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RISING FROM THE BRICKS:
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EAST ST. LOUIS
STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 1969-2004

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies the historical development of State Community College of East St. Louis, a local educational institution of extreme value to the economic and educational prospects of the residents and the city of East St. Louis. It looks at the ways in which the residents of the predominantly poor, African American city of East St. Louis showed tremendous agency and forethought in fighting to establish this institution. This history traces the development of the two-year institution from its infancy stages through the reorganization and eventual closing of the institution. It further examines the struggles, joys, and accomplishments that went into establishing this two-year institution to provide access to higher education for residents. The study utilizes archival research and oral history narratives to show firsthand accounts of the relevance and importance of the institution to the residents of East St. Louis and how in their eyes State Community College removed barriers to a higher education for a city and its residents that were previously isolated from higher education. In chronicling the historical development of the State Community College between 1969 and 2004, this dissertation provides an institutional and social history of the State of Illinois' only public community college funded 100% through state appropriations.

To my nieces and nephews, the next generation of degree earners

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CHAPTER ONE

WHY STUDY STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF EAST ST. LOUIS

Ask both former and current residents of East St. Louis what thoughts and images come to mind when they think of East St. Louis and the answers will run the gamut of memories of a splendid and grand city to acknowledging present problems and increasing negative perceptions of the city. One long-time resident of East St. Louis speaks of the city's potential and how the city's land and people combine to provide a great opportunity to impact the economy of the whole area.¹ Residents speak of the geographical location of the city and how its location right in the middle of the nation and access to the strength of the big river, the Mississippi River, means great things for East St. Louis and the city's resources. You will also hear talk of conspiracy theories that the powers that be are trying to shut down East St. Louis or drive the city into financial ruin so that they can then take over and make use of the prime real estate that East St. Louis houses in its location near the Mississippi River. They will talk of a town they love, admire, and which will always be home no matter how far away they have moved. One former resident stated, "Well a friend of mine always says, "He sleeps in Swansea, he sleeps in Fairview Heights, but his heart is in East St. Louis.""² In this conversation you can hear the tremendous amount of pride residents feel in being able to call East St. Louis home. East St. Louis residents will tell you of a city that while beleaguered with problems is still home to many accomplished, wonderful, and successful people. When pressed to talk about education they will

¹ Reverend John Rouse, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, February 22, 2009.

² Lena Weathers, interview by author, Fairview Heights, IL, April 20, 2009.

tell you of the wonderful schools and fantastic, caring, and supportive teachers that not only educated but also pushed them further and harder. They will talk of their beloved State Community College (SCC) and often speak of the heartache that followed after its closure. East St. Louis residents, while proud of their city, are not naïve or blinded to the problems of the city. They acknowledge and reconcile the problems with their undying faith that East St. Louis while a struggling city, is constantly on the rise. The residents believe that through the motivation and perseverance of the people and the faith and continued operation of local institutions, the city will one day regain its proper distinction as an All-American City.

Traveling through East St. Louis on one of my regular excursions to visit my family or lately to conduct an interview for this study, I'm struck by an overwhelming feeling of sadness, despair, and neglect. My feelings of sadness, despair, and neglect are not sole feelings expressed by me but they are feelings shared by others. One interviewee said that he is overwhelmed with thoughts of sadness when thinking of East St. Louis. His sadness stems from the city's loss over the years of income, tax base, and population.³ As, I drive down streets reminiscing over childhood memories and favorite places, it comes to me that those structures, institutions, and places no longer exist. As I have moved on, so too have familiar people and familiar sites. East St. Louis is no longer the community that many others or I remember. One such institution that has since ceased to exist but that many hold in fond remembrance is State Community College, which operated as a fixture of the community from 1969-1996. State Community College is a place of great joy, inspiration, and dedicated service as told by the many individuals affected by its presence in the community. The author although never having attended SCC was still affected by the institution's presence in the community, as I made use of its facilities as a student

³ Bruce Cook, interview by author, East St. Louis, March 21, 2009.

in the East St. Louis School District 189 gifted program and Saturday morning college preparatory program.

There is an ever-present expectation that communities will educate their residents. Inherent in this expectation is the consensus that communities can afford to and will provide a quality education for their residents. The American expectation is that, communities in providing a quality education, also provide their residents with greater opportunities. This dream and expectation is one that every community and its residents prescribe to and the city of East St. Louis, IL and its residents are no different, in that they too have the same expectations. In noticing the impact of higher education and the adherence by American society to the benefits of higher education, the residents of East St. Louis were not remiss in addressing the fact that the city needed a community college if it was to improve the overall quality of opportunity for residents of the city. State Community College was envisioned as an institution that would provide an educational solution to both the growing unemployment and adverse economic conditions of the predominantly African American city of East St. Louis.⁴ However the realities of the small industrial suburb differ greatly from its expectations.

East St. Louis is a predominantly African American city nestled in between the Mississippi River on the west and the coal bluffs on the east. Residents boast of it being home to greats such as Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Miles Davis and Donald McHenry, yet the only thing the city is home to these days is the Casino Queen and an ever-shrinking tax base and population. The declining tax base has made it hard for the city to afford quality education for its residents that would in turn provide greater opportunities. Starting in the 1960s, skyrocketing unemployment, increasing taxes, declining municipal services, growing deficits, bank redlining

⁴ Illinois Community College Board, *Status Report/Recommendation for Future Funding and Governance of State Community College of East St. Louis* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Community College Board, 1981), 4.

and blockbusting lead to the city's inability to afford to provide the economic backing for a local community college, thus resulting in the establishment, by Illinois legislation, of a State Community College of East St. Louis funded 100% by the state of Illinois.⁵

This dissertation studies the historical development of State Community College, a local educational institution of extreme value to the economic and educational prospects of the residents and city of East St. Louis, and it looks at the ways in which the residents of the predominantly poor, African American city of East St. Louis showed tremendous agency and forethought in fighting to establish a postsecondary institution. This history traces the development of the two-year institution from its infancy stages through the reorganization and eventual closing of the institution, and it examines the struggles, joys, and accomplishments that went into establishing this two-year institution to provide access to college for its residents. This study utilizes archival research and oral history narratives to show firsthand accounts of the relevance and importance of the institution to the residents of East St. Louis and how in their eyes State Community College removed barriers to a higher education for a city and its residents that were previously isolated from higher education. In chronicling the historical development of the State Community College between 1969 and 2004, this dissertation provides: 1) an institutional and social history of the State of Illinois' only public community college funded 100% through state appropriations; 2) a critical interpretation of the community college mission and purpose; and 3) a juxtaposition of the East St. Louis community college with the larger development of community colleges in the state and nationally.

As the United States is faced with growing demands for increased opportunity and access to higher education, community colleges are being called upon to accommodate an even larger

⁵ Kenneth M. Reardon, "State and Local Revitalization Efforts in the East St. Louis, Illinois," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 551 (May 1997): 237.

number of students, especially students of lower socioeconomic status and students of color. The mission addressed by two-year institutions include a commitment to: serving all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students, providing a comprehensive educational program, serving the community as a community-based institution of higher education, teaching and learning, and fostering life-long learning.⁶ Community colleges attempt to adhere to this mission while combating critics that claim community colleges actually stratify their students into the lower class, “cool” them out of higher education, and promote vocational and occupational training as opposed to higher-level academic training.⁷ A social and institutional history of the State Community College of East St. Louis with a critical interpretation of community colleges places State Community College within the historical debates of the purposes and outcomes of a community college education. The institutional history highlights how SCC educated its students while dealing with critics that claimed the institution not only “cooled” out its students but wasn’t sufficient to educate them at all. State Community College reveals that scholars and practitioners must utilize the contradictory nature of community college development theory if we are to expand the burgeoning field of community college scholarship that seeks to understand the intersection of race, class, and gender in providing an accessible and democratic avenue to higher education as pursued through the two-year institution.

⁶ George B. Vaughn, *The Community College Story*, 3rd ed (Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges, 2006), 3.

⁷ Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream: Community College’s and the Promises of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Burton Clark, *The Open Door College: A Case Study* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960); Kevin J. Dougherty, *The Contradictory College: The Origins, Impacts, and Futures of the Community College* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Jerome Karabel, “Community Colleges and Social Stratification: Submerged Class Conflict in American Higher Education,” *Harvard Education Review* 42 (1972): 551; L. Steven Zwerling, *Second Best: The Crisis of the Community College* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976).

This study addresses several research questions, which include: what is the relationship between the political, social, and economic systems of East St. Louis and the establishment, development, and continued operation of the State Community College of East St. Louis? How did the educational and fiscal policies and practices of SCC both differ and/or align with the educational and fiscal policies and practices of the larger community college system? What is the relationship between the racial and class demographics of East St. Louis and the educational policies and practices of SCC? The final question asks how the faculty, staff, and students of the community college as well as the residents of East St. Louis perceived the purpose and significance of the local community college? In answering the primary research question this dissertation examines the social and institutional history of the State Community College of East St. Louis from 1969 to 2004. This question is answered by looking at the history of East St. Louis' political economy between 1950 and 2004 to identify the major social, political, and economic conditions as a means of contextualizing the city's history through the establishment, development, and continued operation of the community college.

A social history of State Community College requires a brief construction of the history of higher education in East St. Louis prior to 1969 and how this history affected the African American residents of East St. Louis, the targeted population of State Community College. A history of East St. Louis' educational system contextualized by a history of the city's political economy, will answer precisely why the institution was developed and sustained in terms of its educational aims, curricular objectives, and student focus. Illinois legislation opened State Community College of East St. Louis on August 8, 1969, as an experimental college funded 100% by the state of Illinois. It has been argued that the state of Illinois chose to fund the institution 100% in part because East St. Louis did not have a sufficient local tax base to support

the institution and in part because the predominantly white community of Belleville, located approximately 15 miles east of East St. Louis, annexed the taxable land surrounding East St. Louis both leaving the residents of East St. Louis without the means to support a local community college for its residents and isolating and barring the residents from access to a more economical form of higher education. The social history of the East St. Louis area during this time frame lays a foundation for understanding why State Community College was needed and what the residents and legislators hoped to obtain by establishing the institution in East St. Louis.

The secondary inquiry of this dissertation involves a critical interpretation that speaks to and challenges the contemporary educational aims and curriculum objectives of community colleges from an intersectional, or race, class, and gender perspective in order to highlight how attention to each perspective alters the goals, mission, and purpose of the community college. This inquiry speaks to the impact race, class, and gender has on educational aims in this case how special focus institutions have adapted their missions to fit their students. In looking at the ways race, class, and gender affect educational aims this dissertation seeks to point out the curriculum and objectives that were unique to State Community College because of its population but also because of the community college's position in the hierarchy of higher education. Inherent in this inquiry is a look at the ways in which community colleges provide access and opportunities to individuals (in this case minority students) in isolated communities.

Methodology

This dissertation employs two primary methodologies in historical analysis to answer both how and why State Community College was developed and what opportunities and access was provided by the location of State Community College in East St. Louis. The first is archival

research and it is utilized as a means to construct the institutional history of State Community College. The first archive visited was the Illinois State Archives that houses the state of Illinois Governors' papers and the papers of the various governing boards of Illinois community colleges. These papers were used to document the organizational and institutional procedures that led to the creation of the State Community College of East St. Louis. Archival material retrieved from the Illinois Community College Board was also used to add to the accurate portrayal of the community college and its varied functions. The archives at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville contained the collection of papers of several mayors of East St. Louis such as Mayor's Alvin G. Fields, William E. Mason, and James E. Williams, Sr. and were used to shed light on the political economy of the city during their reigns which span the course of the study from 1969-1979. Finally, the newspaper collection of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library was also visited to view the microfilms of several East St. Louis area newspapers, which were used to help construct the social history of the city. Regional newspapers from the East St. Louis metropolitan area (which includes the *Belleville News-Democrat* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*) were also utilized to document the changing nature of East St. Louis's racial, economic, and social conditions. Secondary source analysis complements archival data used, it aided in the construction of the political economy of East St. Louis, and the interpretation of the development of community colleges in the state and nation

Capturing oral history interviews is the second methodology used in this study. Interviews were conducted as a means of supplementing the archival and secondary source analysis but also as a means of exploring how in this case people of color articulate their own reality of the world, which stems from a tenet of critical race theory. Critical race scholars are of the opinion that there is another reality within the accounts of events and stories that are told by

people of color when the racial reality is not filtered.⁸ Utilizing oral history allowed for the historical reconstruction of the development of SCC from the participants' viewpoint, providing a personal account of the importance of the establishment of the community college from those individuals directly involved and invested in the successful continuation of the institution. The oral history interviews also allowed for the collection of the remembered experiences of individuals directly involved in the inception, formation, and development of the State Community College of East St. Louis.⁹ Purposeful sampling techniques were used to identify interviewees for this project, which included both local and state board members, initial faculty and staff, former and current students, and elected politicians of East St. Louis directly involved in the development and continued operation of State Community College. These individuals were identified through archival resources such as community college correspondence, newspaper articles, and programs from graduations and other events held at State Community College.

The oral historical method used in the interview process adheres to an "open ended" approach employed by oral historians such as Alessandro Portelli, Studs Terkel, Ronald Grele,

⁸ Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate, "Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education," *Teachers College Record* 97 (1995): 47-68; David Stovall, "Forging Community in Race and Class: Critical Race Theory and the Quest for Social Justice Education," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 9, no. 3 (2006): 243-259; Tara J. Yosso, Laurence Parker, Daniel G. Solorzano, and Marvin Lynn, "From Jim Crow to Affirmative Action and Back Again: A Critical Race Discussion of Racialized Rationales and Access to Higher Education," *Review of Research in Education* 28 (2004): 1-25.

⁹ Gary Y. Okihiro, "Oral History and the Writing of Ethnic History," in *Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, eds. David K. Dunaway and Willa K. Baum (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1996), 209-211. Oral history offers an alternative way of conceptualizing history and a means by which to recover the past. Oral history proposes that we rewrite our history to capture the human spirit of the people, to see how ethnic minorities solved or failed to solve particular problems, how they advanced or resisted change, and how they made or failed to make better lives for themselves and their children. In short, oral history proposes nothing less than the writing of a people's history, liberated from myths and imbued with humanity. Oral history is not only a tool or method for recovering history; it also is a theory of history, which maintains that the common folk and the dispossessed have a history and that this history must be written.

Paul Thompson, and Valerie Raleigh Yow.¹⁰ This approach allows the participants to tell their stories and recall their memories in an individual way instead of following a fixed questionnaire, allowing for the development of a conversational two-way interview. This approach presented the opportunity for new questions to be introduced during the interview providing the opportunity to probe for details and/or discuss issues and contradictions lodged in recalled memories. Oral history methodology provides the opportunity to make this a true social history, which allows the participants in the development and continued operation of the community college the chance to share their stories on their terms and in their own words, apart from constructions of traditionally defined norms and beliefs about what is of value in understanding key events and experiences.

In an interview, the speaker will only reveal what he or she wants the researcher to know. Therefore, the quality and depth of the relationship between the two individuals determines what will be said. Even if narrators answer a prepared set of questions, how they respond depends entirely on the level of rapport.¹¹ Establishing rapport with individuals for this study was both aided and hindered by being a resident of East St. Louis. As a resident, student, and daughter of East St. Louis, my research and I received a warm welcome from many individuals in the community. The fact that I was born and raised in East St. Louis in many cases served as a platform to develop connections with interviewees. This position also granted me favor with others in that they were willing to help me locate interviewees even if they declined to be interviewed. Individuals offered an enormous amount of resources and time. One contact

¹⁰ Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997); Ronald Grele, ed., *Envelopes of Sound: The Art of Oral History*, 2nd ed. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing, 1991); Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: University Press, 2000); and Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Practical Guide for Social Scientists* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994).

¹¹ Sam Pack, "How They See Me Vs. How I See Them: The Ethnographic Self and the Personal Self," *Anthropological Quarterly* 79, no. 1 (2006): 105.

person stated, “It was her duty to help me succeed so that I could in turn help East St. Louis. It was then my duty to use the information and my position for good in the city.”¹² However, my affiliation with the University of Illinois also positioned me as an outsider in that I also identified with the academic community and for research purposes was represented by the University; therefore, branding me as an informal member of the community. My university status was both helpful and problematic. That fact that I was working on a Ph.D. was important to many people. With education being important to people in East St. Louis, my status as a doctoral candidate heightened my position in the community and served to extend the connection between the interviewees and myself. However, for some potential interviewees my affiliation with the University was also an immediate deal breaker. They wanted nothing to do with the research project or me.

The position of insider having been born, raised, and educated in East St. Louis meant that I shared common characteristics with many research participants, it also at times allowed for a deeper conversation to occur with research participants. Conversations were held that allowed for discussions of overall feelings and thoughts of East St. Louis that delved into the good and bad of the city. Even though I was from East St. Louis, I didn’t know very many of the interviewees or individuals associated with State Community College. However, because I was from the city, individuals were willing to assist in whatever way possible. This assistance in turn led to an increasing number of individuals offering their aid in the project. Thus, my outsider status was lessened. By aligning myself with community leaders and school officials, I was given access to larger pools of interviewees. People were eager to suggest others they thought might be beneficial to the study. They wanted to know who was on my list to see if I was missing important people and to suggest those who they were sure would never come across my

¹² Claybourne, interview.

radar. But it did not stop at suggesting names, they also provided any contact information they may have had and in some cases contacted individuals to break the ice and pave the way.

I used a semi-structured open-ended interview and found that even with this concept the reaction varied. Most individuals loved this format and were able to keep talking, those who I felt were more comfortable being interviewed and genuinely felt as if they had a story to share. These individuals used the questions that I asked as a way to talk about different topics and subjects that they felt were important. While others only answered the questions I asked without venturing into more detailed answers. These individuals responded with very concise statements, resulting from a combination of the structure of the questions but also some expressed anxiety at having any value to offer. These individuals were often prodded to explain or elaborate further in which case, they often offered additional information. The successfulness of the format of the interview depended on the person being interviewed, but also my willingness to revise and adjust questions for interviewees. Some individuals did not have knowledge of certain areas but they were able to offer key information in areas that were not originally of interest which added to the themes and richness of the study.

While semi-structured interviews were key in gathering information and evidence for this study, there were some difficulties experienced during the research process. Silence on certain subjects was common in several interviews. Attempts were made to maneuver or manipulate discussions so that negative information was neither discussed nor revealed in the interviews. There were some interviewees who refused to speak negatively of SCC or East St. Louis. They explained that with all the great things that happened at the institution why would they drudge up negative images. This refusal as I saw it to address and present both sides of the development resulted in a biased interview, which was balanced through written records. One interviewee did

say that I could find all sorts of press that presented the problems the institution faced. There was also the problem of research questions being ignored, dismissed, and challenged. While this represented a problem at the time, it actually served to strengthen the study as I was forced to critique why I valued certain information over other information. I was called to explain the purpose of the study and its findings and overall benefits. The semi-structured interview assisted in mitigating these perceived difficulties by forcing me to remember that this was a two-way conversation with both parties invested in the direction and outcome.

In the end, open-ended questions or rather a semi-structured interview aided in interviewees being able to tell their story in and on their own terms. It also aided in not allowing me—the researcher—to appropriate the narrative in terms that I saw fit. Similar to Lempert, most of my interviewees remained active in question and answer. They frequently intervened and commented on my research process and focus. They assumed a range of strategies to bring their particular issues to attention and they worked to achieve their own goals through research participation.¹³ Some interviewees rejected my definitions, opinions and views of the institution and the subsequent outcomes and in some instances even reshaped the questions, proclaiming that they weren't getting at the right answers. Interviewees also influenced the direction of the questions. The structure of the interviews allowed for clarification of emerging themes and ideas. It also allowed for subjects to be introduced that were not previously thought of by the researcher. In fact it was because of the semi-structured interview that the chapter on the nursing program was developed. Interviewees mentioned time and time again the prestige of the program and its benefit to the community. The semi-structured interview allowed for an exchange of ideas, as well as giving the interviewees autonomy over the direction of the

¹³ Lora Bex Lempert, "Cross-Race, Cross-Culture, Cross-National, Cross-Class, but Same Gender: Musings on Research in South Africa," *Feminist Formations* 19, no. 2 (2007): 94.

interview.

Ideas are ordinarily the result of a social process involving many people and this dissertation was no exception. My insider status enabled me with the help of interviewees to develop research questions that challenged traditional views of the community and also provided a more nuanced view of the city's educational system, but my outsider status as a researcher meant that I still had to negotiate with the participants to gain their trust. Like all insider researchers I still had to navigate the research relationship with community members. The individuals I interviewed are integral in the shaping of ideas, themes, and conclusions. In some cases they even offered alternate ways of thinking so that the discussion could be broaden, lengthened and expanded.

Literature and Theoretical Considerations

African American Cultural Value of Education

This study is guided by literature that looks at the value that African Americans have placed on education and how in recognizing and as a means of coveting that value, they have built educational institutions. Historically, building educational institutions was among some of the most important vehicles Black leaders used to invent hope among their people, and restore them to dignity.¹⁴ In working to create their own educational institutions African American communities showcased their commitment and allegiance to educating their own and seeing to that they reaped the benefits from these institutions. Scholars speak of the “historical value and desire” for literacy and schooling espoused by African Americans. The desire for literacy and formal education became a “core value” in the African American cultural value system as a

¹⁴ Rosemarie Anderson-Mealy, "Sitting Down to Stand Up: Black Student Suspensions/Expulsions at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), 1960-1962: A Phenomenological Study," (PhD dissertation, Capella University, 2009), 3

result of the experience of enslavement and legalized oppression and discrimination in the United States.¹⁵ State Community College is a testament of the longstanding cultural appreciation African Americans have for learning and education. African Americans recognize that schools have the potential to “transform lives and society and are the vehicles for social change and upliftment, thus creating opportunities.”¹⁶ State Community College was envisioned as an institution that would dramatically alter the lives of the residents of East St. Louis. In lobbying for the establishment of a community college in the city of East St. Louis, residents recognized the value of locating a higher educational institution in the city and how that value would translate into opportunities for themselves and their city.

Community College Theoretical Framework

In seeking to answer how the value East St. Louis residents placed on a community college education was meted out in the curriculum offerings of State Community College, this dissertation draws from the literature that examines the mission and purpose of the community college, which is often viewed through three theoretical frameworks—democratic equality, social efficiency, and social mobility.¹⁷ The first framework is a traditional approach that generally accepts that community colleges were developed to equalize and increase access to higher education. Democratic equality goals are evident in calls for equal access to schooling and full participation in education through political and civil life. Inherent in the democratic

¹⁵ James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988); V. P. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination: A Cultural History of African American Resistance* (Brooklyn, NY: Lawrence Hill Books, 1992); Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

¹⁶ Christopher M. Span, “Knowledge is Light, Knowledge is Power” African American Education in Antebellum America,” in *Surmounting All Odds: Education, Opportunity, and Society in the New Millennium*, eds. Carol Camp Yeaky and Ronald D. Henderson (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2003), 4.

¹⁷ Alicia C. Dowd, “From Access to Outcome Equity: Revitalizing the Democratic Mission of the Community College,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 586 (March 2003): 95-96; David F. Labaree, *How to Succeed in School Without Really Learning: The Credentials Race in American Education* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997).

equality goal is that community colleges create educational opportunities and expand higher education enrollments. The work of researchers such as Arthur Cohen, Robert Rhoads, Kathleen Shaw, and James Valdez claims that community colleges democratize college access by being plentiful, nearby, and inexpensive, by offering vocational education and adult education in addition to more traditional college offerings and by adhering to an “open door” admissions policy that imposes few entry requirements.¹⁸

The second theoretical framework, social efficiency, is concerned with workforce preparation, economic development, and the effective use of the taxpayer’s dollars in education. Researchers that ground the development of the community college in a social efficiency theory share the belief that socially efficient programs in community colleges accept and reproduce social inequality through the concentration on effective development of human capital to meet the needs of the economy. Socially efficient theorists question the development of vocational and occupational programs as a primary curriculum of community colleges while arguing that it is because of the heavy emphasis on vocational and occupational programs that community colleges were directed and/or coerced to serve the needs of capital by supplying business and industry with a trained workforce. The social efficiency approach is applied in the work of scholars including but not limited to Steven Brint, Jerome Karabel, Burton Clark, Kevin J. Dougherty, and L. Steven Zwerling.¹⁹

Social mobility theory is the third theoretical framework used to categorize the development and purpose of community colleges. Social mobility theorists argue that

¹⁸ Arthur M. Cohen and Florence B. Brawer, *The American Community College*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003); Robert A. Rhoads and James R. Valdez, *Democracy, Multiculturalism, and the Community College: A Critical Perspective* (New York: Garland, 1996); Kathleen M. Shaw, James R. Valdez, and Robert A. Rhoads, *Community Colleges as Cultural Texts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); James R. Valdez, “Transformation of the Community Colleges for the 21st Century,” *Educational Researcher* 31, no. 2 (2002): 33-36.

¹⁹ Brint and Karabel, *The Diverted Dream*, 1989; Dougherty, *Contradictory College*, 1994; Karabel, “Community Colleges and Social Stratification,” 1972; Zwerling, *Second Best*, 1976.

community colleges seek to preserve the American dream that just rewards are due to talented and hardworking individuals who attain social and economic status through success in the educational system. In adhering to the belief that community colleges play a vital role in providing the necessary education to achieve social and economic success, these scholars are especially concerned with issues of quality of education in the community college sector, accountability, and overall educational attainment of community college students. The social mobility approach is evidenced by works including but not limited to W. Norton Grubb, Thomas Kane, John Roueche, and Cecilia Rouse.²⁰ This dissertation joins the larger historiographical and theoretical conversation pertaining to community colleges by grounding the study heavily within all three frameworks—democratic equality, social efficiency, and student mobility. By recognizing that community colleges have goals and functions that are at once compatible and contradictory and by viewing the development of the State Community College of East St. Louis through multiple lenses, this dissertation will be able to address critical issues such as course development, curriculum emphasis, and institutional access along lines of race, class, and gender.

Industrial Suburbs

Central to the understanding of the history and political economy of East St. Louis is a thorough examination of the literature relating to the history of the rise and fall of industrialization and the effect that both industrialization and deindustrialization had on a number of cities, similar to East St. Louis. This dissertation uses major texts relating to the

²⁰ W. Norton Grubb, "The Effects of Differentiation on Educational Attainment: The Case of Community College," *The Review of Higher Education* 12 (1989): 349-374; Thomas J. Kane, & Celilia E. Rouse, "The Community College: Educating Students at the Margin Between College and Work," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 63-84; John E. Roueche, Laurence F. Johnson, and Suanne D. Roueche, *Embracing the Tiger: The Effectiveness Debate and the Community College* (Washington, DC: Community College Press, 1997); Cecilia E. Rouse, "Democratization or Diversion? The Effect of Community Colleges on Educational Attainment," *Journal of Business & Economic Statistics* 13, no. 2 (April 1995): 217-224.

political economy of industrial suburbs like East St. Louis, which argue that industrial suburbs such as East St. Louis, IL, Camden, NJ, and Gary, IN are often located near larger metropolitan cities and were established as an outlet for industry. For example, one researcher argues that East St. Louis was developed as an industrial suburb, which differs from other municipalities because of the roles and expectations of local government but also because it was created to support the larger cities that obscured them.²¹ This literature argues that cities like East St. Louis possessed certain social, political, economic, cultural, and ethnic characteristics that distinguished them as a world apart from other cities in the nation.²² This literature addresses the complexities of cities that focused first on industry and second on residents and the implications this concentration had on economic crisis, political manipulation, and educational development. While the framework is useful in contextualizing the geographical and economic development of East St. Louis it fails to account for the tenacity and determination of the residents and their impact on social, particularly educational institutions, in the city and the impact the residents see these institutions having on the economic development of the city.

Critical Race Theory and Community Cultural Wealth

The aforementioned framework operates from a position that communities like East St. Louis (industrial suburbs), which are commonly communities of color, as a result of their economic and geographical design and focus lack social and cultural capital because these individuals operate outside of the “accepted” notions of cultural knowledge, skills and abilities possessed and inherited by privileged groups in society. However, critical race theory (CRT)

²¹ Andrew J. Theising, *Made in USA: East St. Louis* (St. Louis, MO: Virginia Publishing, 2008), 8.

²² Robert A. Beauregard, *When American Became Suburban* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Jefferson Cowie & Joseph Heathcott, eds., *Beyond the Ruins: The Meaning of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); Dennis R. Judd & Robert E. Mendelson, *The Politics of Urban Planning: The East St. Louis Experience* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973); W. Dennis Keating & Norman Krumholz, eds., *Rebuilding Urban Neighborhoods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999); Jon C. Teaford, *Cities of the Heartland: The Rise and Fall of the Industrial Midwest* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

shifts the center of focus from notions of White, middle class culture to the cultures of “Communities of Color.” CRT and community cultural wealth asserts that Communities of Color nurture cultural wealth through at least six forms of capital such as aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital.²³ This study utilizes the concepts of aspirational (the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers), navigational (refers to skills of maneuvering through social institutions), and social (networks of people and community resources) capital to understand and document how and why the residents of East St. Louis through their collective agency and capital pursued and fought for the establishment and continued operation of State Community College.

Research Significance and Contribution

This research and dissertation is important for many contemporary educators who look towards the community college in examining the complexity of a higher education system that both provides and denies access to large groups of students. It is this contradictory nature of community colleges that makes them essential to study. The institutional and social history of the State Community College of East St. Louis provides the opportunity to study up close and in-depth the developments and events of a specific institution that was created and designed with the goal of providing access and the transformation of the social conditions for a marginalized group of people but through its curriculum emphasis unintentionally denies access to a larger system of higher education and stratifies its students into lower class positions. By utilizing the voices, stories, and experiences of those intimately involved in its construction, the significance of this research speaks directly to the residents of East St. Louis—students, parent, and educators

²³ Tara J. Yosso, “Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth,” *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 2 (March 2005): 77.

who worked to establish, implement, and support the continued development of the State Community College.

This research also holds significance as it adds to the growing body of knowledge and continued conversations on community college history and development. As community colleges are constantly questioned with regards to accountability, effectiveness, and outcomes it becomes imperative that individuals who are raced, classed, and gendered be allowed to contribute their voice and understanding to the impact of a community college education in providing them and their community with an institution that at its core adheres to providing a democratic education. The findings from this study allow researchers and practitioners to understand what individuals consider a quality and useful education and how community colleges expand educational opportunity despite or because of its contradictory nature.

Chapter Outline of the Dissertation

In returning back to the research questions of this study which addresses: what is the relationship between the political, social, and economic systems of East St. Louis and the establishment, development, and continued operation of the State Community College of East St. Louis? How did the educational and fiscal policies and practices of SCC both differ and/or align with the educational and fiscal policies and practices of the larger community college system? What is the relationship between the racial and class demographics of East St. Louis and the educational policies and practices of SCC? The final question asks how the faculty, staff, and students of the community college as well as the residents of East St. Louis perceived the purpose and significance of the local community college? In order to fully address these

questions, this dissertation will explore the narrative of the historical development of the State Community College of East St. Louis in an eight-chapter format.

The introduction or first chapter of this study introduced the reader to the problem and offers the historical background and context that support the rationale for the study. This chapter also introduced the research questions, methodology, significance, and presented the theoretical/conceptual frameworks chosen to contextualize, guide, and define the study. Chapter two discusses and provides a historical background of the city of East St. Louis providing a general understanding of the development of the city, which includes a look at the city's economic as well as educational structures. This chapter highlights those components of the city and the structures in place that contributed to the city not being in a position to establish an institution of higher education until 1969. Relying on secondary sources, it sets the tone for chapter three, which looks at the development of higher education in the State of Illinois and the nation in the 1960s. Chapter three outlines the history and development of a nationwide community college system, paying specific attention to the development of the Illinois community college system and how the push for postsecondary education for the residents of Illinois led to the development of State Community College of East St. Louis. An understanding of the historical development of community colleges provides the foundation needed to examine how an institution such as State Community College came to fruition. This chapter also lays out the historical development of the American two-year institution from its secondary connections into an institution with an integral role in providing education for the masses. A look at this history will situate the development of State Community College within the development of Illinois community colleges and the ideas and circumstances surrounding Illinois community college development. This foundation also provides the means to understand the circumstances

and ideas that lead to the establishment of State Community College as a state supported institution. This history subsequently provides us with the opportunity to trace the evolution of the state's commitment to providing educational opportunities to the general public through the growth of junior colleges.

The purpose of the fourth chapter is to construct the initial history of State Community College and draws analysis from the archival sources as well as oral history interviews to sketch out the beginning years of the institution. This chapter delves a little deeper into why State Community College was established, how it fits in with community college development nationally, and its overall purpose and goals for the community of East St. Louis. This chapter ties the development of State Community College to the development of special-focus community colleges and highlights how institutions created especially and specifically for minority groups have a mission and goal unlike other institutions. In fulfilling this goal, this chapter also highlights those key events, people, and factors that contributed to the establishment of State Community College.

