



## FRCC October 2024 Board Report

Colleen Simpson, Ed.D.

President

### **Transform the student experience.**

#### Collaborative Online International Learning

FRCC faculty and students are participating in the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program, through which they receive support from the [SUNY COIL Network](#) and work with colleges around the world. The college has been partnering



with international institutions in a number of innovative ways to connect our courses with theirs. This month, a distinguished guest is visiting FRCC from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Francisco Morazán (UPNFM) in Honduras. Profesora Sandra Alvarado teaches English and is currently planning a second COIL project with FRCC English faculty member Matt Stilwell. While at FRCC, Profesora Alvarado is attending classes, meeting with COIL and college leadership, and attending academic and cultural activities that tie in with her interdisciplinary interests. She is enthusiastic about the potential for establishing international research connections for future collaboration—and FRCC is thrilled to have her here learning and discussing additional partnership opportunities for our students.

### **Transform our own workforce experience.**

#### Meeting Students Where They Are

Fifteen years ago, two FRCC professors teamed up for a combined philosophy and English course—the experience would revolutionize their teaching. They later found out that what they were doing is called active learning, a teaching model that flips the traditional classroom on its head. Instead of passively listening to lectures, students are asked to produce their own knowledge through discussions, projects and other hands-on lessons. Because of this, their students were thriving and excelling—they were writing better papers, doing better thinking and earning higher grades. In the intervening years, Kerri Mitchell and Eric Salahub have shared their growing knowledge of active learning techniques with many other FRCC faculty and instructors. Now they're spreading this expertise to colleges around the state through CCCS' Active Learning Institute by coaching instructors and faculty systemwide. The method is gaining traction across the system and interest in the institute has far exceeded the number of available spots. Read how these dedicated faculty members are helping professors around the state [meet students where they are](#) through their innovative work in this field.



### Optics & Laser Technology Program

FRCC is welcoming Jenna Montague, PhD, as the new director of the college's [optics & laser technology program](#). The program is one of a small handful of similar offerings in the nation—and the only one of its kind in Colorado. Housed at our high-tech [Center for Integrated Manufacturing](#) in Longmont, the program is critical to FRCC's [efforts to help build Colorado's quantum technology workforce](#). Dr. Montague brings to this role a wealth of experience and a dynamic vision. She recently earned her PhD from the prestigious Wyant College of Optical Sciences at the University of Arizona. Dr. Montague's research, which focused on novel approaches to cancer diagnostics, led to a patent application on which she is the primary inventor. Her vision for FRCC's optics & laser technology program is to continue building on its strong foundation to prepare the college's students to meet the evolving demands of the industry. Under her leadership, the future of our optics & laser technology program is brighter than ever.

### Record-Breaking In-Service

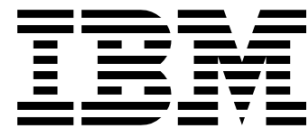
More than 700 employees from all three FRCC campuses attended our fall in-service—the largest all-hands meeting in the college's history. The day-long event was filled with connection, inspiration and collaboration, starting with a student panel about experiential learning. The college's goal for the day was to foster stronger relationships, encourage open communication and embrace a mindset of continuous improvement. Faculty, instructors and staff got the chance to participate in 20 peer-led breakout sessions. The energy, engagement and enthusiasm were truly inspiring, with employees expressing their appreciation for the opportunity to connect, learn and contribute. This event was also a pivotal moment in reinforcing the college community's collective commitment to cohesion across FRCC's three campuses. In addition, it marked a key step in the launch of our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, setting the tone for the exciting work ahead as we continue to build on our shared mission and vision for FRCC. Participants left the day ready to build on the momentum of our hard work from the past academic year and continue to drive forward.



## **Create education without barriers through transformational partnerships.**

### Partnership with IBM

FRCC has been working to address the tech talent shortage by collaborating with IBM on a national initiative to offer new data analytics and cybersecurity certificates. We are one of just four community colleges in the US that helped design and pilot new college-level industry certifications in data analytics and cybersecurity. The partnership was such a success that IBM is now expanding to additional colleges around the US. Read our [full news release here](#).



### Advanced Manufacturing Scholarships

The Gene Haas Foundation has awarded the FRCC Foundation \$15,000 in grant funding for student scholarships at the college's [Center for Integrated Manufacturing](#) to support building the machining workforce. The scholarship funds will help students pay for their classes at FRCC, preparing them to move into jobs in the manufacturing industry. The Gene Haas Foundation has been providing funding for FRCC's manufacturing scholarships since 2015. The total amount awarded to the FRCC Foundation to date is now \$165,500.

### Partnership Aims for Zero Dropouts

FRCC is partnering with the Fort Collins community, K-12 partners and Colorado-based Zero Dropouts LLC to provide GED services to high school-aged students who have stopped out. Zero Dropouts is an educational social enterprise with a philosophy grounded on the belief that all students have the ability to be successful in education and life. FRCC provides an office and classroom to this new effort as in-kind contributions. School districts within the community provide funding for the staff who ensure students have the right resources to complete the High School Equivalency tests (previously GED). Participating students also have the opportunity to take FRCC concurrent enrollment courses.

**Redefine our value proposition through accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, resource development and operational excellence.**

### FANUC Certification

FRCC's [Center for Integrated Manufacturing](#) is officially becoming a FANUC-certified training facility this fall. FANUC is the world's leading supplier of products and services for industrial robotics, CNC systems & factory automation solutions. In September the college partnered with FANUC and X-Cal to host a regional workshop to bring community, industry and education leaders together to discuss how FRCC is aligning skills between industry and education.



### Transportation Workforce Summit

FRCC's [Highway Maintenance Management program](#) and the Colorado [Local Technical Assistance Program](#) are hosting the first annual Transportation Workforce Summit in October to help address worker shortages in the industry. According to a study by the Associated General Contractors of America, 89% of all construction firms report difficulty finding qualified, trained workers. In a rapidly growing industry, now is the time for all the critical stakeholders to discuss shared challenges and opportunities. The [summit](#) will feature breakout session tracks focused on:

- Workforce development and training
- Hiring and retention