



LaGuardia Community College

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LaGuardia Community College President and White Castle Top Executive to Attend Higher Education/Community Partnership Conference

Long Island City, NY—May 18, 2009—LaGuardia Community College President [Dr. Gail O. Mellow](#) and White Castle Executive [LaGuardia Foundation](#) Chairman John Vogt shared their expertise and experience on developing and sustaining higher education-community partnerships at the International Partnership Institute's conference on May 18 and 19 in Portland, Oregon.

Entitled "Reciprocal Partnerships: Transforming Higher Education and Community for the Future," the event featured interactive work sessions and over 30 presentations by leading higher education researchers and community leaders from around the country. Dr. Mellow and Mr. Vogt, who is the Northeastern Regional Director of Restaurant Operations for White Castle Management Company, participated in the Presidential/Community Partner Panel with other college and university presidents and their community partners during a plenary session.

"This was an exciting opportunity to tell LaGuardia's success stories about building enduring partnerships with community organizations and local businesses to a wider audience," said Dr. Mellow.

At the conference, community partners, faculty, administrators, and students explored strategies to address persistent challenges to higher education-community partnership formation and analyzed promising practices.

"The knowledge we gleaned from this conference is an invaluable resource that will enable LaGuardia to maximize its existing relationships with community partners and initiate ever more creative ones with new organizations and local businesses," said Mr. Vogt. Community partners since 2002, LaGuardia's Center for Corporate Education (CCE) provided several hundred White Castle employees with training in Writing Skills for Managers. Since then, White Castle employees have received training from CCE in Business Writing, Minute Taking, Report Organization, Workplace Professionalism, and Conflict Resolution.

LaGuardia's other community partnerships range from providing customized English as a Second Language training to FreshDirect,



one of the nation's leading online gourmet food purveyors, through classes designed to help the company's immigrant workers gain the English language skills needed to advance in their professional careers, to providing customized business training for TIAA-CREF, the financial services and retirement planning provider for those in academic, medical, cultural and research fields.

Dr. Mellow is a nationally recognized expert on the history, development and future of the American community college, and is in demand as a speaker both here and abroad. She has shared her expertise with educators and public officials in several countries, including Chile, Greece, France and China. On a national level, Dr. Mellow has received numerous awards, sits on various boards and has presented to audiences throughout the country on the vital role that community colleges play in educating students for a global economy and spurring job creation.

As the co-author of *Minding the Dream: The Process and Practice of the American Community College* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), Dr. Mellow has also co-authored over thirty articles on community colleges, economic development and job training, diversity, faculty development and pedagogical innovation.

A native of Elmhurst, Queens, Mr. Vogt has worked at White Castle for 38 years and is currently Regional Director of Restaurant Operations for White Castle. He is in charge of stores in the New York region including the five-boroughs of New York City, as well as Rockland, Nassau and Suffolk counties. He served as President of the Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce from 2006-2009, and was recently elected Chairman of the Chamber's Board. Mr. Vogt also serves as Chairman of the Sunnyside District Management Association, and is presently organizing a civic association called American Venice.

Located in Long Island City, Queens in New York City, LaGuardia Community College, part of the City University of New York, is a nationally recognized leader among community colleges. Founded in 1971, the College is recognized as an innovator in educating students who are under prepared for college work and/or are not primary English speakers. A catalyst for development in western Queens and beyond, LaGuardia serves New Yorkers and immigrants from 160 countries through 50 majors and certificate programs, enabling career advancement and transfer to four-year colleges at twice the national average. Visit www.laguardia.edu to learn more.