Chapters five, six, and seven chronicle the institutional history of State Community College of East St. Louis. Chapter five looks at the changes in State Community College's curriculum, facilities, and governance as it continued to grow and develop into a quality two-year institution serving the needs of East St. Louis residents. This chapter draws analysis from both archival sources and oral history interviews to sketch out the continued growth of SCC after its inception. Chapter six looks at the ways in which individuals of East St. Louis, particularly women of color, and especially African American women in the East St. Louis metropolitan area utilized State Community College as a means of economic and social mobility through the nursing program. This chapter also examines the intersecting oppression of race, class, and

gender on African American women in the U.S. and gives voice to their agency in using education but specifically a two-year nursing education and the nursing profession to simultaneously deconstruct and subsequently reconstruct their lived realities. In detailing the development of nurse training at State Community College, this chapter also highlights traditionally how women were served by the community college and the ways in which women were able to use the community college to fit their particular economic and career needs. Chapter seven examines the events that resulted in legislation seeking to abolish State Community College. It further explores the meaning of the closure to the community and its resulting effects on higher educational opportunities for residents of East St. Louis. Finally, chapter eight revisits the impact of community colleges on communities of color, particularly those isolated from economic development like industrial suburbs and offers implications of how the aspirational, navigational, and social capital of communities of color highlights their commitment and value of education in providing access and opportunities.

East St. Louis residents envisioned education in the form of State Community College as a way to change their present realities. The residents and it can be argued the legislators recognized and acknowledged in establishing State Community College that community colleges have long served as an important point of higher education access for underrepresented ethnic minority students and other disenfranchised groups especially given the low cost, geographic convenience, and open access of these institutions. There is strong evidence that the presence of community colleges promotes access to higher education and plays an important role in educating students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and those who face various barriers to higher education.²⁴ The next chapter discusses and provides a historical background of the

²⁴ Thomas Bailey and Vanessa Smith Morest, ed. *Defending the Community College Equity Agenda* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2006), 3, 7.

city of East St. Louis providing a general understanding of the development of the city, which includes a look at the city's economic as well as educational structures.

CHAPTER TWO

I LOVE EAST ST. LOUIS: ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGES IN EAST ST. LOUIS

*The urban society is often characterized by ongoing, often volatile, social conflict. Cities are not chance creations; rather, they are human developments.*¹

Any discussion of State Community College must begin with an overview of East St. Louis. East St. Louis reached its population peak in 1950 when 82,295 residents resided within its boundaries. The city would unfortunately suffer a population loss every year until finally in 2000 the city had a population of 31,542. This sense of loss has come to represent the overall characteristic and demeanor of the city of East St. Louis. East St. Louis's identity once tied to industry and profit suffered a tremendous loss when factories closed and the industrial market fled the area. Once a thriving home to glass makers, meat-packing factories, and other industrial companies, East St. Louis withered into one of the nation's poorest cities accelerated by a decline in the number of factories and the exodus of middle-class whites and blacks in the 1960s. The loss of business and population resulted in an East St. Louis without the necessary economic base to establish a community college, which the residents saw as a viable option in establishing educational and economical opportunities, a means of turning the community around. While a sense of loss has permeated the city, there is also a sense of hope and renewal that continuously battle to keep this sense of loss from completely enveloping the city. "The city has great potential. We got the land. We have the people and we have, I would say a great opportunity to

¹ Joe R. Feagin and Robert Parker, *Building American Cities: The Urban Real Estate Game* (Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1990), 7.

impact the economy of the whole area.”² “You know when I hear East St. Louis, you know, the images that come to mind are some of the images of hope and desire because there is real opportunity available in East St. Louis.”³ If hope, potential, and opportunity are mainstays of the community, how did East St. Louis move from a community that actually embodied and provided opportunity to a community where people dreamed of both its former and future potential? This chapter discusses and provides a historical background of the city of East St. Louis providing a general understanding of the economic, political, and social development of the city. It highlights those components of the city and the structures in place that contributed to the city not being in a position to establish an institution of higher education until 1969 and only then with support from the state of Illinois.

By the time State Community College was established in 1969, East St. Louis had undergone drastic changes from the fourth largest city in Illinois to one of the poorest cities in the state with a continuously decreasing population, and an increasing minority, particularly African American population. During the 1960s residents, local politicians, and policy makers, described the city as the “Other America,” and because of its membership in the “Other America” poverty and shifting cultural concerns was deeply embedded in the community structure. It had and continues to have all the problems of the “central city” in Chicago, New York, or Detroit, but few of their resources. Despite the close connection and alignment with central city problems, East St. Louis is a “satellite city.” The center of the metropolitan area lies in St. Louis, across the river and in another state. Thus, East St. Louis lacks the power of a central city to shape regional decisions affecting its economic and political fate.⁴

² Rev. John Rouse, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, February 22, 2009.

³ Joe Cipfl, telephone interview by author, March 12, 2009.

⁴ East St. Louis City Council, Federal Grant application, 1967, Mayor Alvin G. Fields Collection, 4/18, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville Archives, Edwardsville (hereafter cited as Fields Papers).

East St. Louis and the industrial area surrounding it had without question the most severe economic problems of any area in the state of Illinois starting in the 1920s and continuing to the present. According to Senator Paul Douglas, “When the good Lord created the World, East St. Louis was forgotten.”⁵ These are the images, beliefs, and unfortunately realities that East St. Louis and its residents have had to contend with since the early 20th century, as there has been a continuous tide of desperate economic situations faced by the city. Senator Douglas went on to say that to make matters worse there seemed to be very little that could be done about the situation because of its close proximity to St. Louis and it failing to qualify for depressed area programs. He did however state that, “In evaluating this area we will find two basic kinds of problems. The first is the existence of real poverty and economic blight. The second is the complete absence of cultural and intellectual life in the area.”⁶ It is within both this presence of poverty and economic blight, as well cultural and intellectual absence, that State Community College would be established and operated.

East St. Louis presents a wide range of struggles and angles from which to evaluate and describe the city. East St. Louis has faced a variety of struggles that characterize the overall development of the city including economic problems starting with the reliance on industry as a sole economic base followed by the collapse of the industrial base, political—East St. Louis is known for its political corruption and patronage, and social—the “Southern” culture and customs that characterize racial interactions in East St. Louis and the treatment of minority groups including racism, discrimination, and segregation, and finally the transformation of the population in East St. Louis from a racially and socially mixed city to one with a highly low-income African American population. The struggles that East St. Louis faced, and continue to

⁵ Senator Paul Douglas to Honorable R. Sargent Shriver, 1965, Fields Papers.

⁶ Ibid.

face, have resulted in a city that continuously juggles the need to provide social services for its residents with the reality that the services provided aren't quite adequate. This includes the financial difficulty the school district has continuously faced, the slow decrease in the number of hospitals that service the city and even the ability to provide fire and police services to the residents of East St. Louis. East St. Louis is infamous for its decline from its heyday of a city with an infinite number of jobs and opportunity to one with an inability to provide its residents with basic necessities and services. What economic, political, and social events characterize this change in the city? How did its transformation from an industrial based community wreck havoc on the social stability of the community?

The 1950s marked a time in East St. Louis economic history when the city began an increased descent into economic downfall from which it would never fully recover. By the 1950s, East St. Louis was showing signs of weariness from business closures, downsizing, and transformation of local businesses and was entering what Andrew Theising called the "abandonment phase."⁷ Industrial suburb literature insists that East St. Louis and similar areas like Gary, IN and Patterson, NJ evolved through three distinct phases of existence known as creation, operation, and abandonment. The creation phase creates the industrial suburb and builds the linkage that will allow the community to function efficiently. During operation, industrial suburbs mature into a profitable enterprise expanding its business and political scope over time. An "East St. Louis," which refers to the present day conditions is created during the abandonment phase, when economic activity is declining or no longer operating.⁸ Life and subsequent changes and lived realities in East St. Louis have been tied directly to its industrial and commercial background.

⁷ Andrew Theising, *Made in USA: East St. Louis: The Rise and Fall of an Industrial River Town* (St. Louis, MO: Virginia Publishing, 2003), 11.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

Historical Foundation of East St. Louis (~1792-1920)

Industry in East St. Louis began as early as 1792 when a local ferry was established between the Illinois side of the Mississippi River and the St. Louis area, almost a decade before the area would be incorporated as the city of East St. Louis.⁹ Transportation became the foundation on which the business and residential areas of East St. Louis were built.¹⁰ The proximity of East St. Louis to the coal mines and its location at the banks of the Mississippi River held tremendous advantages that would later be utilized by the growing railroad industry. East St. Louis began as a vital commercial link and had a seemingly endless source of employment and commerce as part of the most significant railroad link outside of Chicago.¹¹ East St. Louis's early industry in transportation combined with its position across from St. Louis made it a prime location to establish future transportation industries, including first railroad and

⁹ L.U. Reavis, "East Saint Louis: Its Past History-Growth-Present Status and Future Prospects," in *Saint Louis: The Future Great City of the World with Biographical Sketches of the Representative Men and Women of St. Louis and Missouri* (St. Louis: C. R. Barns, 1876), 51-53. Bill Nunes, *Illustrated History of East St. Louis*, (Dexter, MI: Shore Incorporation, 1998), 5. East St. Louis dates back to 1656 when Jesuit missionaries explored the east side of the Mississippi River. Later, Joliet and Marquette came to the area and LaSalle included it in his claim for France in 1675. St. Ursule, the name of East St. Louis, dissolved in 1784 as a result of an unusually high flood and a subsequent outbreak of malaria. The area remained deserted until the early days of the Revolutionary War, when Captain James Piggott located a militia claim of 100 acres of land on the spot of present day East St. Louis. The first sign of substantial development and industry occurred in East St. Louis in 1792 when Captain James Piggott set about establishing the first ferry business connecting the East St. Louis area with St. Louis. In 1795, Piggott and his sons erected lodging for travelers continuing to the Louisiana Territory. Finally, in 1797, Piggott applied for license to operate the ferry between Illinois and St. Louis, which he continued until 1799. This first simple ferry business was only the beginning of profits to be made from the close proximity of East St. Louis to St. Louis and the steamboat travel to come through the area. Industry and business continued to grow when a small tract of land was bought and a tavern established between 1805 and 1809. The land was sold in 1816 to John McNight and Thomas Brady, who also purchased Piggott's Ferry. Illinoistown established in 1818 was renamed East St. Louis town in the 1861 charter as a means of increasing the town's attractiveness and profit by playing on St. Louis's favorable image as a cultural center. East St. Louis finally became a city in 1888.

¹⁰ Federal Works Project, "East St. Louis, Illinois City Guide: History of East St. Louis," 1936, <http://www.eslarp.uiuc.edu/ibex/archive/guidebook/fwphist.htm> (accessed November 2004). In 1817, one of the first steamboats to ply the Mississippi stopped at St. Louis and the East St. Louis ferry landing. The operation of a ferry business took on new meaning with the advent of the steamboat. East St. Louis businessmen built a steamboat depot in 1818 taking advantage of the east side's ability to supply fuel and provisions. Seeing the economic potential in the coming steamboat trade and the advantageous position of the east side for supplying fuel and provision, McNight and Brady established Illinoistown over the old settlement of Jacksonville on May 22, 1818 as a steamboat depot.

¹¹ Theising, *Made in USA*, 11.

later highway transportation. With the advent of railroad travel and the inability of St. Louis to accommodate the large switching yards of the railroads traveling through the area, East St. Louis won the dubious honor of hosting the railroad switchyard allowing the city to broaden its industrial base.¹² East St. Louis became a natural transportation funnel point from the eastern states through St. Louis to the western territories. Industry and railroad lines ran north, south, and east of the city making East St. Louis the second largest transportation center, with 36 railroads, four complete belt lines and six docks on the riverfront.¹³ Railroads were a major employer of local residents and collectively were the city's largest revenue sources.¹⁴ The profitability of the railroad yard enticed other businesses to invest in East St. Louis and surrounding areas.

East St. Louis attracted several factories and industries throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Elliott Rudwick argues that businesses were attracted to East St. Louis because of "cheap land, low taxes, and access to inexpensive fuel."¹⁵ The industrial base of East St. Louis quickly grew and paint factories, oil processors, grain and lumber mills, iron foundries and stone and brick works located their companies in the growing city and several packinghouses established towns around the city of East St. Louis.¹⁶ East St. Louis was also home to one of the largest chemical centers as well as home to one of the largest roofing manufacturing centers and largest aluminum manufacturing centers. Aluminum Ore Company produced every ounce of aluminum in the United States between 1902 and 1939. The facilities of Western Cartridge (now

¹² Bill Nunes, *East St. Louis Remembered* (Dexter, MI: Shore Incorporation, 1997), 3

¹³ Joseph N. Fining, *Economic and Other Facts Regarding East St. Louis, Illinois* (East St. Louis, IL: Chamber of Commerce, 1920), 104-108.

¹⁴ Robert E. Mendelson, "East St. Louis: The Riverfront Charade," in *Regional and Urban Development Studies and Services*, ed. William Tudor (Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, 1970), 2.

¹⁵ Elliott Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis: July 2, 1917* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964), 5.

¹⁶ W. Edward English, *The Good Things of East St. Louis* (Mascoutah, IL: Top's Books, 1992), 6.

Olin Corp) produced most of the brass shell casings used by Allied Forces in World War I.¹⁷

Additional industry in the city included a refining plant, a long belt line, and fleets of tows and barges operating on the lower Mississippi River to and from the belt lines' docks. The decision of these companies to locate in East St. Louis did not come without heavy bargaining. Industry leaders were able to negotiate control of taxation and regulation procedures, insuring that their companies would profit. These business practices helped in creating East St. Louis as a complex industrial suburb.¹⁸

Andrew Theising argues that the industries located in East St. Louis—slaughterhouses, smokestacks, and rail yards—were unattractive yet essential elements of urban life and that industrial suburbs must house these elements to allow the major city, in this case, St. Louis to thrive and function. One of the key features of industrial suburbs is the roles and expectations of the local government which differ from other municipalities, making these cities that much more useful to business and industry.¹⁹ The defining feature of industrial suburbs is that they were created out of a need to increase profit and escape costs of doing business in the central city and were seen as appealing sites for business principles, placing industrial profitability before residential needs for city services. Evidenced in the control by East St. Louis's railroad leaders

¹⁷ Theising, *Made in USA*, 118.

¹⁸ Sundiata K. Cha-Jua, *America's First Black Town: Brooklyn, Illinois, 1830-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 12. Complex industrial suburbs include several firms doing different functions in the production-distribution process. These are companies in related industries whose production-distribution costs can be cut significantly by locating in the vicinity.

¹⁹ Theising, *Made in USA*, 7. According to Theising, in the central city or residential suburb, government is designed by its inhabitants to provide some measure of quality of life—safety, health, infrastructure, or development. Citizens expect government to be responsive, and citizens make demands of government. In industrial suburbs, government was designed to be a business tool with little concern for quality of life measures, and government was seemingly detached from citizens in order to focus on the needs of commerce. Industrial suburbs share three characteristics; “they are incorporated governments with the ability to make and enforce laws and policies, they are dominated by a particular firm or industry that wields political control, and they are placed in strategic locations with business advantages within urban areas.

to shape land use activities, which allowed industries access to the best land, unfortunately leaving residents with the remaining land on which to build their homes and social institutions.

The clustering of numerous factories both inside and around East St. Louis attracted a number of Eastern European immigrants as well as Southern blacks to the city throughout the later nineteenth and early half of the twentieth centuries.²⁰ East St. Louis's reputation as the Pittsburgh of the West, where one could always find a job attracted numerous individuals to the city looking for work and willing to work for low-wages. Aiding in this attraction was the saying "if you can't find work in East St. Louis, you can't find it anywhere."²¹ According to historian Sundiata Cha-Jua, the early periods of industrialization and immigration in the metro-east area coincided with national industrialization and the formation of a new racial control system. "The transition to this new racial formation entailed disfranchisement of southern Blacks, the institutionalization of segregation, the resurgence of racist violence, especially lynching, and the rise of scientific racism to rationalize the new racial order."²² As a means of solidifying their subjugated treatment of blacks, Illinois implemented its own version of slave codes, "Black Laws" until 1870. "Denied citizenship and the franchise by law and circumscribed in business ownership by practice, blacks found Illinois and other Midwestern states only slightly more tolerable than the southern slave states."²³ Although Illinois was characterized as a "free state" it practiced prohibitive and exclusionary acts when it came to its

²⁰ According to Charles L. Lumpkins, "Black East St. Louis: Politics and Economy in a Border City, 1860-1945" (PhD diss., The Pennsylvania State University, 2006), 79-80, white East St. Louisans were comprised of native-born Americans, foreign born "old" immigrants and foreign born "new" immigrants. Most native-born and old immigrant townspeople claimed English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, French, or German heritage. New immigrants were those of Eastern and Southern European origins. Most arrived from Russian and Austria-Hungary empires with the rest originating from Greece, Italy, and other countries.

²¹ Robert L. Donahue and Donald S. Glickman, "The East St. Louis Area: An Overview of State Capital Projects and Policies," (Springfield: Illinois Capital Development Board, 1977), 41.

²² Cha-Jua, *America's First Black Town*, 16. See also Robert L. McCaul, *The Black Struggle for Public Schooling in Nineteenth-Century Illinois* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 9.

²³ Cha-Jua, *America's First Black Town*, 17-18.

black residents. Blacks living in East St. Louis and St. Clair County were forced to live and operate in a system of racialized servitude.

The combination of growing industry, a growing black population, and discriminatory and racist practices shaped interactions between black and whites in living arrangements and social institutions—churches, schools, hospitals, and the like. These early relationships would prove important for the later development of East St. Louis into a city with a majority African American population as an adherence to de facto segregation would permeate all social interactions between residents in East St. Louis well into the 1960s and 1970s. Segregation was a way of life in most industrial towns as evidenced in the residential neighborhoods and school system of Gary, IN created by U.S. Steel as an industrial town. The Superintendent of schools in Gary stated, “We believe that it is only in justice to the Negro children that they be segregated. There is naturally a feeling between the Negroes and the whites in the lower grades and we are sure the colored children will be better cared for in schools of their own, and they will take pride in their work and will consequently get better grades.”²⁴ “Separate but equal” or rather in most cases “not so equal,” was a way of life in East St. Louis as well. Racial segregation and discrimination was especially prevalent in East St. Louis and the industries on which black residents relied for their livelihood. In the industries that dominated the city, blacks had separate washrooms and dressing rooms, worked in “segregated labor gangs, and ate meals in segregated sections.”²⁵ The forced system of segregation was a way of life in East St. Louis and dominated living arrangements, social customs, and institutions, even though blacks in East St. Louis enjoyed some freedoms like the right to vote and integrated public transportation. However,

²⁴ Ronald D. Cohen, *Children of the Mill: Schooling and Society in Gary, Indiana, 1906-1960* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 8.

²⁵ Donahue and Glickman, “East St. Louis Area,” 7.

blacks in East St. Louis forced to live in segregated neighborhoods often lived in the poorest and most squalid conditions of the city.²⁶

Industry needs also shaped the segregated school system in East St. Louis. East St. Louis did not establish a school for its children until 1842, and a school for black children was not established until 1871, due in part to the exclusion of black children from public schools in Illinois but also the discrimination that blacks faced in East St. Louis.²⁷ Black East St. Louis residents and activists were instrumental in the establishment of a school for black children, as they also formed numerous political and social clubs to achieve specific objections aimed at confronting racism.²⁸ The early education system in East St. Louis offered a limited educational curriculum for its students typical of most early schools, which focused heavily on reading and simple mathematical skills. However, the education system would soon change as the city and the country became more concerned about industrialization and its effects on the country. Education during the latter part of the nineteenth century began to reflect these changes as schooling became essential in adapting people to new disciplines and incentives of the urban-industrial order. David Tyack argues that many educators during this period saw the school as a critical means of transforming pre-industrial culture—values and attitudes, work habits, time

²⁶ Because industry was the main focus of the city and living conditions often came second, only those who had too lived in East St. Louis, leaving residents forced to live in a community that was an industrial slum in looks, tone, and politics.

²⁷ McCaul, *The Black Struggle*, 1987.

²⁸ Federal Works Project, 1936. Illinoistown erected its first schoolhouse in the village square in 1842 after convincing residents to donate money for the needed structure. A school was established in the Colored Baptist Church in 1871 for black children in East St. Louis, through the efforts of an ex-slave, John Robinson, who would later have a school and a public housing project named in his honor. See also McCaul, *The Black Struggle*, 5. Caul states that Illinois did not address education until its 1870 Constitution when it devoted an article to education and the public schools. He goes on to say that when in the Illinois constitutional convention of 1847, an education article was proposed for the new constitution, a majority of the delegates feared that such an article might bring blacks into white schools. As a result the proposition was voted down, and the Illinois constitution of 1848, in force until 1870, avoided the subject of public education. For more on blacks in politics in the East St. Louis area and their usages of political institutions to fight racism see Charles Lumpkins *American Pogrom: The East St. Louis Race Riot and Black Politics* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008).

orientation, and even recreation activities—of citizens in an industrial society.²⁹ Education in East St. Louis, mirroring the larger educational reform movement, centered around vocational education and training for manual laborers, especially for black children who officially did not receive a school building until 1886, when Lincoln School was erected, an institution that would service the educational needs of black students in East St. Louis until its official closure in 1998.³⁰

While industrial needs and influences helped to shape the educational system in East St. Louis, those influences dominated political development in East St. Louis. It is argued that the city's political leaders made tax concessions and other accommodations for industries to locate within their borders.³¹ Most politicians in East St. Louis were businessmen involved in real estate activities, from rental and sale of commercial and residential properties to land speculation and development. The first mayor of East St. Louis, John B. Bowman, embodied political leaders with much to gain from tax concessions, industrial latitude, and development of business interests at the city's expense. According to Andrew Theising,

Bowman in addition to being mayor was also an attorney in private practice, a real estate and insurance agent for the Connecticut Land Company, owner of title and abstract offices in Belleville and East St. Louis, publisher of the East St. Louis Gazette, financier of the East St. Louis Gas Light and Coke Company, board member of the East St. Louis Street Railway Company, and was corporate legal counsel for the Illinois and St. Louis Bridge Company, the Wiggins Ferry Company, the National Stock Yards, the Vandalia Railway, the East St. Louis and Carondelet Railroad, and Western Union Telegraph Company.³²

²⁹ David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 38.

³⁰ Nunes, *Illustrated History*, 1998. Fining, *Economic and Other Facts*, 60. The educational system continued growing to accommodate an increasing population. From one school in 1842, the educational system consisted of thirty-one school buildings by 1920. The white pupils occupied twenty-five of the thirty-one buildings leaving the other six for the black children. East St. Louis in respecting the "separate but equal" law of the south made sure that "the colored schools were organized, equipped, and conducted the same as the white schools, and were under immediate direction of colored officials."

³¹ Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis*, 1964; Theising, *Made in USA*, 2003.

³² Theising, *Made in USA*, 72.

This apparent conflict of interest between Bowman's personal interests and the political and economic development of the emerging city of East St. Louis would foreshadow the nature of politics in East St. Louis. Cooperation between local politicians and business interests kept taxes low, land cheap, labor unorganized, and patronage opportunities plentiful, resulting in continual near bankruptcy for the city. Area political figures relied early on patronage as a mechanism of political control. Political patronage offices in East St. Louis were to be found in the Levee Board, the School Board, and City Hall. These sources were ripe for political graft, corruption, and control over the city of East St. Louis.

Government in the new city of East St. Louis was in turmoil for the first twenty-five years as railroaders solidified their control of the city. Even though East St. Louis was growing economically under the expansion of the railroad industry, politically and socially the city was in turmoil. Political factions were threatening to keep the city from expanding into an attractive place for residents, while debates over the legality of the charter of the city to improve social services led to even further turmoil in the city.³³ It was also during this early period of development, continuing into the 1900s that East St. Louisans and thus East St Louis became known for their willingness to snub the law, gaining East St. Louis the moniker "anything goes." According to Theising, the lax political and economic environment that existed in East St. Louis during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, contributed to flourishing corruption and vice for purposes of profit.³⁴ Municipal corruption occurred with the falsification of public records, misappropriation of earmarked funds, and the police force was known for its cruelty, oppression, and lawlessness. Politics during this early period were learned through "ruthless behavior and

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 133.

merger of public and private prosperity,” a lesson that Theising argues continues to shape politics in East St. Louis to the present.³⁵

On the surface East St. Louis seemed to be prospering and growing; however, with political corruption and catering to business and industry interests, the city was actually floundering and barely afloat saddled with debt from an earlier bond issuance.³⁶ The first decade of the twentieth century was one of preferential law enforcement, increasing graft, and open violence. As early as 1917 there are records of municipal employees being paid in devalued tax anticipation warrants in lieu of salaries, which they subsequently could not redeem at face value to purchase provisions.³⁷ The laissez-faire attitude toward entrepreneurs and their urban tools in the Progressive Era enabled the creation of industrial suburbs like East St. Louis throughout the industrial centers in the frostbelt states.³⁸ Industrial development and growing populations created East St. Louis into a working class community dominated by industry.

1920-1960

East St. Louis throughout the 1920s and continuing into the 1960s was faced with a growing population and an industrial base that would reach its highest point during this period and begin a not so slow descent. The economic and social problems that plagued the city during this time were further exacerbated by growing political corruption and racial tensions between a growing black population and white residents determined to keep East St. Louis, “a white man’s city.”³⁹ East St. Louis continued to flourish as a major industrial city as major corporations and processing plants located in, near, and around the city. Throughout the second quarter of the

³⁵ Ibid., 83.

³⁶ Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis*, 1964.

³⁷ Ibid., 5.

³⁸ Theising, *Made in USA*, 63.

³⁹ Ibid., 148.

twentieth century the affairs of the city fell into well-ordered grooves and the era of “growing pains” gave way to an era of stability.

By 1920, East St. Louis was also the world’s largest horse and mule market as well as the largest baking-powder manufacturing center and several smaller industrial suburbs had emerged around East St. Louis. While the industrial base of East St. Louis continued to grow, a combination of growing industrial interests and political corruption resulted in an East St. Louis on the verge of economic and even social collapse. Economic and political corruption during the late 19th and early 20th centuries included looting the city and county treasury, accepting bribes to pass legislation, setting tax assessments of major industrial corporations extremely low, for example the big meatpacking plants whose total value was well in the millions were actually assessed between \$34,000 and \$43,000.⁴⁰ As a result, the total assessed value of East St. Louis during the first two decades of the 20th century was only \$13 million. East St. Louis was the second poorest city in the United States in 1920 with an annual income that was 24% of the overall Illinois average, despite it leading the way in manufacturing and being home to major industrial firms. East Coast economic interests controlled industry and the city derived most of its revenue from saloon license fees, resulting in a city with few operating funds. Bankruptcy and a lawless state were tolerated in East St. Louis because industry in the city and county enjoyed political payoffs.⁴¹ There is an air of long-term political corruption in the city, which unfortunately has contributed to some of the city’s major problems.

Patronage was common among white and black East St. Louis residents, whose numbers had grown considerably throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The black exodus from the South affecting northern cities, also impacted East St. Louis. Blacks were attracted and often

⁴⁰ Ibid., 140.

⁴¹ Ibid.

recruited by industrial management to the “bountiful” job prospects in East St. Louis. African Americans entered the working class in East St. Louis mainly as unskilled laborers in meatpacking, iron founding, glass making factories, and in railroad yards.⁴² There appeared to be an influx of blacks in East St. Louis with their numbers rising to 18 percent of the population in the 1930s up from 6 percent in the 1900s.⁴³ Patronage offered a steady income and increased social status within black and white communities. The city operating without a general civil service law until 1967 allowed many city jobs to be utilized for patronage purposes. “And another thing I like to say that the politicians during my growing up time were about the business of taking care of their precincts. They really looked out for the people in their precincts, the people who they represented. And if you needed a job, you got a job. They made sure the people got what they were supposed to get.”⁴⁴ Political machine control of Saint Clair County, of which East St. Louis was a member, including the Levee District, produced additional sources of patronage; and even the city’s independent school district was a significant source of patronage both in jobs and contracts, for the political organization.⁴⁵

⁴² Lumpkins, “Black East St. Louis,” 2.

⁴³ Census information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau for the years: 1870-1930.

⁴⁴ 60-plus year resident of East St. Louis, personal interview by the author.

⁴⁵ William E. Nelson Jr., and Philip J. Meranto, *Electing Black Mayors: Political Action in the Black Community* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1977), 51.

TABLE 2.1 East St. Louis population 1870-1930

Year	Population	White	Black	Other Race*
1870	5,644	5,554	100	—
1880	9,185	8,672	513	—
1890	15,169	14,389	772	8
1900	29,655	27,842	1,799	14
1910	58,547	52,646	5,882	19
1920	66,767	59,304	7,437	26
1930	74,347	62,769	11,536	24**

Source: Census data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau of 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, and 1920) * Other ethnicities include Chinese, American Indians. ** (Other race includes American Indian and Alaska native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race two or more races and Hispanic and Latino)

Despite patronage jobs, low wages were consistent in East St. Louis. Industry preoccupied with profits were not interested or inclined to pay livable wages yet alone, high wages. Low wages contributed to East St. Louis's residents continuously occupying the lowest economic class. Theising argues that low wages prevented a dominant middle class from forming and this lack of middle class prevented a system of checks and balances to curb political corruption. He continues that "because most residents of East St. Louis were poor, it was easier to control them" allowing big industry interests to topple those of residents and civic leaders.⁴⁶ I would argue that just because there was no definitive middle class in East St. Louis during this period citizens were still concerned with "middle-class" values and institutions. While they may not have possessed the social capital of the middle class they did still have the same values, as evidenced in the building of schools, parks, churches, entertainment facilities, and even neighborhood associations. For example, black residents continued to establish churches, civic and fraternal clubs, lodges, societies, and other organizations where they could find camaraderie,

⁴⁶ Theising, *Made in USA*, 144.

affirm their dignity as people, and gain skills.⁴⁷ Values and beliefs can and often are espoused even in the absence of money.

East St. Louis began to show signs of destabilization during World War I, but an influx of federal program dollars in the 1930s and lucrative wartime production in the 1940s staved off the city's inevitable demise.⁴⁸ However, the city was not able to sustain the temporary influx of industrial needs and the booming economy of the World War II years, as manufacturers chose to locate new plants elsewhere, and existing industry continued to vacate. As technology and economics changed the way industries functioned, the post-World War II era saw a tremendous shift in economic interests. Large-scale changes in industry combined with local developments in East St. Louis's such as state and urban federal renewal programs and transportation policies undermined the city's economic base by rendering obsolete dependence on railroad, East St. Louis major transportation industry.⁴⁹ Industries in East St. Louis unwilling to reinvest in aging facilities chose instead to relocate, leaving in its wake an economic catastrophe.

In the 1950s, East St. Louis began to feel the effects of industrial flight and the flight of its middle class, a phenomenon experienced against a background of long-term exploitation, financial mismanagement and neglect of basic government services.⁵⁰ Deindustrialization became the dominant structural process after 1955. Between 1950 and 1960, there was a 20% loss of employed individuals. Industrial flight and failure characterized the region, and in East St. Louis, it was followed by white flight and black political empowerment.⁵¹ Even with negative changes in the economic system in East St. Louis during the interwar and post-War

⁴⁷ Lumpkins, *American Pogrom*, 54.

⁴⁸ Theising, *Made in USA*, 183.

⁴⁹ Kenneth M. Reardon, "Combating Racism Through Planning Education: Lessons From the East St. Louis Action Research Project, *Planning, Practice, and Research* 13 (1998): 421-432.

⁵⁰ Donahue and Glickman, "East St. Louis Area," 7.

⁵¹ Cha-Jua, *America's First Black Town*, 11.

period, political and business leaders remained wedded to a pre-World War I industrial economic policy, financial indebtedness, and machine politics leaving the foundation for a future legacy grounded in deindustrialization and increasing impoverishment.⁵² It was during this time that East St. Louis began to experience what Theising calls the single-most devastating characteristic of industrial suburbs—the ability of industry to abandon its suburb.⁵³

1960-1980

Following the affluence of the 1960s, the economy of the United States shifted away from basic manufacturing and production industries towards services, information systems, and high-tech production. Still enjoying the economic boom of the 1960s, the United States was unprepared for the economic decline of the 1970s. If the nation as a whole was unprepared to deal with this level of economic downturn, East St. Louis was even more unprepared to handle major shifts away from industrial manufacturing. The late sixties and seventies marked a definite shift in the economic base of East St. Louis as the city faced rapid deindustrialization. East St. Louis deteriorating steadily found itself abandoned by the very industries that had once made it proud. Lawyers, dentists, doctors, architects, and other professional offices were also moving to neighboring communities. The local tax base already small continued to decrease increasing the difficulty in collecting tax revenues. There were few property tax revenues for the city and school district, and even fewer employment opportunities.⁵⁴ Industries and workers moved from the city to the surrounding suburbs and with them went jobs and tax revenues. By 1969, over half of the businesses that once lined downtown East St. Louis were gone. The major industries left the area or moved to privately incorporated company towns surrounding East St.

⁵² Lumpkins, *American Pogrom*, 10.

⁵³ Theising, *Made in USA*, 183.

⁵⁴ Mendelson, *Riverfront Charade*, 25.

Louis, leaving city hall as the city's third largest employer, and the school district as the fourth largest employer. An April 11, 1969 *TIME* article stated that, "More than half of the city's families lived on less than \$3,000 a year, 21% of the labor force was unemployed and one-fourth of the 82,000 residents received some kind of public assistance."⁵⁵ At the beginning of 1970, the median income of East St. Louis residents was the lowest (except for Rantoul) of all Illinois cities of ten thousand or more people. It also reported the second highest unemployment rate for cities of that size.⁵⁶ East St. Louis was unfortunately entering its abandonment phase.

