



# ENHANCING BROAD INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR WEI

Tommy Johnson and Vance Laine

# Who are we?

- Tommy Johnson, WEI Success Navigator
- Vance Laine, Director, Student Support Grants

# Discussion

On the continuum of



off on your own

well integrated into your college

how would you describe your WEI program?

# Discussion

Why did you answer that way?



off on your own

well integrated into your college

# Learning and improving

**How it started...**

**Limited faculty buy-in**

**Limited relationships/communication with faculty**

**Lack of training on college processes for WEI staff**

**Lack of capacity in some WEI certificate programs**



# Learning and improving

How it started...	How it's going
Limited faculty buy-in	Much improved faculty support
Limited relationships with faculty	Strong communication channels with faculty
Lack of training on college processes for WEI staff	Better integrated into institutional processes
Lack of capacity in WEI certificate programs	Work with deans to increase capacity, when possible



# Why integrate?

- Most WEI programs are one year long
- Long-term sustainability less dependent on WEI funds
- College-wide awareness of importance of WEI
- Appreciation for extra supports provided by WEI
- It takes a village
- It serves students and the community over the long term

# Align WEI with College admissions processes

- Inquiry tracking
- Returning Hawks (forgiveness of debt to HCC)
- Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan
  - CTE students
  - Students of Color
  - Students age 25 and older



# Heartland student first, WEI student second

**WEI navigators provide an additional layer of support, not replacement for existing supports.**

- Success Coaches / Dean of Students - Emergency Funds, Returning Hawks
- Academic Advisors
- Career Center – WEI funded Career Center Coordinator for 2 years
- Counseling Services (which administers the food pantry)
- Financial Aid guidance (FAFSA, verification, SAP appeals)
- New student orientation



# Align WEI processes with those in Business Office, Financial Aid, IT

- Stipends (similar to financial aid refund process)
- Paying tuition
- Textbook purchases through the bookstore
- IT loaner Chromebooks and wi-fi hotspots

# Align with academics

- All HCC courses paid for by WEI are open to any HCC student meeting prerequisites
- WEI demand may lead to added sections but no seats are reserved for WEI students specifically
- WEI is building relationships with faculty

# Student Engagement

- Many WEI students participate in student organizations and utilize the supports that are offered to all HCC students.
- **Global Student Union (GSU)**
  - Taste of the World
- **Student Leaders in the Community (SLCE)**
  - Alternative Spring Break
- **Project Rise (TRIO)**
  - First Generation Week
- **Career Center**



EDUCATE. ADVOCATE. EMPOWER.



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# Events

- Black Student Union
  - Black Table Talks
  - BHM Speaker: Toy Beasley
  - N'Dere Dance Troupe (Partnered w/ HCC Staff and Faculty)
- Heartland Community College
  - “Justice Denied”
  - Redemption, Resilience and Reclamation”

FREE EVENT

**CELEBRATE AFRICAN CULTURE THROUGH DANCE & POETRY**

UGANDAN NDERE TROUPE



**THURSDAY APRIL 4, 2024**

**3:30-5 pm**  
Performance  
• ACEC Auditorium

**5:15-6pm**  
Student dinner & reception  
• WDC Atrium

BLACK STUDENT UNION

HEARTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Ndere

Scan for more info  
<https://www.heartland.edu/international/index.html>

STOP BY TO SEE OUR

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH GUEST SPEAKER**


Engage in insightful discussions that challenge perspectives!

**HOSTED BY:**  
Black Student Union & Heartland Community College

**MAIN SPEAKER:**  
TOY BEASLEY

**02.26.24 | 2:30-4 PM**  
COMMUNITY COMMONS BUILDING (CCB) 2012

OPEN FOR PUBLIC!  
FIND MORE INFORMATION AT [HEARTLAND.CAMPUSLABS.COM/ENGAGE/ORGANIZATION/BSU](https://www.heartland.edu/campuslabs.com/engage/organization/bsu)



flyer made by antoine richardson

*Redemption,  
Resilience & Reclamation*

THE LIVES OF WOMEN IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Wednesday, April 17, 2024**  
**11 AM - 1 PM**  
**ACEC Auditorium**

Please join us for a powerful event featuring women from the Illinois Prison Project. Listen to them speak of their own experiences with incarceration, re-entry, and overcoming their legal, psychological, and social barriers.





# Ceremonies

WEI holds our own recognition ceremonies  
in December and August



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# Commencement

**Student Commencement Speaker  
2023: Marlphonsia Kimbembe**

**WEI/HCC Student Video Participant:  
Tremayne Wilson**



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# Commencement Challenge

- The truck driving program is a non-credit program at HCC.
- Non-credit truck driving completers not eligible to walk in May Commencement ceremony.





# Donning of the Kente

- Organized by BSU
- Awarded to all students that earned a degree or certificates
- All WEI students that completed a certificate can participate
  - Including truck driving students



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# Community Outreach

- **Before:** HCC's outreach was siloed by department.
- **Present:** HCC outreach team, comprised of many departments (Advisement, Admissions, CTE, and WEI).
- WEI invites departments to events. Mclean County Re-entry Council Resource Fair (WEI, Admissions, Career Center, and BSU).



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# Why is Student Engagement Important?

- Many WEI students are enrolled in a program designed to be completed in a year. It gives students a sense of belonging.
- Safe place to talk and interact with others
- Builds confidence
- WEI initiates change
  - Donning of the Kente
  - Community Outreach

# Support from the top

- **Two WEI champions on cabinet**
  - **Associate VP for Enrollment & Student Services**
  - **Assistant to the President, Institutional Effectiveness and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Strong support from president (a former bus mechanic)**
- **3 board members attended the December WEI ceremony**

# Communication is key

- Some tasks might seem easier to do within WEI
- You don't know what you don't know
- WEI impacts most aspects of the college
- College staff turnover requires regular updates

# Questions?