in training the number of firefighters we were getting. It was obvious that we needed advanced technology to accomplish our goals and we were not capable of doing that internally."

In order to meet their objectives, CVTC contracted with SunGard Higher Education in January 2002 for help in managing its IT and developing a plan for meeting the college's growing technological needs.

A Transportation Center was built that, using simulation, allows students learning to drive trucks

collision avoidance techniques. The Center also teaches emergency response teams life-saving skills in a totally safe environment.

The Haas Technical Center, which was largely funded by a national manufacturer, uses simulation to train students in various manufacturing occupations. CVTC has also been in discussion with local, state and federal government officials about building a simulated city that would allow military and civilian emergency response personnel to learn how to work together in responding to acts of terrorism or disasters.

"We have already purchased the land for this facility and everybody is on board with us: military, fire, and emergency services. This project will cost about \$13 million, but considering the world in which we presently live, I'm optimistic we can identify the funding to make it a reality."

Ihlenfeldt's success in transforming Chippewa Valley Technical College into a regional training center is perhaps no better manifested than in the completion of its most recent project: a \$12 million state-of-the-art Health Education Center.

Officially opened in October 2004, the 90,000-square-foot center encompasses not only advanced teaching facilities, but also a dental clinic jointly operated by CVTC and the Marquette University School of Dentistry, and a medical clinic on a technical college campus.

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"We were always providing workers to the health industry, and like most communities, the demand for health care professionals has continually escalated," Ihlenfeldt said. "As we considered what kind of facility we needed, we began to envision this center where knowledge and practical hands-on experience were intertwined. Also, physicians, dentists and health care professionals have traditionally been trained separately, and then are expected to come together in a clinical environment and work as a team. Why not build a teaching center where they could initially learn and practice teamwork?"

Armed with marketing materials that illustrated their vision, Ihlenfeldt began calling on local clinics, teaching facilities and local businesses to identify partners in turning the college's concept into reality.

SunGard Higher Education Managed Services consulted with CVTC on the project by assessing the needs for a facility utilizing a full and complete integration of technology. A platform needed to be identified that was compatible with those systems operated by all of the participating schools and clinics. Fiber-optic cable was also laid between the new Center and the main campus, located across a four-lane highway, to ensure sufficient bandwidth and connectivity. The technology needs of the center increased the college's overall hardware needs by about 25 percent.

The result is a teaching clinic that not only provides hands-on training in 17 different health-care disciplines, but also delivers quality medical and dental care for local residents in need. The clinics also provide health services to CVTC students at a reduced cost of about \$20 per semester.

"Everything in this facility, from the operating rooms and trauma center to the dental clinic, is exactly as our students will find in the real world, and in some cases, better," Ihlenfeldt said. "We even have a computer-controlled human patient simulator that blinks and breathes. Students can treat him for a number of diseases and problems, and it can simulate everything from an asthma attack to cardiac arrest."



## SunGard Higher Education Customer Profile

Recognizing the need for help in meeting its administrative and educational technology challenges, Chippewa Valley Technical College contracted with SunGard Higher Education Managed Services in January 2002 to assume management of its IT resources and to infuse vision, leadership and knowledge of technology throughout all facets of the organization.

SunGard Higher Education services include:

- On-site chief information officer
- Strategic planning and IT governance
- Project assessment
- Network support and monitoring
- Optimization of the SCT Banner system
- Administrative desktop support
- Instructor pedagogy workshops
- 24x7 Blackboard help desk

Significant outcomes:

- Improved operational efficiencies by 95% through redesign of business processes.
- Avoided the addition of 2 FTE positions each year as a result of leveraging the more than 900 SunGard Higher Education employees nationwide that have added value for unique projects as needed.
- Annual return on outsourcing investment exceeds \$1.5 million through the combination of annual IT cost savings and improved operational efficiencies.
- Proactive approach in using technology now prevails to improve, analyze, and forecast academic and administrative decisions.
- Full integration of technology in the design of the Health Education Center increased server capacity by 25 percent, ensuring sufficient bandwidth and connectivity with participating schools and clinics.



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In fact, the simulator concept was featured on the NBC television drama “ER” in December 2004. People from all over the Midwest have visited CVTC to see the advanced simulation efforts that have increased the school’s learning outcomes as well as placed more of its graduates among regional health providers such as the Mayo Health System, which is one of CVTC’s many partners.



The medical records and imaging scans of patients treated in the center are digitized and stored in the college’s database. There is talk in the area’s medical community of converting all records to digital format so that a patient’s medical and dental history could be retrieved at a moment’s notice, no matter where they were treated. Ihlenfeldt said CVTC would be willing to consider hosting such a database if the concept is ever realized.

“The partnerships we have created are due, in large part, to persistence,” Ihlenfeldt said, in summarizing the college’s success.

The Health Education Center has given new meaning to the movie adage: “Build it and they will come.” Enrollment of students in health-related programs at CVTC has more than tripled to nearly 800 students since 2000, and more program offerings are in the works.

Ihlenfeldt believes many in the local health community, aside from those who joined early in the project, had their initial doubts about the potential success of the endeavor. They eventually got behind the project, however, and several have even contributed to the \$6 million of equipment contained in the facility. A third of

the center’s construction cost was funded by the medical and dental community, a third with federal funding, and the rest by CVTC.

“The partnerships we have created are due, in large part, to persistence,” Ihlenfeldt said, in summarizing the college’s success. “It has a lot to do with your college’s image and your ability to deliver on what you envision. It also is about building great partnerships between your community, local businesses, vendors and your college.”



## About SunGard Higher Education

SunGard Higher Education provides software and support, systems implementation and integration, strategic consulting, and technology management services to help colleges and universities build, unify, and manage their digital campuses. Bringing together people, process, and technology, SunGard Higher Education helps more than 1,600 customers worldwide to strengthen institutional performance through improved constituent services, increased accountability, and better educational experiences. What can we help you achieve? For more information visit [www.sungardhe.com](http://www.sungardhe.com).

## SunGard Higher Education

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