Deindustrialization

Major metropolitan cities once world-renowned industrial centers faced a prolonged and often debilitating economic decline in their industrial economies. Cities like Chicago, Detroit, New York, St. Louis, Buffalo, Youngstown, and Gary have faced economic failure and near bankruptcy as a result of moving industries, declining production, and population loss.⁵⁷ Throughout the sixties, the United States, as a whole experienced astronomical social and economic problems and East St. Louis was no exception. This process, characteristically defined as deindustrialization effected the major social institutions of these cities such as the ability of local government to govern and implement sound economic development as well as the ability to provide a quality education for its students.

Researchers estimate that between 32 and 38 million jobs were lost during the 1970s as a direct result of companies refusing to invest in aging plants and costly equipment. Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison argued that many millions of highly paid blue-collar jobs in

⁵⁵ "The City: The East St. Louis Blues," *TIME*, April 11, 1969.

⁵⁶ Casper L. Jordan, *A Call to Excellence and Innovation: A Survey of the East St. Louis, Illinois Public Library* (Springfield: Illinois Printing Office, 1972), 12.

⁵⁷ Carol Abbott, "Perspectives on Urban Economic Planning: The Case of Washington, D.C., Since 1880," *The Public Historian*, 11, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 5; Pamela J. Bettis, "Urban Students, Liminality, and the Postindustrial Context," *Sociology of Education* 69, no. 2 (April 1996): 106-107; Brian J. Godfrey, "Restructuring and Decentralization in a World City," *Geographical Review* 85, no. 4 (October 1995): 437.

manufacturing were lost during the 1970s because of “runaways, shutdowns, and permanent physical cutbacks.”⁵⁸ From 1970 to 1996, the U.S. lost approximately 43 million jobs, most of which were blue-collar manufacturing jobs in cities in the Northeast and Midwest.⁵⁹ Dramatic changes in the structure of the U.S. economy and its labor market adversely affected both U.S. cities and the nation’s minority population. Deindustrialization of the nation’s urban core and the flight of capital to the suburbs, the Sunbelt, and beyond, according to Squires are the central structural forces that devastated urban communities and contributed directly to the persistence of racial inequality in those communities.⁶⁰ Racial minorities are concentrated precisely in those geographic locations, industries, and occupations that have been hardest hit by deindustrialization.

Several researchers have argued that deindustrialization is about much more than economic restructuring or lost wages, instead, deindustrialization alters and eliminates a way of life created and linked to industrial manufacturing.⁶¹ Industry helped to create an identity for cities and towns stretching from the East Coast to the West Coast, while the onset of deindustrialization has had and continues to have lasting and negative impacts on industrial cities and their residents. Large-scale deindustrialization occurred during the 1970s when millions of highly paid blue-collar jobs in manufacturing were lost. While most researchers hold steadfast to the theory that deindustrialization occurred post-1960, others argue that the effect of industrial and economic change were happening in the 1950s and could be witnessed if policymakers and

⁵⁸ Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (New York: Basic Books, 1982); Albert Chevan and Randal Stokes, “Growth in Family Income Inequality, 1970-1990 Industrial Restructuring and Demographic Change,” *Demography* 37, no. 3 (August 2000): 366.

⁵⁹ Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, eds., “Introduction,” in *Beyond Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 14.

⁶⁰ Gregory D. Squires, *Capital and Communities in Black and White: The Intersections of Race, Class, and Uneven Development* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 17.

⁶¹ Cowie and Heathcott, *Beyond Ruins*, 2003; Steven High and David W. Lewis, *Corporate Wasteland: The Landscape and Memory of Deindustrialization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

politicians chose to view the problems of poverty as a result of the changing nature of economic practices.⁶² The problems were often glossed over, overlooked, or simply attributed to some internal consequence of either the group of people unemployed or disadvantaged or the area itself. Studies of deindustrialization show that it did not happen overnight but instead is a drawn out process occurring over multiple decades in several areas as can be seen in the downsizing and plant closing occurring in the textile industry in the Northeast.⁶³

Following the affluence of the 1960s, the economy of the United States shifted away from basic manufacturing and production industries towards services, information systems, and high-tech production. Still enjoying the economic boom of the 1960s, the United States was unprepared for the economic decline of the 1970s. The nation's first sign of economic woes came with the episodic economic crises in the Northeast and Midwest regions of the country. These crises soon to be characterized as deindustrialization were the "systematic disinvestments in the nation's basic productive capacity."⁶⁴ The northeastern and midwestern regions of the country would see a dramatic change in their local economic output, a change that would depress the areas in terms of family income, social services the cities would be able to provide and the quality of education provided to its students.

This quite seemingly abrupt and massive job loss negatively impacted the industrial cities of the Midwest, transforming them from sites of production and prosperity into urban decay in what became known as the "Rust Belt." The term rust belt entered the American vocabulary

⁶² Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962); Judith Stein, *Running Steel, Running America: Race, Economic Policy, and the Decline of Liberalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁶³ Tami J. Friedman, "A Trail of Ghost Towns Across Our Land: The Decline in Manufacturing in Yonkers, New York," in *Beyond Ruins: The Meanings of Deindustrialization*, eds. Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 19-42.

⁶⁴ Margaret L. Andersen, "Restructuring for Whom? Race, Class, Gender, and the Ideology of Invisibility," *Sociological Forum* 16, no. 2 (June 2001): 183.

during the second half of the twentieth century to describe the regions of the Northeast and Midwest experiencing a tremendous decline in their manufacturing industries.⁶⁵ These areas led the country in production and manufacturing of steel, iron, ore, machinery, and automobiles. While the economic crisis of the manufacturing industry did not always define Midwestern cities, by the late 1960s, their images were consumed by the publicity of riots, declining economic bases as industry and affluent populations left the city, as well as increased segregation in housing and schools. From the Midwest, the problems of the late 1960s continued to grow through the 1970s well into the 1980s, as plants closed at an even faster pace, cities faced near bankruptcy, and unemployment increased to substantial levels.⁶⁶

While, African Americans were among the last group of individuals to benefit from the increase in manufacturing jobs usually by being offered the dirtiest and most dangerous jobs, they were the first to experience the devastating effects of deindustrialization. The closing of manufacturing plants in central cities and/or the subsequent move of plants to the outer-laying suburbs resulted in what some researchers call the spatial mismatch theory, a distance or mismatch between African Americans and their ability to follow the relatively higher paying manufacturing jobs out of the city.⁶⁷ Deindustrialization exacerbated the impact of spatial mismatch or the geographical separation of African Americans from vital social and economic resources leading to higher numbers of the unemployed and the underemployed in residentially

⁶⁵ Jon C. Teaford, *Cities of the Heartland: The Rise and Fall of the Industrial Midwest* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ John F. Kain, "Housing Segregation, Negro Employment, and Metropolitan Decentralization," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 82, no. 2 (May 1968): 175-197; John Kasarada, "Industrial Restructuring and the Changing Location of Jobs," in *State of the Union: America in the 1990s: Economic Trends*, ed. Reynolds Farley (New York: Russell Sage, 1995); Douglass Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

segregated neighborhoods.⁶⁸ As a result of spatial mismatch theory, black workers are more often marginalized and alienated from much needed jobs, and social services that include, “police, fire protection, schools and parks.”⁶⁹

East St. Louis clearly defined and characterized by its reliance on industry and manufacturing jobs to sustain its economic and social services suffered severely when its economic base collapsed. Between 1950 and 1970, manufacturing employment in East St. Louis decreased by over 5,000 people. A major problem for East St. Louis was its high property assessments compounded by “employers and employees moving from the central city to the suburbs, taking with them their tax monies, their purchasing power, and all the other attributes of the urban middle class.”⁷⁰ The high rate of tax assessment, coupled with a rising municipal tax rate was indicative of a situation where East St. Louis was left with drawing more heavily on deteriorating local tax resources in an effort to provide necessary services. The overburdened services deteriorated resulting in an area less attractive to self-sufficient residents and existing businesses, resulting in the relocation of more residents and businesses. These acts contributed to a never-ending cycle in which the lack of disposable income, the limited variety of retail establishments, and the high rate of abandonment lead to further out migration, commercial closing and severed economic relations. The massive out migration left in its wake joblessness and a dependency that contributes to educational underachievement, crime, poor housing, inadequacy of basic services, and crippling dependence on public welfare.⁷¹

The changes in population and population characteristics highlight the impact with which deindustrialization struck the East St. Louis area. The city’s population, which continuously

⁶⁸ Liam Downey, “Spatial Measurement, Geography, and Urban Racial Inequality,” *Social Forces* 81, no. 3 (March 2003): 937.

⁶⁹ Bluestone and Harrison, *Deindustrialization of America*, 11.

⁷⁰ Jane Altes, *East St. Louis: The End of a Decade* (Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University, 1970) 1.

⁷¹ Donahue and Glickman, “East St. Louis Area,” i.

grew throughout the 20th century reached its peak in 1950 with 82,295 residents. However the population trend reversed and the city has since faced a substantial population decline. By 1977, East St. Louis had suffered a loss of 22,250 people or 27% of the 1950 total population.⁷² The rapid decline in population resulted in a drastically different racial makeup of East St. Louis. Between 1950 and 1970, the white population declined by 50 percent, while the black population increased by 75 percent.

Table 2.2 East St. Louis Population 1940-2000

Year	Total	White	Black	Other Race*
1940	75,609	58,781	16,798	30
1950	82,295	54,725	27,555	15
1960	81,712	45,309	36,338	65
1970	69,996	21,479	48,368	149
1980	55,215	2,229	52,782	189
1990	40,944	644	40,167	209
2000	31,542	387	30,829	556

Source: Census data obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau of 1940-2000. *(Other race includes American Indian and Alaska native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race two or more races and Hispanic and Latino)

According to Donahue and Glickman, much of the population shift has been directly related to the general decline and lack of employment opportunity in East St. Louis, resulting in an outmigration of skilled whites and blacks, usually young men, leaving behind a large proportion of dependent black females and children.⁷³ The massive loss of population since 1960 was the heaviest among the educated, the skilled, well-to-do, and working age males.⁷⁴ Not only was the level of unemployment in the city extremely high but the majority of those employed were in low-paying unskilled and semi-skilled occupations. This situation resulted in a comparatively low level of income even among the employed.⁷⁵ Two-thirds of urban workers were employed in service and blue-collar jobs generally as operators, service workers, and

⁷² Sally S. Ferguson, *East St. Louis: A Changing Population*, (Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, 1981), 6.

⁷³ Donahue and Glickman, "East St. Louis Area," 14-20.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 26.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 43.

laborers, which sadly were lost when industries decided to locate their operations outside of the Midwest and Northeast industrial belts.⁷⁶ East St. Louis, unfortunately suffering from deindustrialization and fleeing industry, was no longer the prosperous, burgeoning industrial city where “everyone who wanted a job, could find a job.”

The last direct vestige of the old political systems that ruled East St. Louis collapsed in 1971 when longtime machine mayor Alvin Fields chose not to run for a sixth four-year term. An independent political newcomer, attorney James Williams, defeated the boss of the black Democratic submachine, Virgil Calvert; Williams had the distinction of being the city’s first black mayor (although the electorate of East St. Louis had been majority-black for nearly a decade). By the time the first black mayor, James Williams, was elected and sworn in to office, economic downfall, political graft and corruption yielded Williams’ a “pyrrhic victory”. Minority mayors who succeed traditionally white leadership have not always been able to institute change because few resources remain for them in the urban environment. After struggling for years to achieve political power in cities, blacks may have succeeded only in capturing what has been called a “hollow prize.” Political scientists Nelson and Meranto summed up what it meant for black mayors to be elected to urban cities.

It is undoubtedly true that in the foreseeable future most black mayors will be elected in dead or dying cities whose accumulated maladies are swiftly moving toward the point of no return. These cities will bear only a modest resemblance to the financially secure governmental structures captured by white ethnics. In sum, black mayors will inherit monumental problems but will lack the basic fiscal resources to adequately cope with these problems.⁷⁷

Mayor Williams inherited a city whose assessed value in 1970 was \$169 million, however by the election of the third black mayor in 1979, the assessed value was only \$38 million.⁷⁸ East St.

⁷⁶ Robert G. Mogull, "American Poverty in the 1960's," *Phylon* 33, no. 2 (1972): 166.

⁷⁷ Nelson and Meranto, *Electing Black Mayors*, 337.

⁷⁸ Theising, *Made in USA*, 28.

Louis had a deficit in 1971 of \$678,384 with public services and general funds affected by the deficit along with fire and police protection and public benefits. The Williams administration processing debt from the previous administration had its credit cut by vendors and had to resort to a cash and carry policy.⁷⁹ By the end of the 1970s, East St. Louis was in a never-ending cycle of economic loss, which unfortunately affected every other social institution in the city. The crime rate was on the rise and East St. Louis was experiencing the highest crime rate in Illinois outside of Cook County. Retailers were also leaving the city. By 1972, East St. Louis had only 54% of the retail establishments it had in 1967, and one-third of those businesses would disappear by 1977. By 1975, East St. Louis was characterized as “a city on the road to destruction.”⁸⁰

During the late 1950s, the 1960s, and the early 1970s, as deindustrialization and housing covenants contributed to a massive exodus of white citizens to suburban communities, school desegregation efforts and with it greater push for quality education were crippled. The creation of separate cities—one white, the other black—comes in the aftermath of both failed attempts at desegregation and the accompanying financial problems of deindustrialization. Two separate cities can be seen in the educational opportunities for two separate groups of students—one white and one black. While the problems of predominantly minority schools cannot be attributed to one source, deindustrialization and with it the loss of a key economic base have surely played

⁷⁹ Mayor James E. Williams, Sr., to City Council, 1972, Mayor James E. Williams, Sr., Collection, 56/14, Southern Illinois University Lovejoy Library, Edwardsville (hereafter cited as Williams Papers). Williams expressed a bleak picture for East St. Louis. Continuing to describe the economic conditions in the city, he stated that East St. Louis did not have the capacity to absorb additional indebtedness as the City was well below the statutory limits. The city’s credit rating as computed by the nation’s bonding companies is bad. This is spite of its back record in meeting its bonding obligations. Unless the national picture changes, and this unlikely, the city will be unable to compete in the money market. Most of the outstanding debts for these years will be disposed through judgment funding bonds and will be part of the total indebtedness commitment of the City. Operating with reduced funds to meet the current obligations, the City Council has very little flexibility, if any—cash flow, on the day-to-day basis, determined what obligations could and could not be met.

⁸⁰ Arthur J. Thomason, “A City on a Road to Destruction,” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, April 5/6, 1975.

a role. As spatial mismatch theory posits, students of color, especially African American students in deindustrialized areas are more likely to live in high poverty areas away from adequate educational facilities.⁸¹ Deindustrialization led to massive social deprivation, which in the case of minorities in industrial cities was exacerbated by racial discrimination.

In the 1960s East St. Louis not only had to contend with growing economic loss but was also forced to finally address its historical pattern of racial discrimination and segregation. Blacks in East St. Louis historically were poorly housed and suffered from poor housing conditions, a trend that unfortunately was never actually reversed in East St. Louis. This pattern of racial discrimination was a major cause of the friction and racial disturbances plaguing the city. As wealthier families moved to the suburbs along with industry, inner city schools saw a decrease in funding, serving to exacerbate the inequality in separate school systems. East St. Louis School District 189 was plagued with financial difficulties including a yearly decline in its tax base. Also in East St. Louis, blacks were still being denied access to equal education, particularly education that would prepare them for changing economic positions, according to correspondence from the East St. Louis NAACP chapter in 1964.⁸² Deindustrialization contributed to a growing separation in socioeconomic status, aiding in the rise in the number of individuals of the lower socioeconomic class of inner city schools.

Despite being dominated by industry and transportation, East St. Louis experienced a depressed economy and high levels of poverty throughout its existence with a long history of unstable revenue sources, fiscal mismanagement, and financial crisis. The 1960s signified an irreversible trend in the economic conditions in East St. Louis. While the United States began a slow descent from its Golden Era of prosperity that categorized the 1950s and first half of the

⁸¹ Paul A. Jargowsky, *Poverty and Place: Ghettos, Barrios, and the American City* (New York: Russell Sage, 1997); Kasarda, "Industrial Restructuring," 1995; Massey and Denton, *American Apartheid*, 1993.

⁸² Barry J. Henderson to Mayor Alvin Fields, letter, August 4, 1964, Fields Papers.

1960s, East St. Louis was dealing with an industrial descent that started after the Great Depression. Increasing economic competition from foreign trading partners and the U.S. political response to these developments led to deindustrialization and disinvestment of cities. This process destroyed the job base for many communities, reduced revenues needed to support education and other essential public services, and increased the chasm between predominantly white suburbs and increasingly black inner cities. The deterioration of urban communities of course made them less attractive to private investment, thus expediting their decline.⁸³

This pattern of uneven development contributed to the economic patterns and development of East St. Louis. According to Squires, the predominant trajectories of uneven development remain restructuring and globalization of the national economy, the spatial development of metropolitan areas, and the growing inequality of income and wealth among local citizens.⁸⁴ East St. Louis's primary focus on industry and economic development relegated education and educational services and needs to a secondary position. Education in East St. Louis heavily focused on vocational and industrial needs especially for African Americans prepared individuals for work and not necessarily continuation into higher educational institutions. This is not to say that individuals from East St. Louis did not continue on to colleges and universities but it is to say that the city, its political and economic conditions did not provide an opening for a discussion of the city establishing or creating four-year colleges and universities. The problems of East St. Louis continued to be state problems and the solution to many cities' problems were addressed in educational institutions. The state of Illinois sought to solve the problems of its cities through advancement and development of its educational institutions, particularly the community college system. The next chapter highlights the

⁸³ Squires, *Capital and Communities*, 4.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 13.

development of the community college system both nationally and in Illinois to examine the ways in which the two-year educational system was developed to meet the educational and economic needs of both individuals and the state and provide an additional force with which to fight growing societal problems.

CHAPTER THREE

COMMUNITY COLLEGES COME TO LIFE: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION, 1850-1970

In 2009, Illinois held the distinction of having the third largest community college system in the United States, a distinction far removed from the state's position in 1901 when the first junior college in Illinois was established but a distinction clearly aligned with the state's 1965 goal of developing a statewide community college system. In 1965, the Illinois General Assembly implemented and adopted several measures from the recommendations of the "Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois," which provided motivation, enthusiasm, and direction to guide statewide higher education. The overall objective of the Master Plan was to expand educational opportunity in Illinois to serve rapidly growing enrollments and to do so in an efficient and economical fashion. It sought to achieve its objective through the preservation of diversity, promotion of flexibility and adaptability, and prudent financial determination of priorities.¹ It was in this era of growing commitment to higher education development and expansion of access to higher education that State Community College (SCC) of East St. Louis would be conceived and ultimately established as a fully state-supported institution.

State Community College was established during an era when junior colleges were being developed into community colleges, federal and state governments were beginning to recognize and acknowledge the value and importance of the community college in educating the masses,

¹ Illinois State Board of Higher Education, *A Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois and the Illinois Public Junior College Act: Phase II*, by Lyman Glenn (Springfield: Illinois State Board of Higher Education, 1966), 3.

and junior colleges were disconnecting themselves from secondary education and firmly planting their foundations in the system of higher education. The establishment of SCC evolves from the historical development of community college systems both nationally and statewide. The development of community college systems nationwide led to a community college system that currently allows community colleges to offer lower fees and open access policies to broaden access to post-secondary education for students facing such barriers as poor academic performance in high school, limited English-language skills, other basic skill deficiencies, and/or financial hardship.² Community colleges currently occupy a complimentary role in higher education allowing researchers to argue that the invention of the two-year community college is the greatest innovation of twentieth century American higher education because its very nature lacks the arrogance and exclusion of “traditional” four-year institutions.³ As such, the emergence of the community college fundamentally altered the shape of American higher education, for it introduced a new tier of institutions into the existing hierarchy of American higher education.

Community college development has a history that aligned the two-year institution with secondary education while it also pushed for recognition as a postsecondary institution. The development and history of the two-year institution is one wrought with struggle and perseverance as it sought to carve out a position in an educational system based on structure, hierarchy, and purpose. The phenomena that enhanced the development of four-year institutions such as the demands for post-secondary education for greater and increasingly diverse groups of

² American Association of Community Colleges, “CC Stats: Community College Fast Facts,” American Association of Community Colleges (January 2008), <http://www2.aacc.nche.edu/research/index.htm> (accessed May 26, 2009); W. Norton Grubb, *Honored But Invisible* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

³ Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Harold B. Gores, “The Crucial Years are Now,” in *Planning Community Junior College Facilities: A Look Into the Twenty-First Century* eds. Floyd G. Parker and Max S. Smith (Lansing: Michigan State University Board of Trustees, 1968), 1-7.

people, and broadened institutional purposes in general spawned what is frequently called a junior college “movement.” The junior college and later community college movement spans across several periods of time and societal changes in which the two-year institution expanded in both numbers and size, purpose and mission, and its position within the hierarchy of American education. The historical development of junior colleges in this narrative is fashioned after research that considers junior college development as a manifestation and product of cultural changes and societal influences. This framework allows the development of junior colleges to be studied as a means of examining the social, political, and economic relationships that existed between colleges and their communities and how these relationships and an understanding of these relationships lead local, civic, and professional leaders to push for the establishment of junior colleges.⁴

This chapter outlines the history and development of a nationwide community college system paying specific attention to the development of the Illinois community college system and how the push for postsecondary education for the residents of Illinois led to the development of State Community College. An understanding of the historical development of community colleges provides the foundation needed to examine how an institution such as State Community College came to fruition. It also lays out the historical development of the American two-year institution from its secondary connections into an institution with an integral role in providing education for the masses. A look at this history will situate the development of State Community

⁴ In operating from a framework that places at the forefront the social, political, and economic relationships of two-year institutions and their communities, this dissertation moves away from researchers that have traditionally studied junior college development as a result of “great men”, such as William Rainey Harper, David Starr Jordan, Alexis Lange, and Henry Tappan. Instead, this dissertation is fashioned after research that instead examines the social, political, and economic relationships in play that influenced the development and continued operation of two-year institutions. For further information on “great men” theories and the debates surrounding the study of community college development see: Robert Pedersen, “The Origin and Development of the Early Public Junior College: 1900-1940” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2000); James L. Ratcliff, ““First” Public Junior Colleges in an Age of Reform,” *The Journal of Higher Education* 58, no. 2 (1987): 151-180.

College within the development of Illinois community colleges and the ideas and circumstances surrounding Illinois community college development. This foundation also provides the means to understand the circumstances and ideas that lead to the establishment of State Community College as a state supported institution. This history subsequently provides us with the opportunity to trace the evolution of the state's commitment to providing educational opportunities to the general public through the growth of two-year institutions.

Community college development in Illinois parallels the patterns of development of the larger American community college system.⁵ Illinois junior colleges developed through four periods of expansion. From 1901 until 1935, public junior colleges in Illinois were confined to two-year high school extension programs. In 1931, Illinois passed its first public junior college legislation, which while only providing for the legitimate operation of junior colleges in the city of Chicago led to the development of other junior colleges throughout the Chicago suburban area and a few in other Illinois communities. From 1935 until the 1960s, Illinois communities operated junior colleges as separate institutions of the local secondary schools fueled by both Illinois legislation in 1937, and the impact of World War II and the implementation of the GI Bill. In response to the influx and demands of returning veterans on the four-year institutions in the state, Illinois opened several junior colleges in local high school districts, thus prompting the development of junior colleges in close connection with secondary schooling throughout various

⁵ Researchers argue that present day community colleges are the result of four eras overlapping development, each era concentrating on a specific function and purpose of the two-year institutions. Most notable are Pedersen, "Origin and Development," 2000. Pedersen characterizes the growth into four different periods; from 1835 to 1900, which he characterizes as a time of diversity and unstructured growth. 1901 to 1920 is the initial period of public two-year college development; 1921 to 1947 highlights the expanding occupational programs; and 1948 to 1975 is the growth of the comprehensive community college. While William L. Deegan and Dale Tillery, eds., "The Evolution of Two-Year Colleges Through Four Generations," in *Renewing the American Community College: Priorities and Strategies for Effective Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985) outline the four growth periods or as they prefer generations, as: the high school extension, 1900-1930; junior colleges, 1930-1950; community colleges, 1950-1970; and comprehensive community colleges, 1970-mid 1980s. I suggest that Illinois' more or less followed the same line of development as Deegan and Tillery's projection in that the focus and prominence of the institution expanded throughout its development thus creating very different two-year institutions.

areas of the state until 1965. For Illinois, the years between 1960 and 1980, the third developmental period, represent the greatest development of two-year institutions in the state. In 1965, Illinois state legislators signed into effect the Illinois Public Junior College Act introducing an educational master plan for a statewide, comprehensive community college system. Illinois' fourth stage of community college development spans from 1990 until the present, in which Illinois legislation ensured that every county and thus every resident in the state was within a community college district expanding higher education to every sector the state of Illinois.⁶ It is out of this 100 plus year history that Illinois is now home to the third largest community college system in the United States.

High School Extension Programs (1850-1930)

The historical narrative surrounding community colleges suggests they held an ambiguous status in the American educational system. Community college development derives from a history that has tied it to the development of secondary education with distant ties to the system of higher education. This ambiguous status was solidified in the fact that during the early development of public community colleges they were usually legally incorporated as an institution of secondary education and were part of a unified school district that also operated one or more elementary schools and high schools.⁷ Early public junior colleges were structured in such a way that they were appendages of local high schools and local boards of education. This history is reflected no where greater than in the history of Illinois's junior and community college development where junior colleges were a fixture of the secondary system until 1965,

⁶ Phil Krebs, Stephen G. Katsinas, and J. Lee Johnson, "Illinois Community Colleges: Their History and System," *Community College Journal of Research & Practice* 23, no. 1 (January/February 1999): 19-20.

⁷ Burton R. Clark, *The Open Door College: A Case Study* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), viii.

when the state established a statewide comprehensive public junior college system through the implementation of the Illinois Public Junior College Act.

The rise of early junior colleges has been attributed to influences coming from within the university, within the normal school, the demand for an extended high school, as well as the problem of the small college. These influences are also credited in some ways to the diversity in the types of two-year institutions that existed and continue to exist, like the “lower division” of the junior college within the university most notably evidenced in the late 19th century by William Rainey Harper in the reorganization of the University of Chicago into junior and senior colleges.⁸ It was at the University of Chicago that the foundation for the two-year college was introduced and implemented when President Harper redefined the meaning of the first two years of college course work by establishing a degree for the first two years of college. He not only legitimized the work but also credentialed the completion of those two years offering a solution for individuals not wanting or able to continue on for further studies. Additional types of early junior colleges included the normal school accredited for two years of college work, the public junior college, the private junior college, and in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, two-year high school extension programs or high school junior colleges.⁹

High School Junior Colleges

Two-year high school extension programs dating back to the middle 1800s came several decades before what is traditionally acknowledged as the beginning of a junior college movement. Several high schools were implementing college-level courses in the 13th and 14th

⁸ Allen A. Witt et al., *America's Community Colleges: The First Century* (Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges, 1994), 14. In 1892, Harper secured approval from the University of Chicago Board of Trustees to create a lower division to be called the academic college. In 1896, the academic college was renamed the junior college and in 1899 Harper created the associate degree for graduates of the junior college. In 1931, the university dropped the label junior and since then the lower division has had the title college.

⁹ Floyd M. McDowell, *The Junior College* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), 16.

years of high schools as early as 1850, when private academies and American high schools—themselves relative newcomers to the educational landscape—proved eager to test their limits by adding college-level courses, while others appended commercial schools or vocational institutes to the narrow, college-preparatory curriculum that enrolled the vast majority of their students. Robert Pedersen argues that the early beginnings of junior colleges are not solely rooted in the ideas of leading educators such as William Rainey Harper and David Starr Jordan; they are instead more the brainchild of larger public high schools undertaking curricular experimentation in the late 1800s and early 1900s by adding college level courses. It is argued that these men may have suggested “junior colleges” in their states and their schools, but they are not solely responsible for the nationwide development of two-year institutions. Pedersen continues that two-year colleges actually started out as private finishing schools and expanded public high schools offering elementary, secondary, and collegiate courses in varying amounts. The best documented of these early institutions are Lasell Female Seminary established in 1851 and New Ebenezer College established in 1884.¹⁰ Although these are the most noted institutions, several other high schools throughout the country were also offering courses of the collegiate-grade during this period.¹¹ As comprehensive academies they served all curricular functions, including

¹⁰ Lasell Female Seminary opened in 1851 as Auburndale Female Seminary in the Newton, Massachusetts’ village of Auburndale with a curriculum similar to most academies of the 19th century, preparatory high school programs with collegiate offerings. To honor the untimely death of the founder one month after the institution opened, Edward Lasell, the school was renamed Lasell Female Seminary. Lasell Female Seminary officially became Lasell Junior College in 1932 and began offering associate’s degrees in 1943. The school currently exists as Lasell College offering four-year degree programs. New Ebenezer College established in 1884 in Cochran, GA by the New Ebenezer Baptist Association began instruction in January 1887. The institution enrolled approximately 100 students into a curriculum divided into preparatory and collegiate departments. A stated purpose of the 1887 curriculum was “to prepare pupils for business or for the Junior Class in Universities.” The “college” continued until 1898 when support for the school was discontinued. For more information see, Lasell College, “Lasell...Rich Past, Bright Future,” Lasell College <http://www.lasell.edu/about/history.asp> (accessed October 27, 2009); Alison F. Sheffield, “Middle Georgia College,” *The New Georgia Encyclopedia* <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1443> (accessed October 27, 2009).

¹¹ Witt et al., *America’s*, 11-12; Ralph R. Fields, “A Case Study of Major Educational Changes in a Two-Year College: The Democratization of Baltimore Junior College,” (PhD diss., Teacher’s College-Columbia University, 1971). Fields offers that Baltimore’s leading academic high school included collegiate-grade courses as

offering transfer programs, terminal diploma programs, and vocational-technical programs with such offerings as bookkeeping, surveying, and navigation.¹²

The curriculum of early junior colleges focused primarily on providing the first two years of instruction comparable to four-year institutions termed the collegiate or transfer curriculum. Preparing students to transfer became and still remains a central characteristic of community colleges. The transfer function is key to the community college's place in higher education because it affirms the community college's claim to a collegiate, academic identity. Moreover, transfer has been shown to be a major component of community college students' educational aspirations.¹³ Academic transfer preparation sought to fulfill several institutional purposes—popularizing, democratizing higher education, conducting lower-division courses for the universities, as well as preparing students for collegiate-level studies.¹⁴

One major criticism launched against the early two-year institutions and that continues to plague present day community colleges is that they have continually been charged with stratifying students into less able institutions so that four-year colleges and universities did not have to deal with the added pressure of educating students who were not academically prepared. For some scholars, the “junior college” and “senior college” approach had little to do with democratizing higher education and more to do with diverting students away from the university into an upward extension of the high school allowing the university to pursue its task of research

early as 1870; Tyrus Hillway, *The American Two-Year College* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1958). Hillway traces the early junior college back to several Black colleges that were two-year units prior to 1896. There are other junior colleges that predate the 1900s whose backgrounds are not completely clear. They include Monticello Seminary, Illinois founded in 1835; YMCA College, Illinois, 1885; Sinclair Community College, Ohio, 1887; and American International College, Massachusetts, 1894. Most were small and their two-year programs were short lived.

¹² Pedersen, “The Origin and Development,” 2000.

¹³ W. Norton Grubb, “The Decline of Community College Transfer Rates: Evidence from national Longitudinal Surveys,” *Journal of Higher Education* 62, no. 2 (March-April, 1991); Gary Hoachlander, Anna C. Sikora, and Laura Horn, “Community College Students: Goals, Academic Preparation, and Outcomes,” *Education Statistics Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (2003), http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/2004608_3.pdf (accessed August 4, 2008).

¹⁴ Arthur Cohen and Florence B. Brawer, *The American Community College* 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003).

and advanced professional training, in turn instituting a pecking order into American higher education, with junior colleges playing the role of university gatekeeper.¹⁵

Community colleges in Illinois have their historical roots in two-year public high school extension programs and private two-year institutions. Illinois's system of public education both secondary and postsecondary is a by-product of the free public school law of 1855, the first official law passed in reference to establishing a statewide system of public schools, although, there had been previous measures that were earlier defeated.¹⁶ The residents of Illinois were not supportive of public education during the initial founding of the state as was evidenced in the exclusion of any reference to public education in the 1818 Constitution establishing the state; however, in 1825 Illinois passed its first school law for the formation of a system of public schools. The 1825, Free School Law, later repealed in 1827, established that education was a function of the government. The bill supported the ideology that it was the duty of the state of Illinois to provide a tax-supported system of public education, which would function as an instrument of the state.¹⁷ However, it took 30 years before Illinois residents and legislators actually saw the need and benefit to the state of a tax-supported common education system. The Free School Law of 1855 proposed a system of education supported by public funds favorable to the common man of the state. Proponents of the school law promoted the ideology that "Public schools were instruments for social betterment and agencies for ending crime and social corruption."¹⁸ Promotion of this ideology aided in the passing of the 1855 school law and

¹⁵ Brint and Karabel, *The Diverted Dream*, 25.

¹⁶ John Williston Cook, *Educational History of Illinois: Growth and Progress of Educational Affairs of the State from the Earliest Day to the Present* (Chicago: Henry O. Shepard Company, 1912).

¹⁷ Ralph Lewanda Wickiser, "The Development of a Public Education Policy in Illinois, 1818-1868," (PhD dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1938), 6-8.

¹⁸ John Pulliam, "Changing Attitudes Toward Free Public Schools in Illinois 1825-1860," *History of Education Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1967): 206.

provided the founding ideology on which Illinois would build its subsequent educational institutions.

The 1855 school law provided for the legal establishment of free elementary schools and also provided a basis for the establishment of public high schools; nonetheless, in 1857 a law was passed specifically for the establishment of public high schools. The first free public high school was established in 1851 at West Jacksonville. By 1895, high schools were found in most parts of the state. W.G. Walker claims, “Attendance at high school was considered as essential for a republican education as attendance at the elementary school had been forty years earlier.”¹⁹ Among the many factors the law of 1855 addressed was the establishment of normal schools for the training of teachers to aid in the development of common schools in the state. As a result, public higher education in Illinois received its start with the founding of Illinois State Normal College in 1857. The bill establishing Illinois State Normal College also established the Board of Education of the State of Illinois as its governing body. This was the beginning of a public system of education, both secondary and post-secondary in Illinois that would continuously change and develop as the state grew and public education received a more prominent and heightened position in legislative matters.

Early two-year junior college programs in Illinois were collectively housed in high schools and governed by local K-12 school boards as well as in several private two-year colleges. Public junior colleges began in Illinois as the 13th and 14th years of local high schools. The purpose of the additional years of high school was to provide an opportunity through early introduction of college-level work, lowered expenses, and smaller classes for those students wanting to continue on to a four-year college or university. Although the transfer curriculum

¹⁹ W. G. Walker, "The Development of the Free Public High School in Illinois During the Nineteenth Century," *History of Education Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (December 1964): 273-277.

was the dominant focus of junior-college high schools, the programs also offered additional benefits to both the community and students not interested in continuing their education beyond the fifth and sixth year. These benefits included “the opportunity to gain a two-year degree upon completion of the program, being able to attend school in close proximity to one’s home, and the location of the institution which tended to raise the cultural tone of the community.”²⁰

Junior college education in the form of the junior-college high school made its debut in Illinois in the Joliet Township High School during the 1901-1902 school year.²¹ The expansion of the fifth and sixth years of Joliet Township High School came under the leadership of J. Stanley Brown, superintendent of the Joliet Township District, as he sought and was encouraged to expound upon the program that allowed graduates of Joliet Township High School to receive college credit for certain postgraduate courses. According to W.W. Haggard, educator at Joliet Township High School, as early as 1903 students who had taken certain courses in science and mathematics in the Joliet Township High School were granted advanced credit by such institutions as the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois, the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Pennsylvania.²² The early junior-college high schools often had articulation agreements with universities where

²⁰ C.C. Alexander and G.W. Willett, “Some Aspects of a Junior College,” *The School Review* 28, no. 1 (January 1920): 17.

²¹ American Association of Community Colleges, “Community Colleges Past to Present,” American Association of Community Colleges, <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/history/Pages/pasttopresent.aspx> (accessed September 3, 2009). While Joliet is the oldest existing public two-year institution, there are claims by other communities to being home to the “first” public two-year programs, for example the town of Greeley, Colorado and Saginaw, Michigan claim to have operated institutions in the 1880s and 1895 respectively. These claims however, have been surrounded by much debate that alluded to historical misrepresentation and a lack of corroborating material. For further information on the debate see Michael Brick, *Form and Focus for the Junior College Movement* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964); Charles R. Monroe, *Profile of the Community College: A Handbook* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972); Franklin Parker and Anne Bailey, *The Junior and Community College: A Bibliography of Doctoral Dissertation, 1918-1963* (Washington, DC: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1965); Pedersen, “Origin and Development,” 2000; Ratcliff, ““First” Public Junior Colleges,” 1987.

²¹ Robert Palinchak, *The Evolution of the Community College* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1973), 27.

²² W.W. Haggard, “An Early Upward Extension of Secondary Education,” *The School Review* 38, no. 6 (June 1930): 431.

upon completion of the program, certified students were able to enter the third year of college work. Joliet's program continued to grow and in 1914, the school building expanded to add the junior college extension ward. In 1916, the two-year high school program, indicative of later public junior college development was formally named Joliet Junior College, and a year later, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools accredited the work at Joliet Junior College and the State Examining Board approved college credit for teacher certification.²³

Additional Illinois communities, most notably in the Chicago area followed Joliet's lead in developing and adding junior college programs to the curriculum of their local high schools. Chicago's development of several junior college high schools began in 1911 when Crane Technical High School and Lane Technical High School offered vocational classes for the 13th and 14th years. This occurred after a call was issued by then Superintendent of Chicago Schools, Ella Flagg Young for area high schools to provide two-year vocational courses for those students not interested in college preparation. In 1914, Senn High School began offering junior college classes, bringing the total number of students being served by all three institutions up to 389 within two years. Following centralization of the school system, Crane became the official junior college for the city in 1916 with a separate facility for junior college classes and by 1929 Crane would be the only public junior college in America to enroll as many as 5,000 students. Unfortunately, Crane would close in 1933 as the only tax-supported, tuition-free junior college in Chicago.²⁴

Private Junior Colleges

Despite the effort by many states to establish or allow for the establishment of two-year public junior college programs, private junior colleges headed the development of the early

²³ Thomas L. Hardin, "A History of the Community Junior College in Illinois: 1901-1972," (PhD dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1975).

²⁴ Ibid., 50-52.

junior college movement in terms of institutions in operation and number of students enrolled during the late 19th and for several decades in the 20th century.²⁵ Between 1914 and 1917 private junior college enrollment increased by 34 percent, from 1,771 students in 1914 to 2,372 students in 1917 across 53 institutions. Private junior colleges were established in much the same way as small liberal arts colleges in the United States, and in some cases were former four-year institutions that scaled back their curriculum offerings to include the first two-years of collegiate instruction. Private junior colleges were established through either individual means as in the case of Lasell Seminary, local means as with Lewis Institute or denominational means as with the establishment of New Ebenezer College. Curriculum offerings of private junior colleges did not differ dramatically from high school junior colleges or public junior colleges. Private junior colleges typically offered a four-year high school or academy course and additionally the first two-years of college work. Where private junior colleges did differ from public junior colleges besides governance and control was the source of financial support each institution received to continue operation. Most public junior colleges during the period of 1900 through 1930, except Illinois received financial support through taxation, state aid, and tuition. Private junior colleges while also supported by tuition also relied on monetary support from church budgets, endowments, and offerings and donations to continue operation.²⁶ This early period of junior college development proved fertile to the private junior college as the number of institutions continued to grow. By 1922, private junior colleges numbered 137 and reached a high of 189 in 1927, but the advent of the public junior college and increased state support through legislation and funding for public two-year institutions contributed to the declining enrollment in private junior colleges. Some of these institutions would eventually close or others like several in

²⁵ Palinchak, *Evolution of the Community College*, 27.

²⁶ McDowell, *The Junior College*, 47.

Illinois, Bradley Polytechnic Institute for example, which would become Bradley University, expanded into four-year private colleges.²⁷

Public Junior Colleges

Public junior colleges are a product of the separation of the junior college curriculum from the curriculum of high school extension programs. The establishment of a firm junior college program, still focused on providing the first two years of instruction comparable to four-year programs for transfer purposes, helped in creating a separate identity from the high school as most junior colleges still utilized high school facilities and often high school teachers. Academic transfer preparation charged the junior college with fulfilling several institutional purposes such as popularizing and democratizing higher education, and conducting lower-division courses for the universities.²⁸ While the development of a clear junior college curriculum and the shaping of a definitive purpose and mission helped to separate the public junior college from the high school extension program, separate facilities actually served to weaken the bond. As most public junior colleges would continue to be legally controlled and financially supported by local and in some cases state school systems, they would continue to be connected to postsecondary education. However, in building separate facilities, junior colleges were able to establish themselves as a separate and distinct educational entity capable of being responsive to the postsecondary educational needs of the community.

Although, Illinois did not financially or legislatively support the development of public junior colleges, several cities continued to develop and establish junior college programs during the 1920s and into the 1930s. Chicago, for example, continued to expand existing high school

²⁷ Hardin, "History," 42. The state of Illinois was home to several private junior colleges before Joliet was established, Bradley, Lewis, Shimer, and North Park that no longer exist either through dissolution or the expansion to a four-year school.

²⁸ Cohen and Brawer, *American Community Colleges*, 2003.

extension programs, while Chicago suburbs—LaGrange, Cicero, Harvey, and downstate communities—LaSalle-Peru-Oslesby established brand new junior colleges in 1924 (Cicero, LaSalle-Peru-Oslesby), 1927 (Harvey), and 1929 (LaGrange). These two-year institutions were opened to save expenses while students received the first two years of a liberal arts and science education and professional school preparation. Some of the institutions like Morton College of Cicero were tuition free and offered teacher training courses in addition to transfer preparation courses.²⁹

Even though public junior colleges were a new institution in the educational hierarchy, they were no different than their four-year counterparts in that they were selective, expensive, and academically rigorous in part because they were providing the first two years of collegiate instruction but also because higher education as a whole was not democratic.³⁰ Studies completed between 1920 and 1930 suggest that neither public high schools nor their closely associated junior colleges were especially democratic in the social composition of their student bodies.³¹ Early junior college student bodies' were comprised of traditional college age, male, white students. George Counts points out that the public junior colleges of this period were not only more exclusive than high schools generally, but they were nearly as selective as state universities. According to Leonard Koos, the public junior college students of the 1920s differed little in their class origins than their counterparts in elite four-year institutions. Koos early criticized junior colleges for failing to modify their admission standards, curriculum, and climate to encourage the enrollment of the less affluent and the academically weak.³² James Ratcliff also

²⁹ Hardin, "History," 75-76.

³⁰ Pedersen, "Origin and Development," 2000.

³¹ See George S. Counts, *The Selective Character of American Secondary Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922); Leonard V. Koos, *The Junior College* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1924); Carl E. Seashore, *Problems in Education* (Cleveland, OH: Western Reserve University Press, 1927).

³² Koos, *The Junior College*, 104.

argued that the historical record provides evidence that public junior colleges adopted very few policies that would have made their institutions more open and accessible to “new” students. Ratcliff further states, “It seems to have been the case that more than a few junior colleges actually raised the bar. In the case of admission prerequisites, for example, junior colleges universally imposed standards as strict or even stricter than those of the most prestigious Eastern colleges.”³³ It seems that because the junior colleges of this era so heavily prescribed to the transfer function and had to answer to accreditation standards from universities, it was logical that their academic and admission standards would model four-year colleges and universities. Still, many colleges freely adopted entrance requirements even more stringent than the minimum required by their accrediting association or university accreditors. The first wave of junior colleges emulated four-year institutions in academic standards and admission standards and even modeled themselves as “smaller” albeit just as prestigious versions of four-year institutions.

From 1890 to 1920, the two-year institution was slowly developing and there remained in 1920 many questions about its identity. This early era of two-year institutions were characterized by a variety of two-year programs often grouped into four categories: (a) the “junior college” or “lower division” of the college of liberal arts of the university. This type of organization was found in the Universities of Chicago, California, and Washington. (b) Normal schools accredited for two years of college work. These institutions were officially recognized in Arizona, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. (c) The public high school extended to include the first two years of college work and (d) finally, the small private college, which limited its work to two years.³⁴

³³ James L. Ratcliff, *Community Colleges* (Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 13.

³⁴ Floyd M. McDowell, “A National Study of Junior Colleges,” in *Growth of an American Invention: A Documentary History of the Junior and Community College Movement*, ed. Thomas Diener (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 77-78.

This period also saw an increase in the number of both public and private junior colleges. In 1909, there were a reported 20 junior colleges but by 1920, a total of eight thousand students were enrolled in fifty-two junior colleges across twenty-three states. By 1922, thirty-seven of the forty-eight states contained junior colleges, educating some sixteen thousand students in 207 junior colleges, of which seventy were public institutions leaving 137 institutions controlled by private entities. By 1930, there were at least 171 public junior colleges in the country with an enrollment of over 40,000 students.³⁵ The continued increase in the number of institutions and the number of enrolled students while firmly establishing two-year institutions as a viable sector of the educational system, that in no way resembled the comprehensive, open door community colleges that would follow later or even the seemingly more practical junior colleges of the next generation.

Junior Colleges (1930-1960)

As higher education began to have a more visible and prominent role in the development of American society post-World War I, junior college visibility was also increased while its purpose to and in society was altered. Between 1915 and 1940, higher education experienced unprecedented change and growth. According to David Levine, the interwar period is the first time America's youth began to look to colleges for their role in economic and social mobility. Levine states, "This was a time of skyrocketing enrollments and admissions quotas, of new practical courses of study and selective honors programs, of federal financial assistance and social snobbery, of trend-setting fraternity life, and sophisticated scientific research."³⁶ The

³⁵ Cohen and Brawer, *American Community College*, 13; Raymond Walters, "Statistics of Registration in American Universities and Colleges, 1940," *School and Society* 52 (December 1934): 618.

³⁶ David O. Levine, *The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 1915-1940* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 14.

period between World War I and World War II saw an increase in enrollment in colleges and universities from 250,000 to 1.3 million.³⁷ After World War I, educators in colleges and universities were no longer content to educate; they now set out to train, accredit, and impart social status. As students after World War I began to show more interest in vocational education courses, the curriculum became inextricably tied to the nation's economic structure and junior colleges stepped in to institute vocational and technical education as a mission. As the post-World War I period gave rise to increased numbers of students and an array of specialized academic foci, it also gave rise to "special focus" institutions like two-year and four-year technical institutes, women's colleges, teacher's colleges, Catholic colleges, regional state colleges, and expanded junior colleges.³⁸

There were 85 junior colleges with 4,500 students in the country in 1918; however, by 1940, there were 456 junior colleges with a total enrollment of 149,854. In 1918, only 1.9 percent of all undergraduates in the nation attended junior colleges but by 1938, 17.6 percent of the nation's students were enrolled in two- year institutions.³⁹ The second wave of development of junior colleges ranging from the 1930s through the late 1950s saw a marked influence in the reshaping of the mission, curriculum, and image of two-year institutions. By 1920, the junior college movement had gained sufficient stature to encourage a national meeting and launch a national support organization, the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC). Along with the 1930s and 1940s came increasing numbers and variations of the junior college. Two-year colleges during this time added four functions to its purpose, which included popularization, preparatory education, terminal education, and guidance. These four functions highlighted the

³⁷ John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 205.

³⁸ Levine, *American College*, 162.

³⁹ Ibid.

belief that two-year institutions should offer more than courses needed for transfer and should expand their offerings to include education that applied to a larger and growing audience.⁴⁰ National junior college spokesmen worked to reshape the institution into the “people’s” college by offering a more practical program, which highlighted the importance of student services as well as the institution becoming increasingly responsible for various high school vocation courses and programs.⁴¹ The thirty-year period of junior college development from 1930 to 1960 was also one of legislative growth and legitimacy, particularly in the state of Illinois, as state government caught up legislatively with the educational developments of local communities.

Junior Colleges

Legislation and mission development dominated the focus of junior colleges during the second generation of junior college development. For instance, between 1930 and 1960 junior colleges working to carve out an additional academic niche for themselves were helped along by the increased importance of vocational education to the nation and its residents. A few two-year institutions especially those associated with high schools were primarily or exclusively technical institutes, while the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 and later the Great Depression facilitated the emergence of vocational-technical education as a top priority in other two-year institutions.⁴² Vocational education designed to teach skills more complicated than those taught in high schools was also marketed as “semiprofessional training,” providing junior colleges with a distinct niche in preparing students for mid-level “semiprofessional” occupations. Students who pursued

⁴⁰ Debra Bragg, “Community College Access, Mission, and Outcomes: Considering Intriguing Intersections and Challenges,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 76, no. 1 (2001): 98.

⁴¹ Deegan and Tillery, eds., “The Evolution,” 1985.

⁴² James L. Ratcliff, “Seven Steams in the Historical Development of the Modern American Community College,” in *A Handbook on the Community College in America: Its History, Mission, and Management*, ed. George A. Baker III (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 11. Gerald C. Hayward and Charles S. Benson, *Vocational-Technical Education: Major Reforms and Debates, 1917-Present* (Washington, DC: Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 1993), 6. The purpose of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 was to provide federal financial aid for vocational-technical education in public secondary schools.

vocational credits were assumed to be seeking direct entry into semiprofessional occupations. As a push toward semiprofessional fields, vocational education programs in two-year institutions were designed to teach skills more complicated than those taught in high schools. Community college scholars, Arthur Cohen and Florence Brawer, state, “Whereas secondary schools in the 1930s were teaching agriculture, bookkeeping, automobile repair, and printing, junior colleges taught radio repair, secretarial services, and laboratory technical work.”⁴³ Following this major curriculum addition, the mission of two-year institutions shifted from only offering two years of acceptable university work to a growing offering of occupational programs of “junior college grade.”⁴⁴

World War II also proved to be a boost for junior colleges to provide a vocational aspect of terminal education, especially as new students focused on gaining vocational experience and with AAJC’s encouragement of junior colleges to make the necessary adjustments in their curricula.⁴⁵ In this regard, two-year colleges saw a necessity in providing students with skills to become productive workers and with providing employers with skilled workers. After World War II, junior college programs began to reflect an involvement with public need and community service. Programs were especially well suited for veterans and the curricula diversity contributed to the further transition of the junior college into an institution with comprehensive programs and differing purposes. Charles Monroe argues that the great upsurge in the development and expansion of the community college in the period after World War II came largely from the population expansion and the accelerating demands for trained technicians. The shift from unskilled and semiskilled jobs to skilled and technical jobs created a demand for

⁴³ Cohen and Brawer, *American College*, 22.

⁴⁴ Deegan and Tillery, eds., “The Evolution,” 1985.

⁴⁵ L. Steven Zwerling, “Second-Class Education at the Community College,” *New Directions for Community Colleges* 2, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 28.

technically trained workers and community colleges were available to train students to fulfill that demand.⁴⁶

After World War II and implementation of the GI Bill, higher educational institutions were expanded to include an even larger group of individuals. The Golden Age of higher education beginning after World War II with its increased number of students and institutions, increased amount of dollars flowing into the institutions and increased federal support for higher education marked the beginning of federal legislative interest in junior colleges. The *Truman Commission Report on Higher Education* issued during this time is regarded as the beginning of substantial interest by the federal government in the development of two-year institutions. There was a consensus that higher education was the key to a well-developed and prosperous nation and that it should be available in some form to the public with junior colleges playing an important role in achieving this goal. Recommending that the two-year institution emphasize programs of terminal education, community development, and educational opportunity, the Commission's *Report* suggested that the "junior" college should adopt the name "community" college to emphasize their expanded mission. The Commission states:

It does not subscribe to the belief that higher education should be confined to an intellectual elite, much less an elite drawn largely from families in the higher income brackets. Nor does it believe that a broadening of opportunity means a dilution of standards either of admission or scholarly attainment in college works. If the ladder of educational opportunity rises high at the doors of some youth and scarcely rises at all at the doors of others, while at the same time formal education is made a prerequisite to occupational and social advance, then education may become the means not of eliminating race and class distinctions, but of deepening and solidifying them. It is obvious then that free and universal access to education, in terms of interest, ability, and need of the student, must be a major goal in American education.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Monroe, *Profile*, 82.

⁴⁷ U.S. President's Commission on Higher Education, *Higher Education for Democracy* (New York: Harper Bros, 1948), 5, 6, 36.

While the *Truman Commission Report* issued a challenge to the existing junior colleges and several recommendations to Congress, it did not provide or result in legislation or funding aimed at promoting or developing this new two-year institution. Nevertheless, community college proponents were quick to respond to the challenge of the Truman Commission and subsequently massive expansion occurred in states such as California along with the implementation of entirely new systems in states such as New York and legislative developments for junior colleges as evidenced in Illinois.⁴⁸ Finally, the 1950s saw the junior college slowly give way to a community institution controlled by local communities with the interest of the local community at the forefront. The junior college grew with increasing strength and vigor in the educational and social climate of the country.⁴⁹

Illinois Junior Colleges

Junior college development in Illinois in the 1930s through the 1950s mirrored the growth of junior colleges nationwide, particularly legislative growth. Junior college legislation in Illinois begins with feedback from a 1927 inquiry questioning the expenditure of schools funds for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a junior college to which the Attorney General ruled, “A board of education has no authority under the laws of this State to establish or maintain a Junior College.”⁵⁰ Not only did the 1927 ruling state that there was no authority to establish a junior college but in 1931, the Illinois Senate “openly questioned the legality of operating Crane Junior College as a tuition-free institution financed by public funds.” This ruling caused much controversy, as educators in junior college communities were concerned that their schools would be closed. The reaction by area educators and politicians was to embark on

⁴⁸ Martin S. Quigley and Thomas W. Bailey, *Community College Perspective: Teachers College Responds to the Truman Commission* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 5.

⁴⁹ Thomas Diener ed., *Growth of an American Invention: A Documentary History of the Junior and Community College Movement* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 117.

⁵⁰ Hardin, “History,” 55.

political activity, especially in the Northern portion of the state, as they worked to legalize the junior college.⁵¹

In 1931, the Illinois General Assembly provided the Chicago Board of Education with the power to “manage and provide for the maintenance of not more than one junior college consisting of or offering not more than two years of college work beyond the four year courses of accredited high schools, as part of the public school system of the city.”⁵² The legislation officially sanctioned the junior college in Chicago but left the others wondering about their fate. Chicago utilized the authority of the 1931 legislation, most notably in 1934 to reopen the city college, which closed as Crane Junior College in 1933 with three city branches. The sites selected to open in September 1934 were the former Wilbur Wright elementary and junior high school building on the northwest side, the Chicago Normal College building on the South side, and first Medill High School but one year later Herzl Elementary School on the West side. These early public junior colleges marked the beginning of Chicago’s dominance of community college development in the state for a number of years as the junior colleges of Chicago were “cited to be real opportunities for those willing to take the greater part of the responsibility for their own education.”⁵³

Other Illinois junior colleges would for some time question why Chicago was singled out in the 1931 legislation and what was to become of them. Questioning of their status wouldn’t be eased until 1937, when Illinois finally passed its first Junior College Act, which established junior colleges as part of the public school system. This legislation granted power to Illinois boards of education in districts with populations over 25,000 to establish a junior college board

⁵¹ Ibid., 57, 90.

⁵² Ivan Lach, “ICCS History,” Illinois Community College Board, <http://www.iccb.state.il.us/history.html> (accessed October 31, 2009).

⁵³ Hardin, “History,” 66.

by resolution, while further stating that districts with populations between 10,000 and 25,000 could establish junior colleges after seeking advice from the Superintendent of Public Instruction before presenting a resolution to the local voters.⁵⁴ Although, the 1937 legislation was the first victory of a long fight in Illinois for legislative recognition of public junior colleges, this legislation was problematic in that the bill did not address the question of providing postsecondary credit in institutions that would be under the fiscal control of secondary school districts.

According to Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson, “The act merely enabled high schools to offer two years of college coursework beyond high school,” but didn’t answer if that work was of the collegiate level.⁵⁵ Even though the 1937 law didn’t fully answer questions concerning junior college higher educational legitimacy or questions of financial responsibility, one community did see the opportunity and promise of the law and took advantage to legally establish a local junior college. As a result of the 1937 law, Centralia Township High School was legally able to add a junior college to its program by referendum in 1941. The institution would operate as Centralia Junior College until it was later renamed Kaskaskia Community College as it achieved Class I status under the 1965 Public Junior College Act.⁵⁶

The 1937 junior college law was only the beginning as junior college administrators and educators along with junior college supporters continuously pushed for growing recognition and support from state legislators. Their diligence was rewarded several years later when legislators turned their attention to the lack of state appropriations and lack of funding mechanisms for junior college budgets. As junior colleges were appendages of the local K-12 school board, they

⁵⁴ Illinois General Assembly, Laws of Illinois, 60th General Assembly of Illinois, (Springfield: Illinois General Assembly, 1937), 1090-1091.

⁵⁵ Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson, “Illinois Community Colleges,” 22.

⁵⁶ Gerald W Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College Development, 1946-1980* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Community College Board, 1980), 129-130.

received funding from taxes collected for elementary and high schools. However this changed when Illinois legislators passed legislation in 1943 establishing a separate tax rate for junior colleges. Essentially the 1943 “funding” law made it legal for communities to set up a local tax rate so that junior colleges could have funds separate from those earmarked for elementary and high schools. While this law was instrumental in achieving funding legality for junior colleges it did not provide for funding from the state, which would have increased the budgetary opportunities of the two-year institution.

The shortfall of junior college funding was remedied with a bill introduced in 1955 aimed at specifically allowing for state funds for junior colleges based on enrollment. The bill subsequently altered in the following three biennium and the initial law provided school districts with \$100 for each student enrolled in the junior college, by 1959-1961 there was a subsidy tied to full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment at an initial rate of \$7.60 per semester hour.⁵⁷ So the funding formula evolved from one that directly aligned the junior college with the local K-12 school districts into one that mirrored funding formulas for institutions of higher education. The introduction of legislation aimed at the establishment and funding of junior colleges paved the way for junior colleges to continue to burrow their roots in the educational foundations of Illinois’ systems of public education.

Illinois junior college development was dramatically altered by the end of World War II, particularly the 1946 return of Illinois veterans armed with college funding resulting from the G.I. Bill, which provided financial assistance for tuition, fees, and living expenses. Returning Illinois veterans equipped with the G.I. Bill placed taxing demands on the higher education system of Illinois particularly the University of Illinois. According to Illinois educator, Gerald Smith, “In March 1946 the University of Illinois was faced with about twenty-three thousand

⁵⁷ Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson, “Illinois Community Colleges,” 26.

applications for the fall term. The maximum capacity at Urbana was sixteen thousand.”⁵⁸ The University responded by transforming 31 high schools into two-year extension centers during the fall of 1946. “Students received these centers with great enthusiasm as they were officially students of the University of Illinois and aided in the educational quest of the numerous veterans.”⁵⁹ The extension centers also served as the starting point for several communities to establish local junior colleges. After the initial success of their high schools as extension centers and the urging by the University of Illinois to utilize the University extension center as the initial step for establishing a junior college, several communities (Belleville, Moline, Evanston, Danville, and Elgin) elected to transform their extension centers into community colleges. The Moline community immediately set out to establish Moline Community College and opened September 1946 to 220 students.⁶⁰ Although, for the first two years, most students enrolled in Moline Community College were actually University of Illinois students. By the third year (1949) Moline Community College was providing a comprehensive curriculum, consisting of liberal arts and science, occupationally oriented programs in technologies and business, adult education, and community service. Belleville Junior College opened in 1946 in connection with the Belleville Township High School District; Elgin Community College and Danville Junior College opened in 1949 after their conversion from extension centers of the University of Illinois to junior colleges of their local school district.⁶¹ Junior college development in Illinois did not stop with the transformation of extension centers into junior colleges or the influx of veterans armed with the G.I. Bill. The 1950s were a time of even more legislative growth as junior college leaders fought for greater legitimacy and increased funding.

⁵⁸ Smith, *Illinois*, 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶¹ Hardin, “History,” 126; Smith, *Illinois*, 5.

In 1951, Illinois legislatures once again redefined and revised junior college law by setting forth standards and procedures for establishing junior colleges in school districts by referendum instead of resolution as proposed by the 1937 Junior College law. This legislation also made it possible for any unit or high school district to provide a tax to pay tuition for residents of their respective areas for junior college attendance in a different district.⁶² While this bill did much to aid in the ease of developing junior colleges in communities that wished to house them, junior colleges were still incorporated within high school districts, only adding to their low stature and the confusion surrounding their role as either secondary or postsecondary institutions. By 1959, legislators were authorizing the establishment of separate junior college districts, allowing any compact and contiguous territory to be organized as a junior college district, to be governed by an elected junior college board of education with authority to maintain and operate the college and to levy taxes for support of the college. This law also authorized a new unit of government to handle two-year college programs rather than school districts, governed by an elected board.⁶³ Other legislation throughout the 1950s legalized a tuition charge for the instruction of adults over 21 years of age and also eliminated the structure for teaching certification, which often mirrored that of local schools. The legislation of the 1950s aimed at junior colleges was only the beginning of state involvement in higher education as the state of Illinois solidified its involvement in higher education. Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson best sum up the legislative development of Illinois junior colleges in the 1950s, “As the 1950s approached the 60s, an initial trickle of legislation turned into a tide as bills and reports surfaced annually to support the planning and development of Illinois’ higher education system.”⁶⁴

⁶² Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson, “Illinois Community Colleges,” 23.

⁶³ Smith, *Illinois*, 61.

⁶⁴ Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson, “Illinois Community Colleges,” 26.

The developmental period from 1930 to 1960 laid the foundation for continued development of junior colleges into community colleges and provided the beginning legislation for these institutions to become fully vested higher educational institutions that would ultimately come to provide education for the masses. On a national level these years saw an increase in the number of institutions built, the development of a new mission and purpose that included more fully developed vocational and technical education programs, not to mention new programs aimed at increasing their role and importance in the community, as well as an impressive expansion as they began to redefine and reshape themselves to fit into their new roles as community colleges.⁶⁵ While national development of the junior college gave the appearance of a smooth transition of the junior college process, state and local development of junior colleges provided a fairly more accurate portrayal of the struggle that junior colleges would continuously endure as they shaped and redefined themselves into their upcoming debut as institutions for the masses. For example, junior colleges in Illinois were often of low stature and low ranking with regards to priority of funding, board interest and attention, and total staff concern. The Illinois junior colleges of the 1930s through the 1960s were in the delicate position of dealing with various aspects of both secondary and higher education all while demanding recognition as a unique institution within the structure of higher education. This period delineated the signs that junior colleges were committed to struggle and strife as this period signaled the beginning of the transformation of the junior college into the community college and marked the emergence of a brand new institution as the country moved into the 1960s.

⁶⁵ Cohen and Brawer, *American Community College*, 2003.

Community Colleges (1960-1970s)

Education changed throughout the 1950s as the need for post-high school education for new entrants and refresher or upgrading for practitioners in almost all technical and para-professional fields were rapidly becoming a fact of life. These educational needs had a profound effect on community college development going into the 1960s. Higher education during the 1960s is characterized by enrollment growths, campus expansions, campus differentiations, educational problems, and revolts. Demands that higher education open its doors and increasing pressure from individuals traditionally shut out of higher education are defining characteristics of higher education in the 1960s. The 1960s are also characterized by more state and federal responsibility for higher education and with this increased responsibility came a call for more accountability. During the 1960s, the federal and state governments initiated policies and programs in an effort to ensure access to higher education regardless of student and family economic circumstances. As a result, millions of students who otherwise could not have afforded college were able to enroll in higher educational institutions and attain degrees.⁶⁶

It was during the 1960s and early 1970s, an era of growth and prosperity, that community colleges witnessed their greatest increase in growth and public acceptance. Roughly half of today's community colleges were created in the 1960s as institutional growth of the two-year college entered a boom period. Between 1955 and the early 1960s, institutions were established at a rate of about thirty each year, and the years 1965 and 1966 saw the opening of fifty institutions each year. During 1967, there were sixty-three new institutions established.⁶⁷

Several reasons have been credited for the rapid growth during these decades. First, the post-

⁶⁶ Brian K. Fitzgerald, "Lowering Barriers to College Access: Opportunities for More Effective Coordination of State and Federal Student Aid Policies," in *Expanding Opportunity in Higher Education: Leveraging Promise*, ed. Patricia Gándara, Gary Orfield, and Catherine Horn (Albany: State University of New York, 2006), 53.

⁶⁷ Palinchak, *Evolution*, 1973.

World War II “baby boom” generation came of college age, and states had to expand dramatically the number of places in higher education institutions in order to accommodate the tidal wave of college-bound students. Community colleges could be built and opened quickly and were assumed to be a cost-effective way of providing the necessary expansion of higher education. Second, community colleges began adhering to an “open door” philosophy, which allowed even larger numbers of students to enroll.⁶⁸ With the increased number of institutions built, the development of the name from “junior” to “community” college in part by the recommendation of the Truman Commission, and an expansion of their role and importance in the community, the junior college expanded into and solidified their role as community colleges from the 1950s until the 1970s.⁶⁹ The transformation of the junior college into the community college is the emergence of a brand new institution.

During the late 1950s community colleges added community services—cultural and educational programs that typically did not lead to transfer or specific jobs—and remedial studies to their existing curriculum and mission.⁷⁰ Deegan and Tillery argue that community colleges differ from junior colleges in that they look different, they have different personnel and students, their leaders play different roles, and their mission, while cast in the language of the late junior college, takes on different priorities.⁷¹ Two-year institutions were also chosen as the means for carrying out society’s often-stated goal of equality of opportunity for postsecondary education. This was to be realized through open door admissions, flexible scheduling of classes,

⁶⁸ David W. Breneman and Susan C. Nelson, *Financing Community Colleges: An Economic Perspective* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1981), 1-2.

⁶⁹ Cohen and Brawer, *American Community College*, 2003. The 1950s and 1960s gave way to the term junior college being applied more often to the lower-division branches of private universities and to two-year colleges supported by churches organized independently, while the term community college was gradually used for the comprehensive publicly supported institutions.

⁷⁰ Arthur M. Cohen, “Student Access and the Collegiate Function in Community Colleges,” *Higher Education* 14, no. 2 (April 1985): 151.

⁷¹ Deegan and Tillery, “The Evolution,” 14.

and wide variety of educational experiences in response to student needs. In addition, community colleges' low tuition was considered as a way to put higher education within the reach of almost all families.⁷² Two-year institutions of this period adapted to numerous renovations to emerge as community colleges.

As with most educational institutions during this period, community colleges began to put into practice open admission policies that allowed them to admit an increased number of ethnic minorities, lower income groups, immigrants, and women. Community colleges of the 1960s practiced what students in prestigious universities were demanding: democratization of higher education, including responsiveness to community need, an open admissions policy, the abolition of the concept of "failure," and more emphasis on teaching rather than research.⁷³ States proudly referring to their institutions as "democracy's colleges" viewed two-year institutions as giving thousands of worthy students, who would otherwise have been excluded, a chance to participate in higher education.⁷⁴ California is a prime example of the "open door" community college; high school graduates could enter community colleges free of charge. In addition, the colleges could admit, and were encouraged to do so, all persons over the age of eighteen who could profit from instructional programs.⁷⁵ Open admission policies allowed the extension of educational opportunity to be put into practice.

During the 1970, numerous education reports were issued that advocated for open access in higher education. The aforementioned Truman Commission report and the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education reports issued in 1970 and 1974 challenged community

⁷² Breneman and Nelson, *Financing Community Colleges*, 93.

⁷³ K. Patricia Cross, "The Quiet Revolution," *The Research Reporter* 4, no. 3 (November 1969): 1.

⁷⁴ John O. Hunter, *Values and the Future: Models of Community College Development* (Sherman Oaks, CA: Banner Books International, 1977); Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* 4th ed., (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

⁷⁵ Edmund J. Gleazer, Jr. "Evolution of Junior Colleges into Community Colleges," in *A Handbook on the Community College in America: Its History, Mission, and Management*, ed., George A. Baker, III (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 21.

colleges to firmly accept the task of open access. These reports made pivotal statements about the necessity for community colleges to provide open access. The Carnegie Commission gave specific detail to the need for access for minority and low-income groups, stating that a state system should “provide universal access to its total system, but not necessarily to each of its institutions, since they vary greatly in nature and purpose.”⁷⁶ For the Carnegie Commission, according to Bragg, the community college was the institution of choice within a state’s overall higher education system for providing greatest access, creating a stratified approach with community colleges at the bottom rung of the hierarchical ladder.⁷⁷ The aforementioned reports and the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges report argue that community colleges are the primary vehicle for allowing high school graduates to gain access to higher education, particularly those formally and structurally excluded from higher education.⁷⁸ The usage of Commissions to study the need for growth and expansion in higher education occurred throughout many states during the late 1950s and continues today. Illinois in particular usurped the recommendations of its various Higher Education Commissions to devise public policy and legislative acts aimed at developing a comprehensive system of higher education that openly welcomed the community college.

Illinois Junior/Community Colleges

Higher education in the state of Illinois during the 1960s is characterized by reorganization, development, and tremendous overhaul of the postsecondary system. In other words, during the 1960s, Illinois was working to develop a higher education system delineated by the purpose and function of its various institutions. Legislators were also working to

⁷⁶ Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, *A Digest of Reports of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), 18.

⁷⁷ Bragg, “Community College Access,” 2001.

⁷⁸ Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, *Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century* (Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges and Junior Colleges, 1988).

streamline institutions and provide for some form of accountability and standardization. As Illinois pushed toward a new era of higher educational development, the state initiated several studies or Commissions of Higher Education to study the fate and future development of the state's higher education system. Governor Stratton appointed the first Governor's Commission on Higher Education in late 1954. In April 1955, Senate Bill 265 was passed, creating a statutory body of 16 members to be known as the "Higher Education Commission," instructed to "make a thorough investigation, study and survey" of the problems facing Illinois higher education, public and private.⁷⁹ Junior colleges quickly took up the interest of the Commission as they surfaced as the most efficient way of accommodating the predicted increase of students.

The 1955 Higher Education Commission issued a statement in 1957 that reaffirmed the position of junior colleges in the free public secondary education system but also acknowledged their increasing importance to the overall higher education system. The Commission stated, "It [the junior college] is in reality, an upward extension of our program of secondary education, providing general, semi-professional and technical terminal education, as well as preparing the student to continue in a four-year institution."⁸⁰ The connection between secondary education and junior colleges was readily encouraged as the commission continued that the location and local control of the institution made it sensitive to the educational needs of that particular community and reinforced it being an integral part of the system of free education. However, the connection between junior colleges and secondary education would be severed as Illinois moved

⁷⁹ Smith, *Illinois*, 37, 46. A new Commission known as the "The Commission of Higher Education," implemented in 1957 by state legislation, succeeded the 1954 Commission. This new Commission continued until replaced by the Board of Higher Education in January of 1962.

⁸⁰ Illinois Higher Education Commission, "Illinois Looks to the Future in Higher Education: A Summary of the Higher Education Commission to the Governor and Legislature of the State of Illinois," (Springfield: State of Illinois, 1957), 10.

into the 1960s and begin to study and plan for a more effective, accessible, and integrated higher education system.

The recommendations of both the 1955 and the 1957 Commissions proved influential and instrumental in the development of the 1965 Illinois Public Junior College Act, which shadowed and provided the foundation for future community college development in the state of Illinois. Junior colleges were of particular importance to the Commissions as they were envisioned as viable venue for offering an effective and feasible means of providing in part for the future needs of the State in higher education. The 1957 Commission in particular summed up the status of the junior college and laid out its importance to the developing system of Illinois higher education.

The assessment speaks for itself:

1. *The junior college can provide additional educational opportunities for all high school graduates in the State.* The development of a system of community-junior college over the State, so that all high school graduates may be within commuting distance of either a junior college or other higher educational institutions, appears to be necessary if we would advance the principle of equal educational opportunity.
2. *The junior college relieves freshman and sophomore congestion at four-year colleges and universities.* Keeping in mind the increases forecast for the next decades, it is readily apparent that the junior colleges are carrying a load of considerable size, which might otherwise have to be borne by the four-year institutions.
3. *The junior college reduces State costs for the first and second years of higher education.* Because junior colleges are financed largely from local funds, these institutions provide a promising means of extending educational opportunity throughout the State without a tremendous drain on the State treasury.
4. *The junior college helps reduce costs to the individual and the family or higher education.* This, plus the fact the student may live at home and even continue remunerative employment while in attendance, lowers the cost of higher education for the student and his family significantly.
5. *The junior college provides a means of screening those not able to benefit from college work.* The institution provides the student an opportunity to “find” himself while still living at home.

6. *The junior college can encourage the enrollment of more of the top half of the high school classes who are not now continuing formal education.* The low cost of attending a junior college and its proximity to the student's home encourage many to attend who otherwise would not.

7. *The junior college meets the local needs of agriculture, business and industry.* The junior college can be particularly sensitive to these local needs and is in a position to supply the manpower needed in the community.⁸¹ [italics in original]

The 1957 Report highlighted the grave importance of the junior college in helping to alleviate the strain both financially and intellectually on other postsecondary institutions in Illinois. The Commission did not stop with the study of the current use of junior colleges, but instead quickly responded with recommendations on how the junior college could be expanded to offer additional, more effective and efficient benefits to the system of higher education.

The subsequent reports of the Higher Education Commission offered multiple recommendations for establishing a junior college system in Illinois. Several recommendations of the Higher Education Commission that shaped two-year institutional development were the extension of locally-controlled public junior colleges to eventually cover the state as a means of placing high school graduates within commuting distance of a post-secondary institution. It was also recommended that Illinois enact legislation to permit and encourage the establishment of operating junior college districts by contract or agreement between two or more high school or unit districts, while increasing state aid to encourage extension of junior colleges. The Commission argued that a significant and large community college system in Illinois was needed to meet the projected educational need of the 1960s and 1970s, which could be met most economically and efficiently by the establishment of public community/junior colleges. Public community-junior colleges could provide high quality educational programs at about one-half of the cost of such programs at four-year residential schools and could accommodate those students

⁸¹ Ibid., 16-17. Italics in original.

for whom the community college program is most appropriate for financial, vocational, or academic reasons.⁸² Not only did the Commission prove instrumental in aiding in the promotion of junior colleges but it also laid the foundation for several changes in Illinois higher education in general.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 signed into law on November 8, 1965 was “to strengthen the educational resources of our colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education.” The Illinois General Assembly following the lead of the federal government and other states pursued the goal and commitment of providing higher education to the people of its state, by enacting legislation to establish new state universities and provide financial assistance to public two-year colleges, and promote the well being of the state through higher education.⁸³ The Illinois Master Plan, the blueprint for providing education to the masses in Illinois, is a byproduct of the several higher education studies and commissions implemented throughout the 1950s. Illinois’s Board of Higher Education was established in 1961 as a result of the various Higher Education Commissions and from the planning activities of the Illinois Board of Higher Education came a comprehensive study to point the directions of higher education development in Illinois to 1975 or later in the form of “A Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois.”⁸⁴ The Master Plan materialized with an extensive number of changes to the higher education system in the state of Illinois.

The ensuing goal of higher education in the state of Illinois during the second half of the 1960s was to extend educational opportunity to all residents. The Master Plan was thus organized in several ways to achieve educational opportunity. The Master Plan asserted that in

⁸² Smith, *Illinois*, 50.

⁸³ Illinois Board of Higher Education, *A Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois* (Springfield: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 1964).

⁸⁴ Illinois State Board of Higher Education, *Phase II*, 1966.

order to equalize college opportunities, institutions should be within commuting distance, particularly of middle and low-income students. Such institutions by accommodating large numbers of students who would not otherwise be able to complete a college degree contributed substantially to increased production of manpower and research in developing the state's economic and industrial potential.⁸⁵

The recommendations that influenced the passing of the Public Junior College Act include recommendations to provide state subsidy sufficient to motivate local citizen groups to organize junior colleges. Organization of a junior college board to coordinate the statewide development of two-year colleges and the promotion of technical and semi-technical programs, primarily in junior colleges place two-year colleges firmly within reach of higher education status.⁸⁶ Illinois junior colleges in the 1960s witnessed a break from the public common schools as legislation and educators worked to move away from junior colleges to community colleges, redefine the mission and purpose of community colleges, and solidify the two-year institution as a member of the higher education system. The visions and strategies for a junior college system were realized when the Illinois General Assembly passed the 1965 Junior College Act whose purpose was to “encourage and establish a system of locally initiated and administered comprehensive junior colleges.”⁸⁷

The Act defined a comprehensive junior college program as “a program offered by a community college which includes: courses in liberal arts and sciences and general education; adult education courses; and courses in occupational, semi-technical, or technical fields leading directly to employment. At least 15% of all courses taught must be in fields leading directly to

⁸⁵ Ibid., 14.

⁸⁶ Illinois Master Plan, 3.

⁸⁷ 1110 ILCS 805, “Public Community College Act,” Article 1 (From Ch. 122, par. 101-2).

employment, one-half of which courses to be in fields other than business education.”⁸⁸ The Junior College Act severed the ties in an orderly fashion between junior colleges and common schools allowing junior colleges to become a part of the state’s system of higher education. The separation was seen as a necessity because “identification with the common school system handicapped junior colleges resulting in them being poorly financed, badly housed, and inadequately supervised.”⁸⁹ Legislatures and educators felt that the creation of a planning and coordination agency in the form of the Illinois Junior College Board, which would represent junior colleges at the state level would serve the goal of instituting junior colleges as higher education institutions as well. The Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois envisioned a statewide public community college system locally governed and offering low cost education within driving distance of the home of every Illinois citizen. The system was to be open-door, offering instruction beyond secondary school and in some cases providing the avenue for individuals to complete their secondary education in the form of GED programs. In addition the system was to be comprehensive, offering liberal arts programs, vocational educational programs, adult basic education classes, remedial educational instruction, and public service activities.⁹⁰ The new plan for junior colleges was considered both economical and timely and would firmly establish the junior college as part of higher education. It also preserved the advantages of local initiative and control, and assured adequate state participation to maintain high standards.

The Public Junior College Act provided the impetus for establishing the community college system and proved so successful that most of the current community colleges were

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ David L. Viar, *Policies for Tomorrow: Illinois Community Colleges in the 80's* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Community College Trustees Association, 1981).

⁹⁰ Ibid., i.

established within 10 years of the Act with the exception of Heartland Community College in Bloomington established in 1991. In fact, in Illinois fourteen new community colleges were established between 1965 and 1967.⁹¹ The decade of the 1970s saw the higher education system in Illinois putting into action recommendations issued by the Illinois Master Plan and as such witnessed a growing, prosperous system of higher education. The legislature, educators, and institutions were in the process of tailoring programs that would fit the new direction of the Illinois higher education system. In 1973, Illinois, by formal statute solidified the two-year institution within the higher education system by renaming the institutions community colleges and changing the name of the Illinois Junior College Board to the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB).

As junior colleges developed into community colleges throughout the 1960s through either legislation and increased public acceptance like in the state of Illinois and other states or through pressure from new groups of constituents, the two-year institution readily redefined and reshaped its identity to align itself with the system of higher education but also became an institution that would serve the masses and educate the general populace. During the 1950s-1970s, community colleges promoted community based education, which emphasized serving the needs of a designated geographic area, often called the college's service area or service region. Community education was promoted through services and programs for adults, such as continuing education of workers in the skilled trades, technical occupations, and the allied professions as well as courses and programs of general interest and value to personal and corporate development of the local community.

In an effort to serve its community, community colleges acquired educational functions previously offered by other agencies. Many of them took over law enforcement programs from

⁹¹ Krebs, Katsinas, and Johnson, "Illinois Community Colleges," 30.

police academies, firefighter training from fire departments, and health technology and nursing programs from hospitals. In many cities they also absorbed the adult basic education function.⁹² The community service aspect of the community college became a means by which the community could examine itself, its strengths and weaknesses and its aspirations. Community colleges engaged in community surveys, formed education—community or education—work councils, and initiated other means by which the local community analyzed its political, economic, educational, or cultural needs. In turn, the junior college also became a central figure in community discussions on how to create a new future and how to solve some of the community's problems.⁹³

This new focus of the community college as well as the promotion of the community college to serve social and economic needs of the community would prove beneficial to the rationale and need for a community college in East St. Louis, Illinois. In particular, community colleges in Illinois came to represent the State's attempt to educate the masses as community colleges could provide a cheaper and local higher educational experience without increasing pressure on the State's four-year institutions to open their doors and accommodate an increasing student population.

The development and growth of the two-year institution from the 13th and 14th years of high school extension programs, into junior colleges and finally the expansion into community colleges showcases the American ideal that the benefits of higher levels of education should be extended to all. This sentiment was no more visible than in the ideology surrounding community college development throughout the late 1960s and into the 70s. The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) issued a statement in 1972 affirming their mission

⁹² Cohen, "Student Access," 153.

⁹³ Diener, *Growth of an American Invention*, 9.

that put them in the forefront of bringing the concept of educational opportunity for all closer to reality. AACJC stated:

Community and junior colleges have tried to provide appropriate postsecondary educational opportunities to all who seek this experience. Thus we are committed to the concept of comprehensiveness—to a broad spectrum of programs that will meet the individual needs of the wide range of students in our communities. We are committed to serve our communities in as many ways as are appropriate, from training their citizens for employment to providing programs geared to the needs of retired people. We are committed to seeking out potential students, discovering their needs, and devising educational programs to help them, perhaps to overcome educational deficiencies, perhaps to upgrade their competence in a particular skill.⁹⁴

These reports give a brief look at the direction in which community colleges were urged to grow and the problems they were encouraged to answer. Community colleges were called on to make the community and its citizens their number one priority. Open door policies and a community focus were urged to take center stage in the continued development of community colleges.

It is out of this new commitment to utilizing education and in particular the two-year institution to answer the increasing number of demands of access and educational accountability that were being placed on higher education that State Community College of East St. Louis would be established.⁹⁵ Schools have been called upon to solve numerous society ills, from developing an American identity after the Revolutionary War, to Americanizing immigrants in the early 20th century, to eradicating discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities, and training students to work and become responsible citizens. Educational institutions have taken the brunt of the responsibility of providing solutions and rectifying existing ills all with the illusion that education provides equality of opportunity and is the main tool in traversing and transcending one's social and economic position. State Community College was developed as one such institution; it was lauded as being the answer to the many social and economic

⁹⁴ Ibid., 174.

⁹⁵ Cohen and Brawer, *American Community College*, 2.

problems that plagued the city of East St. Louis. State Community College was to provide the residents of the city with economic and educational training that would lessen the effects of the decline of the city's economic base and was developed in many ways as a response to the economic conditions in East St. Louis and the impact that condition had on the lives of the residents and the stability of the city. State Community College was also the answer to the state of Illinois' question of how to provide higher education to every resident in the state.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROMISE OF HOPE:
STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF EAST ST. LOUIS, IL

When marveling at the longevity and development of State Community College (SCC) of East St. Louis as the only 100% fully state funded community college in Illinois, one can't help but wonder how the residents and former students of East St. Louis viewed their local institution. What did this two-year institution that would later be at the center of much debate, scandal, and struggle for survival mean to those who frequented its halls as both students and staff, passed by its outer perimeter, or those who admired it from a far. Residents will tell you that the establishment of SCC "was a great idea. It was wonderful that people in the community, you know, could go to a college like that in the community."¹ "Well I thought it was great because I perceived education as a lifelong experience and I knew that there were a lot of people in East St. Louis who really wanted to help change the image that East St. Louis had and I thought by having a college in that environment it certainly would assist in changing the image."² Others when describing their feelings toward the establishment of the school would say, "I was happy. I thought it was a good thing because it made education more accessible to the members of the community."³ State Community College would come to symbolize renewed faith in the power

¹ Mrs. Carter, telephone interview by author, May 2009. Carter worked as a purchasing agent in the business office of SCC starting in 1971-72 and continuing until 1996 when the institution closed. She also became a student in 1979 and continued part-time for several years until she obtained her associate's degree.

² Penny Lane, telephone interview by author, February 25, 2009. Lane initially began working at SCC in 1969 as a part-time business instructor. She continued in that position until 1985. She then became a member of the local board in 1994 and continued until 1998 when the institution was dissolved.

³ Delores Ray, telephone interview by author, June 6, 2009. Ray is a lifelong resident of East St. Louis and was a member of the Illinois Community College Board from the mid 1990s until 2002.

of education, collective growth for the city and its residents, and it would also come to mean awakened and future opportunities.

Following this question of what did the institution signify for the city of East St. Louis and its residents comes a much larger question, one central to this dissertation, of how State Community College was developed, established, and operated in East St. Louis. This however is an answer that few members of the community can readily verbalize. Community members of both SCC and East St. Louis for the most part know that the institution was state-supported but aren't sure to what extent, they know that a few community members were instrumental in the founding of the institution, and they also have theories of why the institution was closed. However, there does not seem to be a collective consensus of the historical development of their beloved SCC. It is the purpose of this chapter to construct the initial history of State Community College and draws analysis from the archival sources as well as the oral history interviews to sketch out the beginning years of the institution. This chapter delves a little deeper into why State Community College was established, how it fits in with community college development nationally, and it's overall purpose and goals for the community of East St. Louis. This chapter ties the development of State Community College to the development of special-focus community colleges and highlights how institutions created especially and specifically for minority groups have a mission and goal unlike other institutions. In fulfilling this goal, this chapter also highlights those key events, people, and factors that contributed to the establishment of State Community College.

The development of State Community College is grounded in larger social movements, particularly community development in low-income—mostly black and Latino—neighborhoods that began in the 1950s and continued into the 1970s that were largely an outgrowth of the Civil

Rights, “Black Power,” and other nationality phases of the urban social movement. The prominent themes of community development movements included community control, democratic accountability in the allocation and distribution of social goods, and demands for material and social development aimed at urban communities. Community development in low-income minority areas was linked to a larger, national, and race-based movement for equal opportunity and access for political representation and for inclusive social change.⁴ Community development led to a number of changes in these communities of which educational and economic changes were at the top of the list.

College access is fundamental to economic opportunity in the United States. It is a strongly held American belief that education opens the door to success, and that even the poorest American can achieve greatness with talent and hard work. African Americans have long embraced the ideals of education as a powerful life-altering agent. Historically, formal education was a chief means for African Americans to distance themselves unequivocally from slavery and their subordinate status in society. Education also enabled African Americans to achieve social mobility.⁵ Education is the most prominent hope for upward socioeconomic mobility and public community colleges have played a key role in the realization of that upward mobility. Community college proponents argue that community colleges seek to preserve the American dream that just rewards and upward mobility are due to and can be achieved by talented and hard-working individuals.⁶ According to Richardson and Bender, during the 1960s and

⁴ John J. Betanucur and Douglas C. Gills, "Community Development in Chicago: From Harold Washington to Richard M. Daley," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 594 (July 2004): 92-93.

⁵ Walter R. Allen and Joseph O. Jewell, "A Backward Glance Forward: Past, Present, and Future Perspectives on Historically Black Colleges and Universities," *The Review of Higher Education* 25, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 243.

⁶ W. Norton Grubb, "The Effects of Differentiation on Educational Attainment: The Case of Community College," *The Review of Higher Education* 12 (1989): 349-374; Thomas J. Kane and Celilia E. Rouse, "The Community College: Educating Students at the Margin Between College and Work," *The Journal of Economic*

continuing throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, governmental leaders in states with large urban populations were concerned with higher education opportunities for inner-city, and often low-income residents. The concern and ultimate goal of extending higher educational opportunities for these residents resulted in the establishment and development of new urban community college districts and urban universities as well as the conversion and expansion of existing institutions to serve the growing needs of the urban population.⁷

While expansion of urban institutions was being touted as the new means of economic and social revival for urban areas, the metro-east area of East St. Louis and particularly the city of East St. Louis, with a population of a little over 80,000 in the 1940s and 1950s was void of a higher educational institution. The absence of a local institution compounded with racial discrimination and segregation that kept blacks out of educational institutions in the St. Louis metropolitan area and geographical isolation that kept individuals from readily available access to other public institutions in Illinois, resulted in a race of people blocked from educational opportunities and advancement. African American students, more than any other group faced incalculable barriers to higher education participation and attainment.⁸ During the late 1950s,

Perspectives 13, no. 1 (Winter, 1999): 63-84; David F. Labaree, *How to Succeed Without Really Learning: The Credentials Race in American Education* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1997); John E. Roueche, Laurence F. Johnson, and Suanne D. Roueche, *Embracing the Tiger: The Effectiveness Debate and the Community College* (Washington, DC: Community College Press, 1997); Cecilia E. Rouse, "Democratization or Diversion? The Effect of Community Colleges on Educational Attainment," *Journal of Business & Economic Statistics* 13, no. 2 (April 1995): 217-224.

⁷ Richard C. Richardson, Jr. and Louis W. Bender, *Fostering Minority Access and Achievement in Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987), xi.

⁸ M. Christopher Brown, II and James Earl Davis, "The Historically Black College as Social Contract, Social Capital, and Social Equalizer," *Peabody Journal of Education* 76, no. 1 (2001): 48. Missouri, a southern state, utilized its southern traditions and customs in keeping blacks out of Webster College, St. Louis University and Washington University in St. Louis well into the 1950s and 1960s. However, Blacks in the St. Louis area were welcome to attend Harris-Stowe State University, one of Missouri's two historically black colleges and universities. African Americans in the area could only be educated in institutions that catered to them. *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* (No. 57) 342 Mo. 121; 113 S.W. 2d 783, reversed. Missouri is home of the *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada* case filed after the Law School at the University of Missouri refused admission to African American Lloyd Gaines in line with Jim Crow laws practiced in the state. Marilyn W. Nickels, "Showered with Stones: The Acceptance of Blacks to St. Louis University," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 3, no. 4 (Spring 1984): 275. During the 1940s, there was a situation in St. Louis were according to the Pittsburgh Courier "a thoroughly qualified colored

1956 to be exact, a group of concerned parents and business leaders of St. Clair and Madison County areas formed the Southwestern Illinois Council for Higher Education (SWICHE) to address the lack of educational opportunities for area residents. SWICHE was convinced that with only 3 percent of the 600,000 residents of the Madison-St. Clair counties finishing four years of college, a four-year institution was desperately in order for the communities.⁹

Representatives from the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University were invited by SWICHE to discuss higher educational possibilities for the area. However, despite the statewide invitation only representatives from Southern Illinois University attended the September 1955 meeting. Following several meetings and hearings, in October of 1956, the SIU Board of Trustees voted unanimously to “express its profound interest in the serious situation in regard to higher educational facilities in the southwestern area of Illinois” and “to make accelerated provision for higher education facilities in the said area as quickly as necessary state and other funds became available.” This effort was particularly pushed by SIU as it recognized that college opportunities were needed due to a lack of a conveniently located university in the area and many students couldn’t afford to pay tuition and room and board.¹⁰ In November of 1956, the trustees voted unanimously to establish additional residence centers in one or more communities besides Belleville. In 1957, Southern Illinois University opened two residence

girl, ranking very high in her class, and of good family, good manners, everything else had tried to get into Webster College, and had after long negotiations been told she couldn’t be admitted. Blacks in the state of Missouri were only admitted to one of two historically black colleges and universities, Lincoln University and Harris-Stowe State University in St. Louis.

⁹ Chancellor’s Office, “History,” Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, <http://www.siu.edu/about/history.shtml> (accessed February 9, 2010).

¹⁰ Daniel J. Elazer, *The Metropolitan Frontier and American Politics: Cities of the Prairie* (Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2004). Elazer states that SIU imposed a goal of upgrading the economically depressed southern third of the state and in an effort to accomplish this goal, SIU inaugurated a community development program in the Illinois areas of the St. Louis metropolitan area, resulting in the residence centers in East St. Louis and Alton.

centers in Alton and East St. Louis and by 1959 the temporary facilities were educating, 3800 students.¹¹

Residents of East St. Louis were cognizant of SIU's presence in the community and the advantages to be had by being in close proximity to a local four-year university. According to one interviewee, also a graduate of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, "SIU has always had a presence, a higher ed presence in East St. Louis."¹² Another interviewee recalls, "At one point, SIU-Edwardsville, you know, had their downtown center in the old Broadway Hotel."¹³ Edwardsville while offering traditional college programming also offered programming especially suited for the economic and social conditions of East St. Louis. One program, which stood out during the early years of the institution was the Experiment in Higher Education, which according to the University "was an experiment in working with ghetto youths who lacked formal qualifications for admittance to college, but who could benefit from college instruction."¹⁴ Elazer states that the University established such programs as part of its efforts to stimulate local social and economic change of the community and to improve the position of the clearly "excluded" African Americans.¹⁵ In acknowledging the benefit of the institution to East St. Louis, residents would say later, "Southern Illinois University has been of great service to East St. Louis in bringing college opportunity to the community."¹⁶

¹¹ Stephen Kerber and Donna Yates Bardon, *Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville*, The College History Series (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2000). The SIU Board of Trustees designated the ole East St. Louis High School building as a residence center on January 17, 1957.

¹² Lane, Interview.

¹³ Ms. Sis, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, April 29, 2009. Sis taught English, developmental writing, composition, African American literature at State Community College from 1970 until 1996.

¹⁴ "Rendleman Clarifies Role: SIU Just 'Holding Agent,'" *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 30, 1969.

¹⁵ Elazer, *The Metropolitan Frontier*, 397. Efforts to stimulate economic growth could be seen in the fact that SIU arranged to lease a dilapidated school building in East St. Louis for use as a temporary campus by SIU to encourage the construction of new facilities by the local authorities to replace the leased ones and to increase the opportunities for black youth to continue their education.

¹⁶ Editorial, *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 2, 1969.

When supporters of the school—legislators, community groups, and educators—looked to establish a permanent site for the institution, East St. Louis was on the short list for possible sites as the administration offices for the residence centers were housed in East St. Louis and it was the largest city in Madison and St. Clair counties. However, the city and its residents were not able to raise the appropriate funds and backing, not to mention a suitable space for a sprawling new four-year institution. Edwardsville with its wooded acreage and financial gifts was deemed the more “appropriate” site for the future institution. East St. Louis residents bemoan the fact that the city of East St. Louis lost the opportunity to host a campus of Southern Illinois University. A lifelong resident of East St. Louis and former president of State Community College states, “In 1959, 58, back in the late 50s, early 60s, that area was supposed to be developed into SIU-East St. Louis but things happened and as people left nothing was being replaced. SIU went on and moved to Edwardsville and you can look at the campus now. That should have been East St. Louis. It was planned for East St. Louis.”¹⁷ However, it wasn’t in East St. Louis that ground breaking for a new campus began in 1963 instead it was Edwardsville, and by 1965 a grand opening for the Peck Classroom Building and the Lovejoy Library was held.¹⁸ With the completion of the Edwardsville campus and the consolidation of all classes and administrative offices on the Edwardsville campus, the city of East St. Louis was once again without a postsecondary institution in its immediate vicinity.

The absence of access to higher educational institutions highlights the necessity for easily affordable and accessible institutions packaged in the form of community colleges, whose role is to service the educational needs of the local community. According to George Washnis,

¹⁷ Dr. Richard Bonnor, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, May 12, 2009. Bonnor began working State Community College as a director of the Adult Education Program in 1973. He continued in that position until he became president of the institution in 1987. Dr. Bonnor continued as president until 1991.

¹⁸ Kerber and Bardon, *Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville*, 2000. In 1960, Illinois voters approved a statewide Universities bond issue that included \$25 million designated for an Edwardsville campus of SIU.

assistant to the Mayor of East St. Louis during the 1960s, “the withdrawal of SIU from East St. Louis will leave an even greater need here for a junior college district.”¹⁹ At the same time that the campus of SIU-E was being established and blacks were making inroads into segregated educational institutions, community colleges were expanding their numbers and garnering greater public acceptance. As state after state recognized the importance of two-year colleges in accommodating the mass of students demanding entry into higher education, community colleges were established within commuting distance of every resident. Illinois established its community college system out of a need to provide higher educational access to every resident in the state at a fraction of the cost of four-year colleges and universities. Also two-year institutions provided a great space to offer technical and vocational education, which had the potential to quickly introduce new workers into the economy bolstering the wealth of the state and the individual. Community colleges were especially championed as they could be built and opened quickly and were assumed to be a cost-effective way of providing the necessary expansion of higher education.

During the 1950s-1970s, community colleges promoted community based education, which emphasized serving the needs of a designated geographic area. In attempting to solve a multitude of societal problems community colleges were marketed as a panacea for social ailments.²⁰ Education has long been charged with the role of providing cures and solutions for society’s multiple ailments. If poverty is a growing concern, then education is the answer as it provides the work skills and knowledge to lead people out of economic despair. If there is an epidemic of hunger and filth, educational services can help feed the child and teach both the child and the parent about hygiene. If teenagers are getting pregnant well it’s up to the schools

¹⁹ “Junior College Study Starts,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, March 25, 1966.

²⁰ Gregory L. Goodwin, *A Social Panacea: A History of the Community-Junior College Ideology* (Bakersfield, CA: Bakersfield College, 1973).

to teach about abstinence; drug problems, well roll out the school's stay off drugs programs. Society has always looked to education to solve its problems. Why else would it need an educational system if it can't fix its constituents' ailments or aid in the public image of the nation? In this case, State Community College was the panacea for East St. Louis's ailments as well as the means of easing the sting from the blatant and highly visible racist and discriminatory acts of not only being left out of the Belleville Junior College district, racism and segregation faced in East St. Louis, but also land and taxation pilfering at the hands of Cahokia. SCC was to ease the growing unemployment and waning jobs in the area by being both an experimental college and heavily vocational education focused, two distinctions that would allow for job and skill training and greater ease in introducing programs and partnerships that had not been tried out in other junior colleges of the time.

State Community College was to solve East St. Louis's problems and help transform both the community and its people despite the criticism often lobbied against community colleges.²¹ The school was to be many things to the community and to the people. The first chairman of the local advisory board stated, "The community, the people need this school, and what it can bring the community. The people and the community need a clean-cut institution and we are trying to

²¹ Fred L. Pincus, "How Critics View the Community College's Role in the Twenty-First Century," in *A Handbook on the Community College in America: Its History, Mission, and Management*, ed., George A. Baker, III (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 524. See also Jerome Karabel, "Community Colleges and Social Stratification: Submerged Class Conflict in American Higher Education," *Harvard Education Review* 42 (1972): 521-562; Fred L. Pincus, "Tracking in Community Colleges," *Insurgent Sociologist* 4, (Spring 1974): 17-35; L. Steven Zwerling, *Second Best: The Crisis of the Community College* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976); and Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America* (New York: Basic Books, 1976). Many of the critics raised questions about whether community colleges were providing genuine avenues of upward mobility for poor, working-class, and minority students as the structure of community colleges allowed few disadvantaged students to obtain bachelor's degrees. Critics argued that less-advantaged students were overrepresented in vocational programs and underrepresented in transfer programs leading to bachelors' degrees and college-level jobs. These same critics argue that the structure of community colleges contribute to the stratification of society, particular the stratification into a lower class of individuals in marginalized groups.

serve that need.”²² State Community College was to “provide another level of education for the people.”²³ One resident a former educator at SCC expressed her feelings regarding the initial establishment of the institution, “Well I thought it was great because I perceived education as a lifelong experience and I knew that there were a lot of people in East St. Louis who really wanted to help change the image that East St. Louis had and I thought by having a college in that environment it certainly would assist in changing the image.”²⁴ It is in this light of community college’s solving the problems of its host community that State Community College was developed.

Residents of East St. Louis, Illinois lawmakers, educators and researchers saw the benefit of the comprehensive nature of the community college, which includes, both academic and vocational and technical education programs, as well as continuing and adult education courses, not to mention flexibility in attendance, low-cost, and proximity of location. The multipurpose comprehensiveness of community colleges offers something for everyone and meets the needs of most students and the community. Proponents of State Community College were hoping that the local institution would live up to the challenge that community colleges had been accepting since their inception which included providing new educational patterns by making provisions that adjusted to a wider range of people, including women who chose both family and education, workers with jobs and families, the urban poor with insufficient finances, people in need of retraining, retired persons, the handicapped, disadvantaged, and others alienated from existing programs and institutions.

²² “‘No Improperities,’ Wheadon Says; See No Reason for Ware to Quit,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 25, 1969.

²³ Lena Weathers, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, April 20, 2009. Weathers, lifelong resident of East St. Louis worked at SCC as a student services counselor and was later a member of the local Board of Trustees.

²⁴ Gladys Givans, telephone interview by author, August 18, 2009. Givans, a resident of St. Louis, began working as an instructor in the nursing program in 1972 and later worked as both instructor and coordinator of the nursing program until 1995 when the program was cancelled.

Initial Development of State Community College

The city of East St. Louis was ripe and right for the location of a fully state funded institution. East St. Louis once classified as a thriving and bustling city; by the late 1960s and early 1970s was facing multiple problems like underemployment, unemployment, violence, substance abuse, homelessness, crime, single-parent families, and poverty. All of which were compounded by the fact that the city was experiencing a decrease in population, which would continue at a steady rate as both industries and many of the white residents and affluent blacks fled the city for surrounding communities. The residents turned toward education as a means of rectifying and remedying some of the changes in the city but also because they were keenly aware of what education, particularly access to higher education could do for all the residents of the city. “The purpose of the college in East St. Louis was to provide an educational, you know, workplace, not a workplace, an educational facility for people of the community to gain higher education, an impetus to become more productive members of society.”²⁵ The push for the establishment of State Community College was developed out of the community’s recognition of the need for a higher education institution, particularly a community college, which would be more accessible and beneficial to the community because of its low cost, location in the city, and overall accessibility. The community was equally impressed with the comprehensive nature of the institution in that it could offer the students the needed skills to either transfer to a baccalaureate institution or find a job, promoting and providing both educational and economic success. State Community College was to be an educational institution, which prepared individuals for employment but it would also provide employment. The two-year institution has

²⁵ Ibid.

always been seen in terms of what it could and would do for the community both economically and educationally.

Several major players in both state and local politics, not to mention community and civic leaders in East St. Louis are credited with providing the foundation for the eventual establishment of State Community College but none have been credited more than Dr. Rosetta Wheadon, local community leader and educator. Residents are keenly aware of the vigor, involvement, and agency that leaders and educators espoused in obtaining local educational institutions for the residents. Wheadon's role in the development of the future State Community College begins with a survey of the community's feelings regarding the establishment of a local community college as part of her doctoral study.²⁶ One interviewee, a former local advisory board member states, "Dr. Wheadon was doing her dissertation on the community college and of course it was her presentation of her doctorate that got the ok from the governor to establish the community college."²⁷ Other interviewees, both current and former residents of East St. Louis recall as they envision and imagine it the impetus behind the eventual establishment of State Community College of East St. Louis, which all seem to center around Rosetta Wheadon and her doctoral study.

Dr. Rosetta Wheadon is the one who made the study and discovered the need for a community college in the area. Dr. Wheadon actually made the study as it brought...that was the basis for the community college being in the city.²⁸

²⁶ "East St. Louis: College Has Strong Support," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 2, 1967. To gauge support from local residents for a local junior college a survey was by Mrs. Rosetta Wheadon of East St. Louis as part of graduate work at St. Louis University. Parents returned 8,444 forms indicating 91.62% though a junior college would benefit the city. A total of 88.84% reported that they would favor the establishment of a junior college if all details concerning administration, curriculum, and governmental controls were first determined and made available to residents of the city. Administrators and faculty members returned 605 forms indicating 88.78% believed the city would benefit and 78.88% would favor such an establishment.

²⁷ Fredericka Nash, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, September 8, 2008. Nash, lifelong resident, business owner, and educator in East St. Louis, was one of the original local board members.

²⁸ Lane, interview.

Another interviewee replied, “One of my sorority sisters... Dr. Wheadon wrote the proposal study, the initial study for the [college].”²⁹ While still another one stated,

Dr. Wheadon was the one who, she was the reason the school came into existence really. Because she had, when she was working on her PhD, her dissertation had to do with the development of a community college in the East St. Louis area. So it was based upon her work that it was established.³⁰

While the residents are correct that Wheadon’s doctoral study did gauge, recognize, and iterate the community’s interest in a junior college and also went a long way in providing much of the framework for the feasibility study conducted by the formal steering committee, it however, was not the sole impetus in the Governor signing legislation to establish State Community College.³¹ There were a number of factors, which combined to result in the establishment of a 100% state-funded community college for the residents of East St. Louis.

The racial and economic discrimination of the communities surrounding the city of East St. Louis are at the heart of the development of State Community College. State Community College is intertwined with the expansion and continuing development of Belleville Junior College (BJC). Belleville Junior College was established in the fall of 1946 by resolution of the Belleville Community High School Board.³² Support for organization of a Class I district encompassing Belleville and neighboring communities emerged rapidly in 1965-66. Residents of the school districts in St. Clair County except four bordering the Mississippi River (Lovejoy, East St. Louis, Cahokia and Dupon) joined in a proposal for a new district. According to Gerald

²⁹ Weathers, interview.

³⁰ Carter, interview.

³¹ Nash, interview. The initial interest in a local community college was expressed through a local community group interested in improving the educational opportunities in the city. There were two initial groups working to identify the possibility of establishing a local community college. The groups often worked without the knowledge of one another. Mrs. Nash identified that her local group comprised of community members, educators, a few business owners knew nothing of the group to which Mrs. Wheadon was attached.

³² Gerald Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College Development, 1946-1980* (Springfield, IL: Illinois Community College Board, 1980), 133. By 1957, the enrollment of BJC was almost 1,200 and in 1965 it had grown to a headcount of over 3,400 with a full-time enrollment of 2,600 financed through high school tax rates.

Smith, several factors contributed to the omission of the four communities. Public opinion in Belleville was averse to including East St. Louis on several counts: political, economic, and social. The East St. Louis school district had a population more than twice the size of Belleville, but its tax base was very low and rapidly declining. Also, the general social climate in East St. Louis was quite different from Belleville or most of the other St. Clair County communities. The social climate in reference was the growing number of low-income African Americans, not to mention the infamous crime and scandal notoriety of East St. Louis. According to Bruce Cook, “State Community College was created because the remainder of St. Clair County had deliberated excluded East St. Louis where a majority of the African Americans in our community lived at the time.”³³ Lovejoy was not contiguous without East St. Louis, and most of its characteristics, other than size, were similar to those of the city of East St. Louis. Cahokia was not interested in joining a junior college district in 1965-66 school year and Dupou was not included in the discussion. According to Gerald Smith, this was an ideal situation for Belleville because the exclusion of all four districts along the Mississippi appeared to lessen the possibility of including East St. Louis in their district. Belleville Junior College became a Class I community college district on December 27, 1966 without the incorporation of the four Mississippi communities.³⁴ The denial and exclusion of East St. Louis from the Belleville Junior College district would be the first in a long line of acts to hinder the prospects of East St. Louis African American residents from the opportunities afforded by attendance at a two-year institution. It is in this era of exclusion and outright dismay and denial toward East St. Louis and its residents that we see the continued push for a local postsecondary higher educational institution.

³³ Bruce Cook, interview by author, Belleville, IL, March 21, 2009. Cook a former resident of East St. Louis, local lawyer was a member of the steering committee and chairman of the legal committee.

³⁴ Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 134.

African American residents of East St. Louis having faced exclusion and discrimination inherent in being black residents in a community segregated by de facto customs were no less than thrilled to be excluded from the Belleville Junior College district. One resident exclaims, “It was a Belleville school and Belleville was noted for its segregation and segregationist attitudes. Cause it was basically a prejudice situation, you know. And they looked down on us, you know, so I wasn’t that hot on ‘em. So I definitely didn’t want it to go that way, you know.”³⁵ “When I moved here, East St. Louis was still very segregated and this was 1965. But at that time very few blacks lived in Belleville.”³⁶ Other residents viewed this as a prime example of why the city of East St. Louis needed an educational institution that would be responsive to their needs. One interviewee stated, “We felt that because of the tenor of the times that we still would be better off doing our own thing.” The tenor of the times turned out to be segregation and racial discrimination pervasive in the community. With this system in place, black residents of East St. Louis, a rapidly increasing population, felt it was more important that they have their own system to accommodate their students instead of being incorporated in one where they continuously faced a lack of control in educational institutions and inadequate educational programs. While the establishment of a Class I junior college in Belleville that did not include East St. Louis contributed to the continual push by East St. Louis for a local community college it was only one of a number of contributing factors.

The possibility of establishing a community college in East St. Louis was broached as early as 1964, however it wasn’t until 1966, a year after the passage of the Illinois Public Junior College that the mayor of East St. Louis officially called a meeting between representatives of

³⁵ Rev. John H. Rouse, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, February 22, 2009. Rouse, local pastor, has lived in the city of East St. Louis for 34 years worked at SCC in multiple positions but mainly worked in grounds and facilities crew. He also served on the local advisory board.

³⁶ Sis, interview.

East St. Louis, Dupo, Cahokia, Brooklyn (Lovejoy), Venice, and Madison—cities in both St. Clair and Madison counties—to discuss the possibility of developing a community college to service the needs’ of their residents.³⁷ An advisory committee comprised of business, civic, and educational leaders of the respective areas minus Cahokia and Dupo commenced in the spring of 1967 to conduct a feasibility study and work collectively as a junior college action group.³⁸ The committee began its work with a survey of the East St. Louis, Brooklyn (Lovejoy), Venice, and Madison school districts and also included the village of Sauget.³⁹ Sauget, while small in terms of population, 300 residents, was very large and highly important to the economic stability of the proposed community college in East St. Louis, for Sauget was home to the Monsanto Chemical Plant. Monsanto was assessed at \$60,000,000 and provided a large part of the tax base needed for East St. Louis to qualify for a local community college.⁴⁰ Sauget, an industrial corporate town, provided a buffer between the increasing black population in East St. Louis and the white population in Cahokia.

Cahokia’s mayor minced no words when he let it be known that he was opposed to Cahokia being involved in proposals for membership in any junior college in either Belleville or East St. Louis. Cahokia Mayor Robert Jackson said, “Cost wise, I think that our community

³⁷ James L. Ratcliff, ““First” Public Junior Colleges in an Age of Reform,” *The Journal of Higher Education* 58, no. 2 (1987): 170. Informational and promotion campaigns for the establishment of junior colleges was popular in garnering support for local institutions. Communities also conducted unofficial referendums and in the case of East St. Louis, unofficial surveys and studies to determine the sentiments of the townspeople prior to the founding of the college.

³⁸ “Junior College Committee,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, February 23, 1966. The East St. Louis city council named a ten-man committee to study the feasibility of a junior college district for the city (Rev. L. O’Connell, Dr. John Gunning, Clarence Blair, Edward Mattatall, L. E. Manebrink, Scotia Calhoun, John Carl, Haig Apoian, Fred Teer, and Rev. O. B. Rush). George Washnis, Editorial, *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 8, 1969. The East St. Louis City Council, School District 189, and private industry put forth \$1,000 each for the \$3,000 study.” A feasibility study describes territory lines, assessed valuation, projected enrollment, and curriculum, the study must be approved by the state Junior College Board prior to scheduling of an area election for approval.

³⁹ Steering Committee for the East St. Louis Community Junior College, *East St. Louis Community Junior College: A Feasibility Study* (East St. Louis, IL: Steering Committee, 1968).

⁴⁰ Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 166.

would oppose it.” Robert F. Catlett, Cahokia Superintendent of Schools, pointed that from the standpoint of expense, District 187 “would be ahead by staying out of” the proposed district.⁴¹ The refusal of Cahokia to consider a shared community college with East St. Louis immediately took Dupo out of the discussion, as Dupo was not contiguous to East St. Louis without Cahokia, a condition stipulated in the new junior college act. The city of Dupo filed for annexation to Belleville Junior College in 1967 and their request was quickly granted. With the push for East St. Louis to acquire the village of Sauget in their petition for a junior college, “leaders in Cahokia grew uneasy about their future and were apprehensive about the possibility of being drawn into an East St. Louis district.”⁴² To highlight this apprehension, the city of Cahokia filed a petition in 1968 seeking annexation along with the village of Sauget and the assessed valuation of the Monsanto Chemical Plant, to the Belleville Junior College district, —at the same time that East St. Louis was preparing its application for community college consideration—to ensure that they would not be coupled with the city of East St. Louis. The Cahokia petition for annexation was filed August 8, 1968. The inclusion of Sauget in the Cahokia petition seemed to seal the fact that East St. Louis would not have its own community college as its declining tax base and the small tax base of the other communities which at this point had dwindled down to the surrounding cities comprising the East St. Louis school district—Centreville, Alorton, Washington Park, Fairmont City, and National City were not sufficient to house a Class I junior college. Despite the petition by Cahokia for annexation to Belleville, East St. Louis continued

⁴¹ “Junior College Cost Study Total Sought,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, April 7, 1966. Under the Illinois Junior College program after 1968 any area not within a district must pay the tuition of any qualified student from its district to attend any other district. If a high school district is not within a district, local subsidy of a student to college would come from the high school district’s educational fund. Catlett, superintendent of Cahokia said that in that case, the latter would cost less for them. “Cahokia Says ‘No’: Junior College Plan Rejected,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, July 14, 1966. On July 13, 1966 the Cahokia school district rejected a proposed junior college district with East St. Louis, Brooklyn, and Dupo districts. Catlett has said that a junior college district might involve a tax hike of 20 cents per \$100 assessed valuation.

⁴² Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 166.

with its feasibility study and included in its ability to pay for a community college the assessed valuation of Sauget, filing its petition on October 10, 1968.⁴³ Even though, the city continued with its plans, the Illinois Junior College Board granted Cahokia the right to hold a referendum for annexation to the Belleville Junior College district which was quickly passed effectively ensuing that East St. Louis would have to find alternate means of funding its two-year institution.

The annexation of the Dupou and later Cahokia school districts into the Belleville Junior College district seemed to further incense the suspicion of Belleville residents and leaders that this was a ploy to incorporate the city of East St. Louis. According to Gerald Smith, then Executive Secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board, Belleville residents voiced their concern about the incorporation of East St. Louis into their district, through the local newspaper, the *Belleville Daily News Democrat*. Articles in the paper made it clear that the school wanted nothing to do with annexing the city of East St. Louis as part of its district. According to Gerald Smith, newspaper staff were under the impression that changes in the legislation and classification of community colleges allowed for the IJCB to advance their ulterior motives of linking East St. Louis with the Belleville Junior College District. Although members of the Illinois Junior College Board went to great lengths to reassure Belleville community members that they had no intentions of arbitrarily annexing East St. Louis to the Belleville district, editorials of the *Daily News Democrat*, expressed firm beliefs by the residents that the Junior College Act granted excessive powers to the State Board regarding annexations and left

⁴³ Ibid., 166. The Illinois Junior College Board's procedure was to handle applications in the order that they were filed and to hold off on later applications if there was some conflict, thus allowing the Cahokia petition to be heard first which resulted in an overwhelming vote to join the Belleville district.

receiving districts practically no effective means for fighting against the addition of unwanted territory.⁴⁴

The actions by Belleville and Cahokia are just one example of the many racial aggressions that blacks faced in America. The “exclusion” of East St. Louis by both communities highlights how “holders” of whiteness have been given the absolute right to exclude.⁴⁵ The exclusion of East St. Louis from the surrounding community college districts was acknowledged as being predicated less on race than on the economic status and financial capabilities of the city and its residents. While this exclusion wasn’t explicitly race-based, although the statement—the general social climate in East St. Louis was quite different from Belleville or most of the other St. Clair County communities—would suggest otherwise, by highlighting the lessened economic abilities of the growing majority African American population, race was an inherent factor in the decision to exclude. This act of exclusion by the city of Belleville and later Cahokia served to minimize and void the educational and subsequent employment opportunities of East St. Louis residents. In keeping with the historical discriminatory treatment of African Americans in Illinois and the East St. Louis area in general, residents of East St. Louis were correct in their assumptions that “Belleville was up to its usual

⁴⁴ Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 135. The residents of Belleville made it perfectly clear that it was not interested in including East St. Louis in its community college district, in fact the angst and turmoil over the possibility of East St. Louis ever annexing into the district resulted in the passing of a 1967 legislation supported by Belleville legislators that amended the annexation procedures. The legislation, of great benefit to the Belleville area, allowed the receiving district to vote, as well as the annexing area, in the event the population of the petitioning territory was equal to or greater than that of the receiving district

⁴⁵ Cheryl I. Harris, "Whiteness as Property," in *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement*, ed. Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Pellar and Kendall Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995), 281. A liberal view of property includes the exclusive rights of possession, use, and disposition. Its attributes are the right to transfer or alienability, the right to use and enjoyment, and the right to exclude others. While this technical definition has often referred to the racial construction of whiteness, it has also been applied to societal institutions, and especially education.

racist antics.”⁴⁶ Blacks in the East St. Louis area were no strangers to racism, exclusion, and segregation.

While African American and even white residents of East St. Louis were quick to point out the act of exclusion as an example of overt racial discrimination, the school districts comprising the Belleville Junior College District acted in ways that were less personal and more so institutionally based. Studies of institutional racism define the process as “placing or keeping persons in a position or status of inferiority by means of attitudes, actions, or institutional structures which do not use color itself as the subordinating mechanism, but instead use other mechanisms indirectly related to color.”⁴⁷ In the exclusion of East St. Louis on the basis of a decreasing tax base, economics was clearly a substitute for race. The form of institutional racism exhibited by community leaders in Belleville and Cahokia and the larger St. Clair County are what Bullock and Rodgers refer to as mapping where geographical lines are drawn in ways that

⁴⁶ East St. Louis has a long history of racial discrimination and injustices committed against its African American residents. East St. Louis was no aberration from other northern cities in their treatment of blacks during the early part of the twentieth century. Although Illinois was a free state, its ambiguity in dealing with slavery, its operation of “Black Laws,” and its clinging to de facto segregation resulted in a state clearly at odds with its “proposed” ideal of freedom. African Americans in East St. Louis, occupationally at the lowest rung of the ladder learned to accommodate themselves to a subordinated and segregated status. “Although, Illinois was the ‘Land of Lincoln,’ white East St. Louisans liked to think of themselves as being in the southern part of the ‘land’.” Negroes were expected to conform to a rigorous system of racial segregation.” As long as blacks continued to accept a subordinate status and made no demands to challenge their status, and as long as they remained a relatively small minority, they constituted no threat to the whites. However, this pre-World War I system of accommodation was disrupted by the migration of a considerable number of Southern blacks, and by the adoption of the racial equality doctrine among some long-time black residents. The subjugated treatment of African Americans in East St. Louis reached a boiling point in 1917 when one of the worst race riots in American history occurred in East. Louis. White workers blamed the destruction of the union and strike on blacks who they felt had taken their jobs. Only one single point was valid, if blacks had not come to East St. Louis the union could not have been crushed. The collision of economic and industrial interests and racist attitudes resulted in violent mob action that left thirty-nine African Americans and eight whites dead. Countless blacks were injured and large sections of the city were razed to the ground as whites sought to destroy entire neighborhoods. According to Malcolm McLaughlin, throughout the day, working-class whites in crowds numbering thousands rampaged throughout the city, beating, shooting, and hanging African Americans in the streets. The East St. Louis race riot offered up for the world to see the racial discrimination and segregation occurring in the industrial city and would remain the platform on which interactions between racial groups in the area would be built. For further information see Malcolm McLaughlin, “Reconsidering the East St. Louis Race Riot of 1917,” *International Review of Social History* 47, no. 2 (August 2002): 187; Elliott Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1964).

⁴⁷ Charles S. Bullock III and Harrell R. Rodgers Jr., “Institutional Racism: Prerequisites, Freezing, and Mapping,” *Phylon* 37, no. 3 (1976): 212.

concentrate blacks in one area and exclude them from others.⁴⁸ In this case, that would be the horseshoe drawn around the predominantly black East St. Louis and Brooklyn areas that comprised the white communities of Belleville Junior College District 522.

The adamant resistance by Belleville to include the East St. Louis area, and the equally adamant resistance of East St. Louis to be included in the Belleville district, combined with the annexation of both Dupon and Cahokia to Belleville left East St. Louis in a very vulnerable position with regards to providing community college education for its residents. The city of East St. Louis had for years been struggling with a decrease in taxable income and the rise in population of individuals living below the poverty line. It was during this time, the late 1960s, that deindustrialization swept the country sparing few cities from its destructive path. East St. Louis was among those affected by factory flight, loss of population, and disinvestment so far reaching that it left the city unable to provide advanced educational opportunities for its residents.⁴⁹ At the time of the initial study to determine the need for a junior college, which would be responsive to the needs of the residents and the community, students in the area were being educated by several outside entities that while providing educational services were not responsive to the needs of both the residents and the community.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ibid., 213.

⁴⁹ Carol Abbott, "Perspectives on Urban Economic Planning: The Case of Washington, D.C., Since 1880," *The Public Historian* 11, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 5; Pamela J. Bettis, "Urban Students, Liminality, and the Postindustrial Context," *Sociology of Education* 69, no. 2 (April 1996): 106-107; Brian J. Godfrey, "Restructuring and Decentralization in a World City," *Geographical Review* 85, no. 4 (October 1995): 437. Cities like Chicago, Detroit, New York, St. Louis, Buffalo, Youngstown, and Gary have faced economic failure and near bankruptcy as a result of moving industries, declining production, and population loss. This process, which has characteristically been defined as deindustrialization, has effected the major social institutions of these cities like the ability of schools to provide a quality education.

⁵⁰ Illinois Junior College Board and Local Board of Trustees for State Community College of East Saint Louis, "Report to the General Assembly of the State of Illinois and State Community College of East Saint Louis," (Springfield, IL: Illinois Junior College Board, May 1971), 9. In June 1968, 600 students were attending the branch of SIU in East St. Louis. 500 other students were attending business schools, schools of cosmetology and other private institutions in the area. The University of Illinois extension division was operating within the East St. Louis High Schools. 565 students were enrolled in the Adult Education Program in the public schools attending the Manpower Training classes.

The land annexation of the cities surrounding East St. Louis left the city without any possible means of increasing the assessed valuation needed to construct a junior college, thus limiting the educational opportunities for the thousands of residents not being served by the existing educational institutions in the East St. Louis area. The loss of a potential tax base for the establishment of a community college in East St. Louis dealt a devastating blow as the October 10, 1968 petition by East St. Louis was rejected by the Illinois Junior College Board at a meeting in May 1969.⁵¹ Changes in the economic and social conditions of the city of East St. Louis combined with the rejection of their petition proved to be only a stumbling block in East St. Louis's quest for a local community college. Residents and community leaders recognizing the need for additional educational opportunities for residents in the city were reluctant to drop their quest all at once. One religious leader stated, "he wholeheartedly believes in the need for a junior college in East St. Louis, and need here is perhaps even more so than in Belleville."⁵²

Legislation for State Community College

Legislation for a state-supported community college in East St. Louis came after the Illinois Junior College Board rejected the city's petition for the establishment of a junior college. Members of the East St. Louis steering committee still seeing the need for a community college in the area proceeded with Plan B, which was to petition the state legislators for a state supported institution. It seems that it was always part of the committee's plan to ask for state assistance,

⁵¹ "East St. Louis: Junior College Petition is Rejected," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 14, 1969. The local newspaper ran a story not only reporting that the petition was rejected but also offered a conclusion as to the problems that led to the rejection of the East St. Louis petition. The Illinois Junior College Board has rejected a petition to establish an East St. Louis junior college district. The board, meeting last Friday, May 9, 1969, in Chicago, voted to deny the petition. The request for an East St. Louis district was rejected on the grounds that plans called for the Village of Sauget to be included in the district. Even with the inclusion of the Sauget tax base the East St. Louis district tax rate would have been the highest in the state. Representative of the governor and other state offices, including area state legislators attended a meeting on May 15, 1969 to discuss other options of establishing a community college in East St. Louis.

⁵² "Junior College Study Starts," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, March 25, 1966.

once the realization fully hit that the city simply couldn't afford to completely fund a two-year institution. In discussing the ability of East St. Louis to fund a community college the question was asked if East St. Louisans were able to afford the necessary tax increase to fund the institution. To which the steering committee responded, "if it proves unfeasible to locate the junior college in East St. Louis they will request that East St. Louis be annexed to Belleville Junior College District 522 or that the state help establish a junior college in East St. Louis."⁵³ However, as mentioned earlier it was considerably unpopular in both communities for East St. Louis to annex to Belleville. An article in the *Metro-East Journal*, a local East St. Louis newspaper, quoted Gordon Bliss, chairman of the feasibility study as saying, "A shrinking assessed valuation, a relatively low tax collection rate and the reluctance of other school districts to join East St. Louis's proposal may hurt the city's opportunity to establish a junior college. The only way we can see is to follow the necessary steps and let the state board turn it down and then turn it over to the legislature and see what they can do with it."⁵⁴ Bliss was not the only

⁵³ "For East St. Louis: Financial Hurdles Loom High for Junior College," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 24, 1968. The proposed East St. Louis junior college, the dream of many East St. Louis community leaders, continues to seem more like a dream as work progresses on the feasibility study for the college. Members of the citizens committee working to establish the college have concluded that it will take a total tax rate of 40 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation to provide the local share of \$700,000 to operate a campus once it is built. Which proved problematic for the poor district proposed for the East St. Louis college. The assessed valuation of that total area has been decreasing steadily the past several years. Residents of the East St. Louis school district 189 earlier in the month of June defeated by a 5-to-1 margin two proposals to increase school taxes. Dr. Bliss also stated that annexation to the Belleville Junior College district, use of facilities of SIU, and facilities of the proposed vocational center would not take the place of or substitute for a junior college district for the East St. Louis area.

⁵⁴ "In East St. Louis: Group will Petition for Establishing Jr. College," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, July 30, 1968. Gordon Bliss continued by saying, "A conservative estimate shows that about \$950 is needed to educate one student. We have found that \$150 per year (\$5 per semester hour) is the most that can be asked from a student in East St. Louis for tuition. Thus we must rely on the district to produce a good deal of the revenue." He later spelled out the actual options for a two-year institution in East St. Louis. "After going through all the other channels of getting the school established and the petition either being accepted or denied and the city told to annex with Belleville the other choice which would be the last resort if Belleville declined to let East St. Louis in, was to turn the matter over to the state legislatures and let it help establish the district, Bliss said."

member of the community college steering committee that felt it would be up to the state to assist in establishing a much needed two-year institution in East St. Louis.⁵⁵

A local citizens' group led by, Mr. A. Randolph and Dr. Rosetta Wheadon, were in agreement with Dr. Bliss' assessment of funding and establishing a community college in East St. Louis via alternative methods. The husband and wife team proclaimed:

The passage of the referendum for Cahokia District 187 to annex to District 522 left East St. Louis in a very unfortunate position. What we'll have to do now is to amend the study and ask for direct support from the state of Illinois due the fact that we will not be able to economically support a junior college in our own area, A. W. Wheadon said. Dr. Rosetta Wheadon said, I'm sure we will develop another approach which might be to examine the policy for establishing junior colleges in our state so we can determine how they have formed all around East St. Louis and have not included East St. Louis.⁵⁶

While examining other approaches to funding community colleges in the state of Illinois, Dr. Wheadon also exercised other options by making a direct appeal to the Governor of Illinois to request his assistance in establishing a junior college. Dr. Wheadon proclaimed that the school district could not become a reality without the assistance of the governor's office. In a letter to the Governor revisiting the problems caused by the annexation of Cahokia, Dr. Wheadon asked, "If these prospective community developers are to be denied the opportunity of obtaining at least two years of higher education because of the economic condition of the area?"⁵⁷ She continued, "The Governor should want to help. There are junior colleges throughout the state. He should be interested in the same educational opportunities now being denied the children there."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 167. After the petition for a junior college in East St. Louis was rejected, Gerald Smith held a December 1968 meeting with Dr. Delyte Morris, president of Southern Illinois University, and Dr. Keith Smith, Associate Director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education, to discuss additional options for the establishment of a junior college in East St. Louis. Their meeting concluded with an agreement that some educational structure focusing solely on East St. Louis was very important.

⁵⁶ "Vote Kills Hopes of East St. Louis," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, April 21, 1969.

⁵⁷ "Want East St. Louis District: Junior College Backers Seek Help From Ogilvie," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, April 29, 1969.

⁵⁸ "East St. Louis Proposal: State Support Sought for New Junior College," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, April 30, 1969. A leader in the movement for a junior college for the East St. Louis area said her appeal to Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie is for a state-sponsored junior college rather than a junior college district. Mrs. Rosetta F.

A state financed junior college in East St. Louis was proposed from a variety of people, which included educators at Southern Illinois University like Gordon Bliss, community leaders like Mr. and Dr. Wheadon, and even politicians like gubernatorial candidate Richard Ogilvie. During the campaigning season, Richard Ogilvie expressed his concern for the junior college situation in East St. Louis, promising the residents that if elected, he would address the junior college situation in their community. Ogilvie who campaigned on a platform to mobilize the state against “poverty and ignorance,” also pledged to rectify the joblessness and fiscal chaos of the city of East St. Louis.⁵⁹ A local community college focused on vocational education and job skill training would both educate and prepare residents for work, alleviating poverty and ignorance. “Community college education is a source of educational empowerment, so essential to properly preparing individuals for the workforce.”⁶⁰ This statement embodies the sentiments surrounding establishing a two-year institution in East St. Louis.

According to Taylor Pensoneau, “Few persons expected East St. Louis, a Democratic stronghold, to get priority attention from a Republican governor from Chicago, but Ogilvie had a few special cards in his hand that he intended to play in regard to East St. Louis. If he were successful, a measure of economic revival might result.”⁶¹ For Illinois, East St. Louis represented a national symbol of urban decay but unlike Chicago it was smaller and lacking

D. Wheadon, executive secretary of the East St Louis junior college committee, has appealed by letter for help from Ogilvie asking that the state establish a junior college. Mrs. Wheadon said it might be possible for the state to establish a junior college financed in the same manner state universities are financed without a local junior college district or tax needed. Mrs. Wheadon said Gov. Ogilvie could ask the state legislature to establish such a college. She added that it also might be possible to get legislators, through public opinion, to introduce whatever bills are necessary. The passage of the referendum annexing Cahokia and Sauget to Belleville prompted Mrs. Wheadon’s letter.

⁵⁹ Taylor Pensoneau, *Governor Richard Ogilvie: In the Interest of the State* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997), 17. Junior College Plan Sound, *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 19, 1969. That a new state proposal has developed is a tribute both to the determined efforts of that committee and to the state administration, which had made pledges in this area.

⁶⁰ Joe Cipfl, telephone interview by author, May 12, 2009. Cipfl was the president and executive director of the Illinois Community College Board during the transition of Metropolitan Community College to the East St. Louis Community College Center.

⁶¹ Pensoneau, *Governor Richard Ogilvie*, 15.

some of the larger political machines making it easier for Ogilvie to achieve results. Keeping his political promise, Governor Ogilvie once elected convened a committee to address the possibility of establishing a community college in East St. Louis. Initial surveys of the situation reaffirmed the earlier conclusion that establishing a community college in the city under normal and regular provisions was impossible. It was then suggested that it could be possible to operate a district to meet the needs of East St. Louis if major supplemental funding from outside sources could be procured. Gerald Smith says of his meeting with Governor Ogilvie about the community college issue in East St. Louis, "Governor Ogilvie liked the idea of a plan tailored to the special conditions there. Furthermore, he favored total state financing for a junior college at East St. Louis."⁶² In May 1969, Julius Hovany of the Governor's Office of Human Resources, announced that plans were under way for an administration-sponsored bill for an experimental state junior college in East St. Louis.⁶³

A community college in East St. Louis was heralded as the living embodiment of the goal of community colleges in Illinois as a means of providing economic opportunity and growth in the community and the state. The *Metro-East Journal* stated, "A special experimental state junior college is the kind of help that is needed. It goes straight to one of the root problems of the community, the quality and quantity of educational opportunity, especially vocational educational opportunity."⁶⁴ Community colleges were also a means of providing educational opportunities for those individuals considered to be living in disadvantaged areas, of which East

⁶² Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 168.

⁶³ "No Title," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 29, 1969. Plans for the school were developed by the Illinois Junior College Board, the East St. Louis Junior College district committee and the Governor's Office of Human Resources.

⁶⁴ "Junior College Plan Sound," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 19, 1969. According to the writers at the *Journal*, the problems that beset East St. Louis were too severe to be solved with the resources of the community alone and state help was surely necessary. Nor was state help of the kind accorded to all cities or school districts sufficient. While they weren't able to describe the reason, it was acknowledged that the educational system in East St. Louis and the overall ability of government to serve had degenerated past the point of return without outside help.

St. Louis was the prototype. The Illinois Master Plan outlining the goals of utilizing the two-year institution to extend educational opportunity to the masses, made specific mention of Chicago and East St. Louis, where according to the Master Plan, “Large numbers of youth are deprived of higher education because their cultural backgrounds predispose them to either poor public school education or lack of motivation to pursue post-high school training. However, many of these youth have the intellectual capabilities to profit by further education.”⁶⁵ While the educators behind the Master Plan recognized the need for postsecondary institutions in urban areas they seemed to misplace exactly why these areas and in particular “raced” individuals did not have access to postsecondary education especially considering the racial climate and economic conditions of the country, particularly in areas such as Chicago and East St. Louis with large minority populations. Notwithstanding the need to place blame for the educational conditions on the residents of these areas, the Master Plan recommendations were that individuals in these areas would benefit from an extensive and well-organized program of identification; guidance; remedial programs; specially tailored curricula; and student financial aid programs through which the community college would be the most effective venue of achieving the intended goals.

The establishment of State Community College and other two-year institutions established during the 1960s and 1970s to answer the call for community colleges to alleviate economic depression and stimulate economic growth was not a new phenomenon. The community-junior college was advocated in particular during the depression to ease unemployment and reduce crime and more generally to advance the economic efficiency of the nation. However, urban community colleges such as State Community College were established

⁶⁵ Illinois Board of Higher Education, "A Master Plan for Higher Education in Illinois Phase II: Extending Educational Opportunity," ed. Illinois Board of Higher Education (Springfield: Illinois Board of Higher Education, 1966), 39-40.

particularly in urban areas as a response to the lack of economic development, growing jobless rates, and increased poverty.⁶⁶ The urban community college was and is still committed to addressing the needs and expectations of nontraditional, increasingly nonwhite and immigrant, and relatively disenfranchised metropolitan constituencies.⁶⁷ By serving all the people, including immigrants and other historically disenfranchised and underrepresented groups, urban community colleges provide a common educational ground on which people from various backgrounds come together to acquire skills for work and citizenship.⁶⁸ The location of the urban community college proved to be as essential in attracting students who previously had no thought of attending college as did the lure of economic opportunity. Access depends on proximity. The advent of the community college as a neighborhood institution did more to open higher education to more people than did its policy of accepting even students who had not done well in high school. Throughout the nation, in city after city, as community colleges opened their doors, the percentage of students beginning college expanded dramatically. During the 1950s and 1960s, whenever a community college was established in a local area where there had been no publicly supported college, the proportion of high school graduates in that area who began college immediately increased.⁶⁹

The establishment of State Community College was seen as a special political card held and played by newly elected Governor Richard Ogilvie. Taylor Pensoneau, journalist and biographer of Ogilvie's political years in Illinois, labeled it a special card for the poverty-

⁶⁶ Gregory L. Goodwin, *A Social Panacea: A History of the Community-Junior College Ideology* (Bakersfield, CA: Educational Resources Information Center, 1973), 93-94.

⁶⁷ Raymond C. Bowen and Gilbert H. Muller Bowen, "Editor's Notes," *New Directions for Community Colleges*, no. 107 (Fall 1999): 1-3.

⁶⁸ Joshua L. Smith and Fayyaz A. Vellani, "Urban America and the Community College Imperative: The Importance of Open Access and Opportunity," *New Directions for Community Colleges*, no. 107 (Fall 1999): 5-13.

⁶⁹ Cohen and Brawer, *American Community College*, 16.

wracked city.⁷⁰ “High unemployment and certain other problems peculiar to East St. Louis demanded creation of the facility on an emergency basis. Yet, Ogilvie, realized, as did others that the local tax base just could not provide the necessary dollars for it.”⁷¹ According to those working closely with the governor, East St. Louis’s problems were given top priority. The governor termed the East St. Louis unemployment problem as among the most critical in Illinois. He went on to state, “I believe we will be making the finest kind of investment, by helping young people lead productive and useful lives in this college.”⁷²

Despite Governor Ogilvie’s personal interest in the establishment of a community college in East St. Louis, it was not passed without considerable objections from state legislators.⁷³ A bill that required giving unprecedented amounts of money for the establishment of a community college was not an easy bill to package. The bill called for state appropriations in the amount of \$750,000 for the first year of operation with expectations of additional federal funding for 75 percent of the vocational and technical training and the rest to come from funds from the division of training and vocational education, the Illinois Junior College Board, and grants under the

⁷⁰ Pensoneau, *Governor Richard Ogilvie*, 183. State Community College while envisioned as a wonderful opportunity for the community was only one of the great political feats that Ogilvie was able to accomplish. The excitement and unprecedented act of establishing State Community College independent of local support would be trumped by Ogilvie’s biggest political act of all time, establishing a state income tax for Illinois. Third on Ogilvie’s list of memorable political acts was his willingness to give unprecedented increases in funding to public education, specifically community colleges. Ogilvie saw the income tax and community college development and funding as key weapons in his fight against poverty and ignorance. For the first time in 1969, Illinois established a state income tax, whose money was to be used to help bolster the economic situation of the state and provide the state with additional revenue so that it could provide more services to its residents. In joining the fight of previous Governors and legislators to bring education to every resident of the state, Ogilvie was interested in expanding junior and community colleges and providing additional funds for private colleges so that they could enroll the expanding college population. Ogilvie’s second budget beginning July 1, 1970 incorporated record state expenditures of \$4.9 billion which encompassed more state funds for schools and governing bodies in local communities while reducing appropriations for some state agencies. In fact, 58 percent of the projected revenue for that budget was reserved for education costs, including the budgets of the public universities and colleges.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁷² “Legislation Expected for Community College,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 27, 1969.

⁷³ “Creation of ‘Experimental’ College District Sought,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 16, 1969. The *Metro-East Journal* printed that Julius Hovaney, warned that the proposed bill could have a rough time getting passed by the legislature. He said that even though the governor would “push” the bill, not all bills backed by the governor are passed.

federal Manpower Development and Training program.⁷⁴ The availability of additional funds for vocational education was one of the many reasons why the institution was targeted to have a heavy vocational and job training focus. The first concerns came from the appropriations committee who worried that the appropriation for the proposed community college carried an extra item not in the proposed state budget. There were also concerns that the bill did not outline long-term goals for the institution or the city with regards to funding the institution locally. Because of concerns about the long-term goals of the institution, an amendment was added to the bill. The amendment called for an extensive review of the school after two years to determine what it accomplished during that time frame and what steps should be made regarding future funding and governance.⁷⁵ There were also concerns that centered around race and politics and if the institution would be safe from “wrong-doings” that occurred in East St. Louis. Senator Merle Ottwein, sponsor of the bill addressed those concerns by stating, “He looks upon such a school as “preventive medicine,” that could challenge the community to use the facilities as fully as possible and “in complete good faith.” He also stated, “It would be much better than something that was an actual giveaway in that it would provide the means for young people to better themselves.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ “Legislation Expected for Community College,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 27, 1969. According to the *Metro-East Journal*, funds from other sources were sought because local tax sources “could not possibly support a junior college in East St. Louis.”

⁷⁵ “Senate Approval Predicted: Legislators Optimistic about Junior College Bill,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 13, 1969.

⁷⁶ “Senate Panel OKs Jr. College Measure,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 5, 1969. Sen. Merle Ottwein, R-Edwardsville, sponsor of the bill, said he expected a fight in the appropriations committee as members of that committee are concerned with cutting the budget wherever possible. Sen. G. William Horsely, R-Springfield, voted against the bill. He said, however, he might support it on the floor if a provision was made that in time there would be some local funding. It was reported that the four committee members voting present were concerned that East St. Louis would not be a safe place in which to locate such an educational system. Ottwein said East St. Louis would be the only site for the school as that is where the people needed most such an institution. An additional newspaper article from the *Metro-East Journal* reported on the resistance to the bill from several legislators. “College Proposal Snagged,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 19, 1969. A bill calling for the establishment of an experimental junior college in East St. Louis ran into a serious snag today in the Illinois House Appropriation Committee. A vote on the measure was postponed when several committee members demanded more information

Withstanding earlier criticism, Senate Bill 1255 introduced into the Illinois Senate on May 28, 1969, passed by the 76th General Assembly in bipartisan legislation authorized an experimental junior college in East St. Louis focusing on vocational and technical training was enacted into law on August 8, 1969.⁷⁷ The month of June was spent sending the bill from one committee to the next. These committees included the education committee, the appropriations committee and several readings in the Senate before it was eventually passed and referred to the House for consideration. The bill was passed in the Illinois House on June 25, 1969. The language of the bill aimed at increasing both the economic and educational opportunities of the residents of the East St. Louis and Lovejoy (Brooklyn) areas gave significant power to the Illinois Junior College Board as it was “directed to establish, maintain, and operate an experimental junior college district to be comprised of territory which included the city of East St. Louis, to be known as the State Community College of East St. Louis.”⁷⁸ The explicit language giving control of State Community College to the Illinois Junior College Board would serve as the cause for future tension between the locally elected board put in place to plan and recommend curricula, experimental programs, personnel procedures, and operational procedures

from proponents on the proposed college which has the support of Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie. And committee chairman, Rep. Richard A. Walsh, R-Oak Park, warned supporters of the proposal that the college bill is destined for tough going when it comes up for a final vote in the committee. “You better bring everybody you got who will back the college,” Walsh said when Sen. Merle Ottwein, R-Edwardsville, sponsor of the measure, said he could provide more testimony in support of the bill, including members of the governor’s staff. Rep. James C. Kirie, D-River Grove, strongly criticized the college proposal arguing that it was “merely a device to circumvent the wishes of the people. You’re taking the monkey off the taxpayer’s back in East St. Louis and putting it on the back of the state,” Kirie said. “It is simply a fact that no one wants East St. Louis with its low assessed valuation,” Ottwein said of the possibility of annexation.

⁷⁷ “No Title,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, May 29, 1969. The bill was introduced into the State Senate by Sen. Merle Ottwein, R-Edwardsville on Wednesday, May 28, 1969. It has the backing of a coalition of Republican and Democratic legislators and the Governor. The bill was backed by Democratic Senators Alan Dixon-Belleville and William Lyons-Gillespie, Republican Senators Merle Ottwein-Edwardsville, and John Gilbert-Carbondale. Representatives backing the bill were Republican House Speaker Ralph T. Smith-Alton and Ed Lehman-East St. Louis and also Democratic Representatives James G. Krause-East St. Louis, Kenneth Hall-East St. Louis, Leland J. Kennedy-Alton, and Horace Calvo-Granite City. Sen. Alan Dixon, D-Belleville said, “I’m really encouraged by the reception. I’ve talked to those on my side of the Senate and I am sure every Democrat will go for it.” Dixon, who termed the plan “an innovation and an exciting concept of education,” said he is sure the bill will be referred to the Senate’s education committee.

⁷⁸ 110 ILCS 805/2-12.1, “Public Community College Act,” Sec 2-12.1 (From Ch. 122, par. 102-12.1)

to the State Board. However, the initial signing of the bill was met with a flurry of excitement and activity. “I thought it was an excellent opportunity for the city and surrounding communities to improve; begin rebuilding themselves economically and socially with state funding.”⁷⁹ The Illinois Junior College Board was authorized to maintain and operate State Community College of East St. Louis, financed by state general funds with some support from the federal government, a student book fee, and other income.⁸⁰ The bill went on to outline the purpose and curriculum of the community college highlighting that the IJCB was expected to develop, promote, and operate experimental and innovative programs emphasizing vocational and technical training.

State Community College in Operation

State Community College officially went into operation August 8, 1969, however key planning and operations for the school were implemented well before legislation was ever signed. According to Gerald Smith, “Governor Ogilvie urged IJCB to operate as if the bill was already completed.”⁸¹ The Governor was insistent that planning occur so that the institution would be ready to open that Fall. The school was planned, established, opened, and operated under one of the quickest schedules. The draft of the bill was put forth in the legislation in April and it was signed in August with classes opening in September, giving a six-month turn around period from when there was no hope of the city having a junior college, to the city not only having a junior college but opening for instruction. It remained to be seen if this hurried process would help or harm the future of the two-year institution. Gerald Smith in revisiting the opening

⁷⁹ Sis, interview.

⁸⁰ Illinois Junior College Board Trustees “IJCB Policy Manual for SCC of East St. Louis,” 1973, Illinois Junior College Board Board Meeting Files, 472.019, Illinois State Archives, Springfield (hereafter cited as ICCB Meeting Files).

⁸¹ Smith, *Illinois Junior-Community College*, 169.

of State Community College shared the same sentiment when stating, “The objective was achieved with excitement, elation, enthusiasm and through magnificent cooperation of too many individuals, agencies and institutions to list. My conclusion, however, is that such hasty and feverish action is not the appropriate way to start a college.”⁸²

The frenzied activity surrounding the institution; however, would not give those involved much chance to ponder this question or the after effects of the break neck pace with which the institution opened. While leaders of IJCB were able to work with the leaders of SIU-Edwardsville to secure a lease for administrative and classroom facilities prior to the opening of the institution, the bulk of operational activities took place within a six-week time frame between August 8th and September 24th of 1969 that included building, remodeling, acquisition of furniture, equipment, supplies, staff recruitment and employment, class scheduling, student counseling and admission, and many other details. The administrators and leaders worked hard to ensure that classes would be able to start on September 24, 1969. Through joint operation and shared facility space with SIU-E, State Community College opened its classrooms in the newly rehabilitated and refurbished Illinois building, Besinger building and the former Illini Club, all situated on Missouri Avenue and Fourth Street in downtown East St. Louis.

State Community College opened to much attention and praise from around the state of Illinois, but no attention or praise could match the fanfare that local residents bestowed upon the institution during its grand opening. “There was a great sense of possibilities.”⁸³ “I was excited about it.”⁸⁴ “I thought it was a magnificent idea. I thought it was very much needed. I thought it would create an opportunity for students who could not afford to go to college in other places to

⁸² Ibid., 171-172. Edwardsville played a large role in helping the college transition into a position to open by leasing the building, making its staff and available both in a consultant capacity and for direct assistance.

⁸³ Sis, interview.

⁸⁴ Edna Allen, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, August 7, 2009. Edna Allen was a lifelong resident and educator of East St. Louis. She was a member of the local board for two terms.

come, to attend and at least get acclimated to attending an institution of higher learning.”⁸⁵ A life-long educator in the city stated, “The finest thing that has happened to this community during these 40 years is this Community College. There have always been “Rat Alleys” in East St. Louis but there has never before been a State Community College. Many other of our fine youngsters will be drawn to the college if it is permitted to grow.”⁸⁶ “At that time, the school was, you know, bubbling with students, all kinds of students cause you had the community residents, for example, you had the women that were in the community that had waited for, you know, the college to be developed and opened. So, it was all kinds of activities.”⁸⁷ The tuition-free, State Community College enrolled 1,050 students in its first quarter. By the time State Community College embarked on its second year of operation, community colleges had shed almost all admissions criteria, opening institutional doors to an unprecedented mixture of students, resulting in a dramatic increase in the size and diversity of student bodies. State Community College opening during this period was able to extend its reaches to a variety of students.⁸⁸

Purpose of State Community College

State Community College opened as a two-year institution focused on vocational and technical education and was key to ending financial turmoil in East St. Louis. While the institution and particularly sole state funding was celebrated as a key proponent in challenging the conditions of the city of East St. Louis, the legislation also directed the state board to

⁸⁵ Lane, interview.

⁸⁶ Mrs. Clementine R. Hamilton, “A Singular Opportunity,” Editorial, *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 21, 1969.

⁸⁷ Ruth Claybourne, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, April 20, 2009. Mrs. Claybourne began working at State Community College in 1973 as a counselor and later became the director, and finally left the institution in 1996 as Dean of Student and Counseling Services.

⁸⁸ See Appendix C for student enrollment numbers.

continue studies with respect to future local funding and governance of the college. It was envisioned that the school in providing economic opportunities for the city and its residents would bolster the overall economy of East St. Louis by rectifying the decreases in tax revenues, the flight and loss of businesses, breathing new life into the city of East St. Louis.

State Community College was established in line with an earlier Illinois motto “School as a force for social improvements.”⁸⁹ Legislators, community leaders, and especially residents were clued into the perceived empowering ability of State Community College. “The community college system was developed to put education closer to the citizens at a cheaper cost and provide areas of study to meet short-term goals.”⁹⁰ “One of the major purposes was to give those students who did not have the resources an opportunity for an education and they could transition on to institutions of higher learning.”⁹¹ “The purpose of the college in East St. Louis was to provide an educational, you know, workplace, not a workplace, an educational facility for people of the community to gain higher education, an impetus to become more productive members of society.”⁹² Educational institutions with their empowering environments reinforce the changes rendered by education. Empowering environments will bring out the unique power within each person, and help to accomplish the goal of increased autonomy, and self-defining an educational experience that matches a person’s individual needs and background.⁹³ East St. Louis residents were happy to have the institution in the city because they wanted to learn and welcomed the opportunity to help themselves. State Community College was of the utmost importance to youth and residents of the city because it provided them with access to low cost quality higher

⁸⁹ John Pulliam, “Changing Attitudes Toward Free Public Schools in Illinois 1825-1860,” *History of Education Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1967): 202.

⁹⁰ Rouse, interview.

⁹¹ Lane, interview.

⁹² Givans, interview.

⁹³ Peggy L. Chin and Maeona K. Kramer, *Integrated Theory and Knowledge Development in Nursing*, 7th ed. (Philadelphia: Mosby, 2008).

education for those youth and residents who could not afford to attend other higher educational institutions.

Residents continued to espouse their hope and purpose for the community college in East St. Louis, many of which would be implemented into later curriculum and policies of State Community College. In the role the community college would serve for the local community, those intricately involved expressed their joy in working with the new institution.

It was a very rewarding experience because it gave the students a chance to stay at home in the area and to get a chance to be apart of higher education. I'm an education proponent of the highest degree. I feel that everybody should have an opportunity for an education (Very emphatic answer). And I felt that that school was the vehicle for it because we had the...GED classes. We had all kinds of incentives down there to help people to become a little bit more interested in their educational background. And to me it was the star in our crown. Because anything to do with education I felt would help the community because we were sorely in need of it.⁹⁴

Another alum concurred:

Now I started like I said in 1970 and at the time that I started teaching at SCC, it was a time when a large segment of the East St. Louis population and surrounding areas that fed into the school had not been able to afford higher education. And SCC made it affordable for them. You had a lot of pent up need that was being met in the first couple of years. Black people who had never had an opportunity to go to college before and SCC was a gateway for them to get in, get the background and stuff that they needed and some of them from that went on to jobs. Some of them went on to SIU-Edwardsville. Some of them went away to school, different places. And it was really, I think, something that gave the community a sense of pride.⁹⁵

State Community College was an institution established explicitly for the growing, low-income African American population of East St. Louis and joined the ranks of other educational institutions established to serve historically oppressed groups. State Community College, a predominantly black two-year institution became a member of a special group of two-year institutions classified as special-focus community colleges. These institutions fall into three main categories, historically black two-year institutions, predominantly black two-year

⁹⁴ Nash, interview.

⁹⁵ Sis, interview.

institutions, and black-serving institutions. Historically black two-year colleges are those established prior to 1965 as segregated institutions, while predominantly black institutions service a student body that is 50 percent or more African American, while black-serving institutions service a student body that is 25 to 49 percent African American. Urban community colleges make up the largest proportion of those institutions that are predominantly black and predominantly black serving institutions.⁹⁶ These institutions while comprising less than 10 percent of the population of two-year colleges make a big difference because they “strive to create a climate conducive to the academic success of their particular racial, ethnic, or gender student body.”⁹⁷

Education has long served as a powerful symbol for the important connections among self, change, and empowerment in African-American communities. In order to gain access to higher education, blacks had to create their own institutions. The fact that blacks weren’t allowed to attend other educational institutions made the establishment and attendance in their own institutions very important to and for them. Historians have shown that an emphasis on black self-reliance and the development of black institutions are frequently found during periods of black discouragement and increased racist oppression. However, the founding of black

⁹⁶ Barbara K. Townsend, ed., “Collective and Distinctive Patterns of Two-Year Special-Focus Colleges,” in *Two-Year Colleges for Women and Minorities: Enabling Access to the Baccalaureate* (New York, Falmer Press, 1999), 5. State Community College was not established in a vacuum, rather it joins a group of two-year institutions labeled as special-focus community colleges because they enroll women students only or primarily enroll black, Hispanic, or Native American students. These institutions are commonly known as women’s colleges, historically black and predominantly black colleges, tribal colleges and predominantly Native American colleges, and predominantly Hispanic institutions. Vanessa Northington Gamble, *Making a Place for Ourselves: The Black Hospital Movement, 1920-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), xv. Special-focus community colleges join the multitude of institutions that service a predominantly black clientele. These institutions are categorized as segregated, black-controlled, and demographically determined. Whites established segregated institutions to serve blacks exclusively, as they were not allowed in non-black institutions. Black-controlled institutions on the other hand are those institutions found by black professionals, fraternal organizations, and churches, generally not as exclusively black enterprises, but as interracial ones that would not discriminate. While, “demographically determined,” institutions were established neither to serve African Americans or founded by them but through the rise of black populations in the surrounding area became black serving.

⁹⁷ Townsend, “Collective and Distinctive Patterns,” 3.

institutions should not be seen solely as a reaction to discriminatory, exclusionary practices, but should also be viewed as the long-standing tradition by the African American community of providing for its members.⁹⁸ Educational institutions established for and by blacks, commonly known as HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) unlike other colleges, are united in a mission to meet the educational and emotional needs of black students as well as the needs of the black community—that is the preparation of black youth for leadership roles and professional services in the black community.⁹⁹ HBCUs were created to provide educational opportunities for African Americans when other higher educational venues restricted their participation. It is in this historical tradition of providing access and opportunity as well as a commitment to racial uplift that the residents of East St. Louis envisioned the development and growth of State Community College. To borrow from educational researchers M. Christopher Brown and James Davis, SCC because of its position, mission, and location through its social contract to the community and its students was a “social agency” as well as a “social equalizer,” in that it sought to provide an equal educational opportunity and attainment” for its students.¹⁰⁰

“The State Community College is one of the most important things ever to happen to East St. Louis.”¹⁰¹ State Community College represented a dream come true for a community and advising committee that refused to say die when locating the institution in East St. Louis seemed an impossibility. It was a symbol of hope in a community where jobs and job training were major problems.¹⁰² State Community College quickly rose to the challenge of living up to the equity agenda of community colleges by opening its doors to residents who both did and did not

⁹⁸ Gamble, *Making a Place*, 11.

⁹⁹ Julian B. Roebuck and Komanduri S. Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), xi.

¹⁰⁰ M. Christopher Brown II and James Earl Davis, “The Historically Black College as Social Contract, Social Capital, and Social Equalizer,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 76, no. 1 (2001): 33.

¹⁰¹ “State Board Bears Responsibility for East St. Louis Junior College,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 30, 1969.

¹⁰² Editorial, “Junior College Election Important,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 19, 1969.

have high school diplomas, who were seeking a liberal education and job training skills. State Community College worked hard to bring services to the community. According to Bailey and Morest, community colleges play a particular role in providing equity in higher education. In living up to the equity or social mobility model, community colleges have built their activities around their open-door mission—providing access to a college for a wide range of students.¹⁰³

While State Community College represented a wonderful opportunity for the residents and the city of East St. Louis, the turmoil, struggle, and uncertainty in getting the institution established would haunt the institution in later years. The following chapter looks at the continued operation of State Community College as it sought to fulfill its quest of providing educational opportunities for the community.

¹⁰³ Thomas Bailey and Vanessa Smith Morest, eds., “Introduction” in *Defending the Community College Equity Agenda* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2006) 3.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BEST THING THAT HAPPENED TO EAST ST. LOUIS: THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The College is the focal point of the community. On its success or failure depends the success or failure of the East St. Louis community. State Community College has been the biggest boost to the community in a number of years. It has given inspiration, uplift, a ray of hope to the citizens economically, socially, and politically. More businesses are opening in the downtown area. It has given persons who never thought they would be able to attend college an opportunity to attain a higher education. For the future of the community, the College is a necessity, a necessity which is expected to project itself into the future.¹

The views and sentiments expressed by members of the first State Community College local advisory board are a common portrayal of what the establishment and operation of State Community College meant and would continue to mean to residents and the development of East St. Louis. These sentiments are what would drive the continued development of State Community College. This chapter looks at the changes in State Community College's curriculum, facilities, and governance as it continued to grow and develop into a quality two-year institution to serve the needs of East St. Louis residents.

After State Community College's first few years of operation the institution worked to determine the exact nature of its experimental status. "There was no precise definition of what was meant by the term "experimental college" in the statute. One very real element of experimentation is related to the whole problem of the rebuilding of the deteriorating city of East

¹ Illinois Junior College Board and Local Board of Trustees for State Community College of East Saint Louis, "Report to the General Assembly of the State of Illinois and State Community College of East Saint Louis," (Springfield: Illinois Junior College Board, May 1971), 21. Statements from Miss Fredericka Nash, Secretary to the State Community College Board and A. Wendell Wheadon, Chairman of the State Community College Board.

St. Louis. Numerous federal projects had been established in East St. Louis, and so one of the experimental characteristics of this activity was to determine whether or not an institution like a State Community College could further prevent deteriorating characteristics of the city.”² State Community College’s experiment was to significantly impact the community’s educational and economic opportunities by offering sound, innovative and quality academic programs. State Community College strived to provide a strong educational program aimed at producing an intelligent, educated electorate, a group of citizens able to approach, examine and resolve some of the problems of the day, and able to rise to the challenges of leadership in neighborhoods and communities across the nation.³ State Community College settled into the East St. Louis area by providing much needed educational as well as social services.

Administration, faculty and staff, and local and state board members were enthusiastic that State Community College would continue to grow and thrive into a well-functioning community college integral in the economic and educational development and opportunities of the residents and the community of East St. Louis. As a means of becoming a full-fledged higher educational institution, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS) accepted State Community College as a correspondent of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education in March 1971. This successful completion of the first step of the accreditation process indicated acceptance of the plans of the college for a quality academic program.⁴ SCC received annually a certificate of recognition from the Illinois Junior College Board until 1978 when it received accreditation from the North Central Association.⁵

² Gerald Smith, interview by G. Ernst Giesecke, October 4, 1976, transcripts. Norris L. Brookens Library, University of Illinois at Springfield, Archives/Special Collections SM 57, 357 (hereafter referred to as Smith interview).

³ Julian B. Roebuck and Komanduri S. Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993).

⁴ Illinois Junior College Board “Report to the General Assembly,” 1971, 6.

⁵ “SCC Budget Expected to Increase,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 1, 1974.

Accreditation for State Community College went a long way in assuring that the institution provided quality academic programs.

Curriculum

State Community College reached out to its growing student body by offering a variety of courses specifically aimed at increasing the educational and economic opportunities of the residents. These courses ranging from English to drafting, including adult education aligned with the institution's mission of providing a comprehensive education. State Community College offered programs in 1) liberal arts and sciences for people interested in pursuing a baccalaureate oriented degree, 2) occupational programs in vocational and technical fields with focus on job entry skills and career development, 3) adult and continuing education programs to serve the educational needs of adults in the community, 4) developmental programs customized to assist individuals in removing deficiencies in order to qualify for admission to various programs, 5) community and public service programs to provide cultural activities and services to individuals and organizations in the community, 6) student programs to meet the extracurricular, supportive and environmental needs and classes and finally 7) special programs designed to meet the needs of the area, including special training programs developed to train workers for the highway construction industry.⁶ Adherence to a comprehensive mission allowed State Community College the opportunity to offer two-year degrees in associate of arts in liberal arts, associate in science in math and science, associate in science in business, associate in science in pre-teaching, and associate in applied science for vocational trades.

⁶ James B. Holderman and Fred L. Wellman, "The Public Community College System of the State of Illinois," October 3, 1972. Illinois Junior College Board Trustees "IJC Board Policy Manual for SCC of East St. Louis," 1973, Illinois Junior College Board Meeting Files, 472.019, Illinois State Archives, Springfield (hereafter cited as ICCB Meeting Files).

Vocational Curriculum

Vocational, occupational, and technical education were important factors in the establishment of State Community College, an institution established for its perceived role and capability in helping to alleviate the growing economic and racial concerns of East St. Louis.⁷ Vocational and occupational education remains one of the key focuses of community college education and during the establishment of SCC, community colleges and their vocational education programs were heralded as holding great promise for giving the kind of education, which leads to good jobs, and also for filling the national shortages in critical skilled occupations. The role of vocational and occupational education in community college curriculum, development of students, and potential outcomes remains a highly debated topic. In what ways does vocational education hinder or facilitate positive outcomes for its students often leads in questions surrounding the debate of vocational education? An equally important question is who is behind the push for vocational education? In the case of East St. Louis in the wording of the legislation that established the institution, the state government pushed a vocational education focus on the institution. And while vocational and occupational education were seen as the key to solving East St. Louis's problems, the community wanted an educational institution that would be responsive to the needs of every student, including those who wanted to go on to a four-year institution, hence the comprehensive nature of the curriculum. Nonetheless, vocational and occupational education courses were a considerable portion of the educational opportunities available to the residents of East St. Louis.

⁷ The three terms vocational, occupational, and technical will be used interchangeably for this study. Vocational education is that category of educational programs specifically oriented toward preparing people for work. It includes such programs as technical skills training, occupational and career learning programs, and on-the-job training programs.

Vocational education since its inception and expansion to meet educational and economic needs not met by existing educational programs has been the subject of much controversy. Functionalists argue that students and the economy contribute to that rise, while class reproductionists argue that the interest and input of businesses are contributing factors. Kevin Dougherty, on the other hand, argues that occupational education is the result of local and federal governmental influence, while sociologist Jerome Karabel feels that the community college's emphasis on vocational education arose from a class stratified capitalist society pushed by national foundations, businesses, state master plans that encouraged vocational curriculum, and federal government expenditures.⁸ Karabel states, "Capitalist elites—centered in business, the selective universities, and prestigious foundations—support the vocationalized community college because it provides business with publicly subsidized employee training and selective universities with a covert means of deflecting the enrollment demands of less desirable students."⁹ Karabel argued that the interest of the business community in encouraging occupational training at public expense manifested because of the changing labor force that required increasing amounts of skill and manpower shortages. As a result, private industries were eager to use the community college as a training ground. He further argues that the influence of the business community on the junior colleges was exerted through membership of local industrial notables on community college board of trustees. Karabel with fellow sociologist Stephen Brint added to Karabel's earlier theory; Brint and Karabel found that although businesses had a hand in vocationalism it was indirect based on their control of jobs. Moreover, the internal dynamics of the field of higher education particularly the entrepreneurial activity by

⁸ Kevin J. Dougherty, *The Contradictory College: The Origins, Impacts, and Futures of the Community College* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Jerome Karabel, "Community Colleges and Social Stratification: Submerged Class Conflict in American Higher Education," *Harvard Education Review* 42 (1972).

⁹ Karabel, "Community Colleges and Social Stratification," 551.

community colleges played a greater role, portraying higher education as an “organizational field” composed of colleges competing for prestige and resources. In recognition of this hierarchy, community colleges carved out a place for themselves by supplying middle level or semiprofessional occupations. This niche over time gave way to a significant emphasis on vocationalism.¹⁰

Kevin Dougherty continuing the scholarship on the vocationalism of community colleges offers a theory that is both similar and different from Brint and Karabel’s theory. Dougherty argues that government officials took the lead in establishing and vocationalizing the community college, but did so within constraints set by a democratic polity and a capitalist economy. Dougherty finds that governmental initiatives went well beyond the actions of state university and community college officials.¹¹ State government officials ranging from legislators to the state community college boards also spurred the expansion of occupational education. They promulgated rules requiring a certain level of occupational education programming and also provided monetary incentives to accomplish these goals. The federal government had a major impact on the vocationalization of the community college by providing monetary aid and by shaping the views of state and local policymakers. Dougherty argues that Congress and the Presidency combined to encourage occupational education through aid enacted under the National Defense Education Act of 1958, the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962, the Vocational Education Act of 1963, and their subsequent amendments which increased the amount of dollars invested in vocational education.¹² Dougherty argues that government

¹⁰ Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream: Community College's and the Promises of Educational Opportunity in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

¹¹ Kevin J. Dougherty, *The Contradictory College: The Origins, Impacts, and Futures of the Community College* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

¹² Kevin Dougherty, "Educational Policy-Making and the Relative Autonomy of the State: The Case of Occupational Education in the Community College," *Sociological Forum* 3, no. 3 (Summer 1988): 400-432.

officials supported vocational education out of a belief in educational opportunity but also for self-interests. In efforts to gain prestige and economic advancements local officials spearheaded the founding and funding of two-year institutions.

State level officials and state education departments joined state universities in pushing for aid for community colleges because, among other things, they saw the community college as a cheap way to meet the demand for college access and to stimulate politically popular economic growth through publicly subsidized training for business. Dougherty, however, does not neglect the influence of business on governmental initiatives. Realizing that capital investment is key to economic growth and therefore their own political prospects, public officials have taken the initiative to offer businesses publicly subsidized vocational education in order to secure business investment in their jurisdictions. Government officials subscribe to values and beliefs of the importance of economic growth and that this growth must come through an expansion of jobs in the private rather than public sector making them ready to serve business interests with little prompting.¹³ Dougherty showed that local government officials thought of community colleges as a potential boon for their communities, that state government officials found community colleges appealing on opportunity and efficiency grounds, and the state in general had an economic interest in providing trained manpower for private business.¹⁴ Local officials and state officials in Illinois saw the need for vocational education to benefit the state and local community, while also helping students.

Illinois government played a key role in deciding the educational fate and focus of State Community College. Initial legislation surrounding the institution stated explicitly that the institution would develop a strong curriculum in vocational and technical education. As a

¹³ Dougherty, *The Contradictory College*, 50-52.

¹⁴ Steven Brint, "Few Remaining Dreams: Community Colleges Since 1985," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 586 (March 2003): 21.

testament to the intended vocational nature of State Community College, the college was designated by the state as an area vocational-technical center.¹⁵ Designation as an area vocational-technical center made it possible for 11th and 12th graders of the service area to obtain admission for programs in vocational and technical training as the law establishing the college enabled it to plan for vocational training starting with the third year of high school and continuing through the college level. One headline prior to the opening of the institution read, “Junior College Offers New Vocational Courses.” The article goes on to highlight how one unique aspect of the school was to be its focus on vocational and technical courses, listed as blueprint reading, carpentry, sociology, insurance, and law enforcement, as well as licensed practical nursing and nurse aid training, with plans for a registered nursing program to be added at a later date.¹⁶ The first six vocational courses approved by the Illinois Junior College Board were drafting technology, automotive technology, welding, business occupation, and experimental music. These courses ranging from certificate programs to associate degrees were aimed at providing the residents with job skills and these programs could also be funded through national grants alleviating and freeing some financial pressure on the state.

Occupational education represents a solution or viable option in the push for equality of opportunity and society’s need for manpower training, not to mention, the desire for publicly-subsidized employee training. The construction training program, under the direction of the college and the Metro-East Labor Council funded through a \$260,000 grant from the Illinois Bureau of Employment Security enabled the college to train 300 people in programs for carpentry, iron workers, cement masons, operating engineers and laborers in certificate programs

¹⁵ “SCC: New President Believes East St. Louis Institution,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 19, 1970.

¹⁶ “Junior College Offers New Vocational Courses,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, September 3, 1970.

ranging from 2 to 15 weeks.¹⁷ Vocational education courses were continuously added to the program offerings at State Community College. Beginning with the second year of operation the school was expanding its vocational course offerings to include one-year certificate programs in auto mechanics, auto body, mechanical drafting, architectural drafting, business administration, data processing, computer operating key punching and unit records operating. Welding, stenography, sheet metal, radio-T.V. repair, electronics and clerical courses were also added to the roster.¹⁸

While SCC offered a range of vocational programs for its students, the courses lagged behind those offered at more affluent community colleges. A historical look at the difference between educational institutions that served a white student population and those that served a black student population reveals a disparity between the quality of educational programs. Janet Guyden argues that white two-year schools offered courses in applied sciences and nuclear and industrial management, the black public junior colleges in the same areas offered terminal programs in auto mechanics, cosmetology, and shoe repair.¹⁹ For example, at Belleville Area College, students were afforded the opportunity to gain vocational certificates in airframe power mechanics, while SCC students were offered certificates in basic auto mechanics and often had to depend on donations from nearby manufacturers such as Ford Motors for students to gain experience working with equipment. A director of career education in the district stated, “We could never afford the cost of those engines, planes, and parts.”²⁰

¹⁷ “State OKs Certification,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 11, 1970.

¹⁸ “Junior College Offers New Vocational Courses,” 1970.

¹⁹ Janet E. Guyden, “Two-Year Historically Black Colleges,” in *Two-Year Colleges for Women and Minorities: Enabling Access to the Baccalaureate*, ed. Barbara K. Townsend (New York: Falmer Press, 1999), 94-95.

²⁰ “District 189 Night Pupils May Take Courses at SCC,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, September 27, 1972.

The institution went beyond its vocational education courses to offer a combined program that provided job training as well as basic educational skills as evidenced by the job training project under the New Careers program, jointly sponsored by the Madison and St. Clair County Economic Opportunity Commission which combined construction and technical training with a GED program.²¹ In November 1972, the school began operation of the East St. Louis Skill Center, previously operated under the control of Southern Illinois University, as part of the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA). The purpose of the Skill Center was to train disadvantaged youth and adults directed by the Manpower Development and Training Act and in cooperation with the Board of Vocational Education and Rehabilitation, the Department of Labor, and Illinois State Employment Service. The programs were funded heavily by federal funding and a small portion came from the State of Illinois's MDTA funds. The Illinois Community College Board approved certificate programs in Building Maintenance, General Office Clerical, Mechanical Drafting, Sheet Metal Fabrication, Upholstering, and Welding and since completion of the certificates were based upon individual student needs, all programs allowed for student entry on a continuing basis. These particular programs were approved by the ICCB since they served a definite need for the East St. Louis area by providing instruction for disadvantaged students who might not otherwise be able to be provided with the opportunity to receive educational training in an occupational area.²² The Manpower Center was turned over to SCC in part because of the Illinois Board of Higher Education's Master Plan Phase II, which decreed "the universities have to get out of the associate degree and certificate business, in favor

²¹ "President of Junior College May be Chosen by April 10," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, March 18, 1970.

²² Illinois Junior College Board, "State Community College of East St. Louis: Career Certificates, Manpower Development and Training," October 10, 1972, ICCB Meeting Files.

of community colleges. It was also the only Manpower Center in Illinois that wasn't under the control of a local community college.²³

Legislators and community members and students of State Community College lauded vocational training and a vocational education focus for the institution. According to one resident, the institution was established to “provide job training for as many residents as possible. It was necessary to have education easily, accessible in order to compete in the work world. So I think that was part of the thrust, I mean a big part of the thrust in having the community college.”²⁴ One board member stated, “Originally it was to have been a vocational college. Vocations...we were sorely in need. It's just recently that our fellows are getting into unions here. And this is what SCC was to have been all about, the emphasis on producing students who could command jobs in the union because the union was your badge of authority. The purpose of the program was to develop workers period.”²⁵ How one viewed the purpose of the institution would go a long way in determining how they utilized the institution and their determination of the institution's worth in the community.

The role of vocational education in helping the overall economic development of the city was not lost either. “Well it would be a plus for any business that was thinking of coming into the area. That we would have training courses for the students who would be interested in certain avenues or endeavors and we would help each other, help the business community as well as it would help us in our growth with the educational aspects of the city.”²⁶ Another description of the role of the community college in East St. Louis stated, “State Community College is located in the central business area of East St. Louis and can therefore be considered a major

²³ “Job Training Agency: Manpower Center Control Goes to SCC in November,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, September 13, 1972.

²⁴ Ray, interview.

²⁵ Nash, interview.

²⁶ Ibid.

catalyst in the improvement of the target area population. The attempts of the institution are to improve the educational level and to provide specialized skills, which will drastically improve the economic outlook of the city of East St. Louis and its residents.”²⁷ Before the institution was actually opened and operating, Ray Dickerson, head of the Department of Business and Economic Development, imagined the school as providing the key for unlocking the door of prosperity in East St. Louis. Dickerson stated, “It’s [SCC] very much a natural for the improvement of the skills in the area.” The thinking was that State Community College would play a significant role in efforts to sell East St. Louis to industrial developers.²⁸ Vocational education for some educators and leaders represented a real need for the community. It was through vocational education that residents would get skills needed to get a job but it would also provide them with skills to get training and experience in jobs that were part of unions, which to them guaranteed long-term employability.

State Community College focusing on its commitment to community service and community education offered several vocational and technical programs in conjunction with the community to enhance employable skills of community residents. The Illinois Community College Board approved a community service program for area contractors designed to provide training in bidding and business procedures and also provide appraisal of construction problems with students suggesting solutions.²⁹ State Community College partnered with neighborhood and community based centers to provide educational services to citizens not currently or traditionally involved in higher education and facilitated their access to State Community College. Granite City Steel also requested that State Community College participate in and

²⁷ “Special Program for Assistance to Students,” Unpublished manuscript, Illinois State Archives, Springfield, IL: Illinois Community College Board Meeting Files, ICCB Meeting Files.

²⁸ Richard H. Icen, “New Junior College,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, June 8, 1969.

²⁹ “Rev. Hubbard Appointed to SCC Board of Trustees,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 7, 1971.

develop jointly a recruitment, job and study program. Granite City Steel and State Community College recruited candidates for employment with Granite City Steel at mid-management level. Successful candidates studied at State Community College and worked at Granite City Steel Corporation and were given the option to continue their studies at Southern Illinois University if they chose to do so. According to the Illinois Junior College Board, this program was an example of State Community College's commitment of total accountability to its community.³⁰

In spite of the heavy push for vocational education on the part of the legislation establishing State Community College and community members interested in the possibility of economic growth at the hands of vocational education, the institution was chartered with a comprehensive mission statement and focus. Although the merits of vocational education were espoused and even accepted for particular periods of time, liberal education has remained a vital part of education for blacks. College leaders wanted to ensure that their students were being educated for multiple avenues in life. According to the first Dean of Curriculum at State Community College in response to the newly developing curriculum responded, "The curriculum will be for the development of human beings."³¹ Through its innovative programs such as Pre-Teaching, Human Services, Urban Sociology and other courses the institution projected itself into the revitalization of the East St. Louis community. The school also offered several courses for those who were employed and needed schooling to be upgraded in their field.³² The East St. Louis Headstart Agency approached State Community College to provide its teaching staff with an upgrade within the formal structure of higher education. State Community College responded by developing a pre-teaching associate degree program. State Community College articulated

³⁰ Illinois Junior College Board and Local Board of Trustees for State Community College of East Saint Louis, "Report to the General Assembly of the State of Illinois and State Community College of East Saint Louis," (Springfield, IL: Illinois Junior College Board, May 1971), 18.

³¹ "No Title," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, August 14, 1969.

³² "SCC Registration Nears," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 31, 1969.

transfer guarantees of the degree to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. East St. Louis envisioned its two-year institution as providing educational opportunity to community members to gain more knowledge and reinvesting in renewing their quality of life. These goals would all the institution to literally become the community's college, providing educational opportunity, for everyone.

As State Community College continued its service to the residents of the community college district, the curriculum debate shifted from one of occupational education vs. liberal education, to one that focused on how best to serve a student population where more than a few of the students were unprepared for collegiate courses. As a result, State Community College and its instructors were forced to tackle the issue of remedial and developmental education. The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools charged State Community College with not providing enough remedial or developmental programs at the school, which did much to hinder its "open-door" policy. The institution responded to this challenge by instituting a Learning Laboratory to provide learning resources in three ways. The first learning approach relied on the ASSET test (for new students, and for students enrolling in math and English), secondly skills courses in English and math for students who were not eligible for college-level courses were provided and finally the school implemented individualized instructional programs in reading, English, and math.

State Community College also developed an Early School-Leaver Program designed to assist students who dropped out of junior and senior high school. The office staff assisted these students in finding employment and getting assistance through adult basic education programs at the college. In an attempt to assist welfare recipients, State Community College faculty and staff designed a program to prepare individuals for the GED program to assist them in gaining access

to employment or a college education through the Workforce Preparation Program.³³ State Community College continuing to respond to needs of the community offered a number of community service projects housed on the campus including Upward Bound, Alcohol and Drug Education Training, the Foster Grandparent Program, Job Training Partnership Act, Literacy Project, L.O.V.E., Adult Basic Education and General Educational Development (GED) preparation, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and other programs for students with special needs. There was a reciprocal agreement between the college and area schools through the TECH PREP program, whereby the schools utilized the vocational-technical building for several classes while the college was allowed to use the school's maintenance equipment. SCC also utilized local school space to offer off-campus courses.

The Illinois Junior College Board approved the Junior College Public Service Grant Program to enhance the ability of community colleges throughout Illinois to carry out locally created programs of public service. The program allowed the application of the college's resources to locally identified community problems and provided for cooperation between community colleges and other agencies at the local level.³⁴ This grant that included funding programs like non-credit continuing education and community service activities such as seminars, workshops, community development surveys, forums, series, outreach centers and other forms of special education services was instrumental in helping State Community College forge a relationship with the East St. Louis community. State Community College utilized the local Mary E. Brown Community Center as an outreach center for the College's commitment to public and community services. Since performing arts facilities were not present or available at

³³ State Community College of East St. Louis, "Comprehensive Evaluation for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools," October 23-25, 1995, 21, unpublished manuscript, personal papers of Ruth Clayborne.

³⁴ Illinois Junior College Board, "Guidelines on the Junior College Public Service Grant Program," May 12, 1972. ICCB Meeting Files.

the leased properties of State Community College, the College used the Center for its Performing Arts teaching and productions, and related student activities. Administrators felt that the Mary E. Brown center was a very good beginning toward the realization of developing the neighborhood, school, homes, economic resources and even moral fiber of the community.³⁵ State Community College was commended on its many beneficial collaborative relationships with neighboring educational institutions, business, industry, and governmental policies.³⁶

Facilities

State Community College, an institution of the community, held its classes in various buildings, offices, and locations throughout the community. Automotive, welding, and sheet metal occupational programs were hosted in a leased garage facility. The State Armory in East St. Louis was utilized as a physical education facility and the local community center was utilized for drama, music and art. Officials at State Community College made it a point to utilize existing community institutions as a means of serving the residents of the community.³⁷ For 11 years, classes at State Community College were conducted in “rehabilitated” buildings across the city. The state paid for the rehabilitation of buildings that were formerly dentist and doctor offices, funeral homes, and even former manufacturing buildings. SCC specifically conducted its vocational technical education classes in former manufacturing buildings. By utilizing community facilities it allowed the college to come into greater contact with the community who had personally reached out to the institution. It provided greater visibility for the institution and its programs.

³⁵ Fred L. Wellman to Clifton J. Woods, memo, 1970, ICCB Meeting Files.

³⁶ SCC, “Comprehensive Evaluation for the Commission,” 24.

³⁷ Illinois Junior College Board “Report to the General Assembly,” 13.

While the residents of East St. Louis were considerate of the circumstances under which State Community College opened, and recognized the opportunity and impact on the community that courses housed locally afforded, they were also aware that their facilities were not on par with those of other community colleges in the State. Given the expediency of the opening of the institution, there wasn't time to secure "proper" educational facilities. However, given the "urbanness" of the city, it was not impossible to see how classes could be conducted in renovated office buildings in the downtown area. Despite the gratefulness on the part of students, faculty, staff, local businessmen and leaders, they couldn't help feeling that the construction of the facilities was yet another haphazard way in which the community was being treated. As early as 1970, the Human Relations Commission favored a new permanent campus for State Community College. Members of the commission argued that the students of East St. Louis would be receiving an inferior education if they didn't get a new facility and kept learning in the makeshift quarters. Rex Carr stated, "It is our understanding that most junior colleges in the state are building campuses designed for and intended for the creation of a college atmosphere. The education to be received at such a campus might well be superior to the education received in the facilities presently being used."³⁸

The College indicated a number of institutional goals to be achieved by establishing a permanent campus. The institutional goals included an improved image and a sense of stability for the institution. A permanent campus would also improve community within the college and between the college and its constituencies, while also providing flexibility in the curriculum, student support services, and the governance of the college in order to meet student and administrative needs. A permanent campus would have allowed State Community College to expand co-curricular activities to increase greater participation of all college personnel in student

³⁸ "Relations Unit Request New SCC Campus," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, April 29, 1970.

activities and expand community service offerings. Making the college facilities more available to community groups and making additional college resources available to agencies, organizations, and institutes in their efforts to serve the Metro-East area. A permanent campus would also provide a space to develop cooperative working relationships with local businesses, industries, and management, a benefit for the community and surrounding communities.³⁹

Plans for a permanent campus for State Community College began as early as 1971, when discussions between the local advisory board and the Illinois Community College Board resulted in preparation for a new interim campus on a permanent site. While there were plenty of discussions and even tentative plans to build an interim campus that materialized in the 1973-1974 school year, difficulties in securing a permanent pushed those plans to the side. It was determined that the future campus needed a tract of land at least 20 and perhaps as many as 40 acres, centrally located in the district, with access to public transportation, and suitable for construction. It was also an added requirement that the future site be in downtown East St. Louis so that the investment in the college, its very newness, would contribute to renovation of the central city.⁴⁰ The Foster Calvert Park area was chosen as the future site of the State Community College campus based on its estimated costs, land acquisitions and its potential in helping to revitalize and redevelop the downtown community. City officials envisioned the community college campus generating much needed commerce essential to the community like dime-stores, drugstores, record and tape stores, stationery and novelty shops, and above all, eating and drinking establishments.⁴¹

³⁹ Jenkins-Fleming Architects, "Program Analysis for State Community College," East St. Louis, October 1975. ICCB Meeting Files.

⁴⁰ "Time to End Indecision on SCC Campus Site, *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, July 3, 1975.

⁴¹ Robert L. Donahue and Donald S. Glickman Donahue, "The East St. Louis Area: An Overview of State Capital Projects and Policies," (Springfield: Illinois Capital Development Board, 1977), 81. "Mason Vows Opposition to Shop City SCC Site," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, August 4, 1975. A quote from the journal

The Foster Calvert Park area near the central downtown area was chosen as a final site in 1974, with the hopes of occupation by 1978. While the site was chosen in 1974, there were considerable hurdles facing the administration of the school in actually acquiring the site for actual construction and building. SCC and the Illinois Community College Board struggled for over a year and a half on site selection of the campus for which the General Assembly appropriated \$4.4 million.⁴² SCC was included in the special (additional) \$30 million funds for capital projects even through Governor Walker made sweeping reductions in funds for capital projects across the state because the college needed a permanent campus and had higher priority than colleges seeking simply to enlarge, and it was a project in a high unemployment area. The statewide construction program was designed to aid the ailing economy by creating jobs.⁴³ Problems in acquiring the land were exacerbated by the fact that the neighborhood was occupied and the city had to acquire funds to actually purchase the land. In 1976, the city of East St Louis secured a \$1.1 million loan to buy and clear the campus site. The ICCB also committed the state to pay \$678,000 toward purchase of about 35 acres of the site, plus \$38,000 to cover costs the city incurred prior to HUD approval.⁴⁴

Ground finally broke on a new institution in October 1978, seven years after a permanent campus was first proposed. At a ceremony celebrating the groundbreaking, Governor James R. Thompson and other state officials declared construction of the \$19 million campus an important step for the economic development of the city and the education of its citizens. Thompson said, “The construction was a new cornerstone for the redevelopment of the community. The state of

echoes this sentiment. East St. Louis Mayor William Mason said, “We were looking toward the college to revitalize the downtown. I’ve talked to fast-food chains who said they would come here if the college were downtown.

⁴² Larry Spohn, “State May Repay Missing SCC Funds,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, July 25, 1976.

⁴³ “SCC, Schools, Sewers Also Included in Walker Program,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, February 2, 1975.

⁴⁴ “SCC Site Money OK Seen,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 28, 1976.

Illinois is firmly committed to supporting not only the rebirth of the community college but also the redevelopment of the center of this great city.”⁴⁵ The 1978 groundbreaking resulted in the final completion of a 25.7 acre campus consisting of 30,015 square feet in the learning Resource Center, 37,475 square feet in the Skill Training Center, and 59,985 square feet in the Academic Administrative Building which opened its doors on January 18, 1982. While \$19 million was budgeted for the campus, total construction for the three buildings amounted to a little over eight million dollars.⁴⁶

Governance

Governance issues clouded much of State Community College’s growth period. “The SCC board’s advisory role has been a sore point with local trustees, almost since the college was created in 1989.”⁴⁷ Governance focuses on the external control of higher education organizations, while most focus has been on what state bodies govern or coordinate public colleges, Dougherty argues that governance needs to be put in more general terms of the external control of organizations by a variety of players and a variety of modes of control.⁴⁸ Illinois public junior colleges were primarily local institutions governed by a local board of trustees with coordination and approval of various activities by the Illinois Junior College Board; however, that was not the case in East St. Louis. A key means by which community colleges are controlled is through the structure of their financing mechanisms. In the case of State Community College its unique position of being a state supported community college resulted in

⁴⁵ Marilyn McCraven, “SCC Project Supporters Applaud Ground Breaking, *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 20, 1978.

⁴⁶ “A Short History of State Community College,” ICCB Meeting Files.

⁴⁷ “Legislation Proposes Appointed SCC Board,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, March 16, 1977.

⁴⁸ Kevin J. Dougherty, “Introduction,” in *ASHE Reader on Community Colleges* 3rd ed., eds., Barbara Townsend and Debra Bragg (Boston: Pearson, 2006), 117.

it being governed by not one but two governing boards. SCC was the only junior college in Illinois operated by the state junior college board instead of merely being supervised by it. The Illinois Public Junior College Act made the Illinois Junior College Board directly responsible for the budget and expenditures of the State Community College of East St. Louis. Thus the Illinois Junior College Board specifically was responsible for all revolving funds, special assessments, charges and fees, charges to persons not connected with the college, funds received from other agencies, and funds received from private sources.⁴⁹ The two boards were set up to preserve the state's investment and to give local community members input into college operations.

The duties of the local advisory board in East St. Louis were spelled out in 1969, shortly after the first election. The first meeting between the local board and the state board occurred on October 27, 1969, two months after State Community College opened for instruction. The first meeting centered on creating a tentative budget for the community college for the fiscal year 1971, recommendations for employment, architectural services in connection with the renovation of buildings being used by the school, and other business. The local advisory board was also charged with making a thorough, comprehensive and continuous study of the college's program of studies, the curricula needs and problems and making regular reports and recommendations to the state board. It was the local board's duty to recommend to the state board necessary rules for the management and governance of the college that might be required or proper for the maintenance, operation and development of the college. It would take a study of personnel needs, qualifications, duties, compensation, tenure and performance and make regular reports and recommendations on such to the state and was also charged with giving attention to the

⁴⁹ Frank F. Fowle Mr. A. Wendell Wheadon, letter, October 15, 1970, ICCB Meeting Files.

development of experimental programs intended to serve and enrich the college contribution to the community needs.⁵⁰

Members who were not content with their position or duties were of the opinion that the local board should assume all responsibility for the College. The state board should be relieved of its responsibilities other than what they would have with any other junior college district even though the school was funded 100% by the state. State Community College did not operate as any other junior college instead it operated as a state agency and was subject to different rules. Board members continued that other institutions like four-year colleges and universities were financed 100% by the state and they had the right for local governing. Local authority meant passing its own rules and creating its own policies. The unique position of reporting to two separate governing bodies caused confusion and conflict. The state-local board dual roles contributed to an unsettled environment, not only for the president, but also for many other administrative and professional employees of SCC as well.⁵¹ Gerald Smith, the first Executive Secretary of the Illinois Community College Board and Executive Officer of State Community College stated,

One of the problems that began with the organization of the Advisory Board in the fall of 1969 and persisted, was the great dissatisfaction of that group with the limitations on their authority and power. The members of the elected Board in East St. Louis deeply resented the fact that they did not have control of the finances, that all of their actions were advisory only. They have felt that way from the time they first organized, and I think that it has been an unfortunate development. It is my judgment that ICCB has done everything it could possibly do to delegate to those people the opportunity to make recommendations to the State board with regard to the operation of the district so that, in essence, they were almost making the decisions.⁵²

⁵⁰ "Light Voting Expected Today: New SCC Board Work Ready," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 22, 1969.

⁵¹ Leonard Busen, "Local Control of SCC Urged," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, July 21, 1972.

⁵² Smith, interview, 359.

While the state board did try to delegate as much responsibility as possible to the staff and local board of State Community College, members of the East St. Louis board of trustees viewed the governance structure as problematic. They felt the relationship hampered the provision of effective leadership and created an additional and unnecessary layer of bureaucracy that major, complex college operations had to be sifted through. It also limited the college's impact on and relationship with the community since many decisions were made from afar. It restricted administrative and fiscal control and imposed undue strains on the process of doing business with vendors; caused inordinate delays in the ordering and receipt of materials.⁵³

The Illinois Community College Board faced charges of paternalism in its relationship with the elected board of trustees in East St. Louis. These charges seemed to be supported with statements between state board members, "Some state officials in other agencies have actually claimed that we have delegated too much responsibility and that we need to provide closer supervision and control of State Community College operations, particularly financial matters."⁵⁴ "The local SCC board acts as an advisory board to the Illinois Junior College Board which governs SCC."⁵⁵ A profound statement in that it shows that the local community never governed the institution and while it may have been established for the local community the community members didn't possess enough "sense" and savvy to run the institution. The Illinois Junior College Board took the recommendations of other state agencies and implemented extensive financial management policies. The policies took nearly all authority for handling finances from the local board and placed the authority and responsibility in the hands of the state board. The

⁵³ Jefferson Ware, "SCC 75-Against the Tide," *Review* 2, no. 3 (November/December 1974), 1.

⁵⁴ Fred L. Wellman, Executive Secretary of IJCB to Rey W. Brune, IJCB Board Member, January 24, 1972. ICCB Meeting Files.

⁵⁵ "Business Reasons Cited: Wheadon Quits College Board," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, September 19, 1971.

state board controlled most of the college's funds and the local board had responsibility for the student activities fund.⁵⁶

This was a key concern for many and was an underlying question in a number of bills aimed at modifying the operation and governance of State Community College. In the Spring of 1977, the question of who was most fit to govern the institution was answered when Senate Bill 380 was signed into law.⁵⁷ In restructuring the Board, many called for the Governor to appoint Trustees outside the community since the school was supported with state funds. The constitutional question became: Can state funds for a community school be directed entirely by a community? However, the underlying question was: Can East St. Louisans, given the city's reputation for scandals involving public money, operate the college? These objections were quieted in 1977 when Governor Thompson established the autonomous local SCC board with community members. The Governor appointed a seven-member board of trustees—the first local board to have the statutory authority, and responsibility for directing SCC's affairs. However, the General Assembly would retain fiscal control because the institution was state supported and the state board would retain the same authority it had over all other community college boards in

⁵⁶ Illinois Community College Board Meeting Minutes, May 1972. ICCB Meeting Files. ICCB implemented changes in financial procedures after reported problems with bidless contracts in violation of the state purchasing act. The executive secretary of the junior board stated that part of SCC's problems had resulted from the fast startup of the college and an unfamiliarity with procedures. The new policies included requiring all purchase requisitions be processed through the junior college board office. All payrolls and grants at SCC had to be approved by the Illinois Board and paychecks were to be issued by the state to all employees among a whole list of changes.

⁵⁷ SB 380, 80th General Assembly, 1977 and 1978. Introduced by Kenneth Hall, SB 380 amended the Public Community College Act. It changed the governance of State Community College in East St. Louis from the Illinois Community College Board to a new board of trustees of seven members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate and one non-voting student member. SB 380 established the powers and duties of the local board and of the State Board with respect to such experimental community college district. The law stated that the State Board shall have the powers and duties of the experimental district board enumerated in Article IV until the effective date of appointment of the experimental district board. The members of the board of the experimental district appointed by the Governor shall be citizens and residents of the experimental district and shall be selected as far as may be practicable on the basis of their knowledge of, or interest and experience in, problems of community colleges.

the state under the new law.⁵⁸ The newly appointed board took office in January 1978. Gov. Thompson said, “The action was a reacclamation of faith in the people of East St. Louis.”⁵⁹ State Community College became the only two-year institution in the state to receive all its financing from the state, yet still maintain an autonomous board.

State Community College brought a vital service—education—for a better life and a better job to a community very much in need of both. State Community College was implemented as helping the state try to solve the many sociological, urban, and disadvantaged problems of the community through academic and educational services. “My observation is that the East St. Louis district has in general been successful. It’s successful because it has served a sizeable enrollment. The enrollment grew to between 2500 and 3000 people and remained at that level. The college has continued to serve essentially a black population. I think in terms of the educational programs and the operation of the college that it has been a very positive force in East St. Louis and from that standpoint I think it was a good idea.”⁶⁰ The next chapter looks at one such academic program that proved to be quite successful in providing both educational and economic opportunities to the residents of the East St. Louis metropolitan area.

⁵⁸ “Lame Duck SCC Trustees Question Elected Need,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, January 11, 1974.

⁵⁹ Carolyn Kingcade, “7 SCC Appointees Represent Broad Spectrum of Citizenry,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, January 22, 1978.

⁶⁰ Smith, interview, 359.

CHAPTER SIX

IF THEY DON'T MAKE A PLACE FOR US WE SHOULD MAKE A PLACE FOR OURSELVES: AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN AND NURSING AT STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

*Women changed the two-year college while the two-year college changed women.¹
The untrained nurse is as old as the human race; the trained nurse is a recent discovery.²*

This chapter looks at the ways in which women of color, particularly African American women in the East St. Louis metropolitan area utilized the nursing program at State Community College as a means of economic and social mobility.³ This chapter also examines the intersecting oppression of race, class, and gender on African American women in the U.S. and gives voice to their agency in using education but specifically nursing education and the nursing profession to simultaneously deconstruct and subsequently reconstruct their lived realities. Karen Flynn and Evelyn Barbee argue that racism within nursing is often overlooked and downright denied by interested parties on the premise that the inherent qualities of nursing such as caring and nurturing make it impossible for nursing to be discriminatory and prejudicial.⁴ Barbee further contends that “the contradictions between caring, a principle part of the identity of nursing, and racism make it difficult for nurses to acknowledge racial prejudice in the

¹ John H. Frye, “Women in the Two-Year College, 1900 to 1970,” *New Directions for Community Colleges* 89 (Spring 1995): 5.

² Victor Robinson, *White Caps: The Story of Nursing* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1947), 25.

³ The term African American and Black will be used interchangeably to refer to women of African descent within the United States.

⁴ Evelyn L. Barbee, “Racism in U. S. Nursing,” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (December 1993): 346; Karen C. Flynn, “Race, Class, and Gender: Black Nurses in Ontario, 1950-1980,” (PhD dissertation, York University, 2003), 247.

profession.”⁵ In recognizing the disconnect between non-racist ideology and racist practices, this chapter provides an overview of the development of African American women in nursing, while utilizing the theoretical framework of Black Feminist Thought to showcase how black women were able to carve out a space for themselves within a profession though dedicated to the care and well-being of patients, systematically sought to deny professional opportunities to women of color. This chapter further takes a look at the historical development of nurse training programs and nurse training educational institutions. It is within this historical development of nurse training, that the nursing program of State Community College will be introduced. In detailing the development of nurse training in State Community College, this chapter also highlights traditionally how women were served by the community college and the ways in which women were able to use the community college to fit their particular economic and career needs.

Black Feminist Thought

In the United States, women of color are confronted with multiple challenges that limit access to opportunities and threaten their educational and economic success. Black women provide a unique opportunity for examining how marginalized race, class, and gender statuses intersect and are acted on institutionally to place individuals at risk for economic and educational failure.⁶ Black women also represent the opportunity to showcase how marginalized groups are able to utilize educational institutions as a means of etching out an alternate social reality. In fashioning the community college into a tool to break the intersecting links of race, class, and

⁵ Evelyn L. Barbee, “Racism in U. S. Nursing,” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (December 1993): 346.

⁶ Carla O’Connor, “Black Women Beating the Odds from One Generation to the Next: How the Changing Dynamics of Constraint and Opportunity Affect the Process of Educational Resilience,” *American Educational Research Journal* 39, no. 4 (2002): 859; Reitumetse Obakeng Mabokela and Anna L. Green, eds., *Sisters of the Academy: Emergent Black Women Scholars in Higher Education* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2001).

gender oppression, black women's experiences in the community college become as equally important to study. Their experiences and struggles are essentially void in studies on the educational experiences of community college students. Major texts on community colleges and community college students also fail to adequately address the diversity among women community college students.⁷ There is also continued omission of theoretical studies that focus specifically on minority women students.⁸ Flynn declares, "The scarcity of resources available on black women necessitates exploring whatever sources are available to try and piece together a narrative of their experiences."⁹

The combined forces of racism, sexism, and classism result in a society that traditionally fails to provide black women with the opportunity to realize and fulfill their human potential. U.S. black women produced social thought designed to oppose oppression. Black women social theories have traditionally been utilized as a way of "escaping from, surviving in, and/or opposing prevailing social and economic injustice."¹⁰ With the advent of nursing as a profession and nurse training programs including two-year programs in community colleges, black women were able to utilize this profession and career trajectory as a means of directing, controlling, and devising a path to professional achievement. Community colleges and two-year programs have provided incredible educational and economic opportunities for students of color, particularly women, as they constitute the majority of community college enrollment. In the case of nursing

⁷ The major texts include but are not limited to, Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream: Community College's and the Promises of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Arthur M. Cohen & Florence B. Brawer, *The American Community College*, 4th ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003); Kevin J. Dougherty, *The Contradictory College: The Origins, Impacts, and Futures of the Community College* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); William Moore, *Against the Odds: The High Risk Student in the Community College* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970); Michael A. Olivas, *The Dilemma of Access: Minorities in Two-Year Colleges* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1979).

⁸ Berta Vigil Laden and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, "Viewing Community College Students through the Lenses of Gender and Color," *New Directions for Community Colleges* 89 (Spring 1995): 18.

⁹ Flynn, "Race, Class, and Gender," 34.

¹⁰ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. 2nd ed (New York: Routledge, 2000), 5.

and nursing professionals, community colleges and two-year programs offer a plethora of opportunity for underrepresented students often shut out of four-year nursing programs in predominantly white schools.

African American women exist in society under the restraints of race, class, and gender oppression. According to Patricia Hill Collins, African-American women's oppression has encompassed three interdependent dimensions.

First the exploitation of Black women's labor essential to U.S. capitalism represents the economic dimension of oppression. Second, the political dimension of oppression has denied African American women the rights and privileges routinely extended to White male citizens. Finally controlling images applied to Black women that originated during slavery attest to the ideological dimensions of U.S. Black women's oppression. Furthermore, the analytical framework of oppression (economics, politics, and ideology) has created an extremely effective and long-running system of social control designed to keep African-American women in an assigned, subordinate place.¹¹

Historically the image and identity of the black woman has been defined through the ideology of an oppressive and discriminatory society. Collins states, "because the authority to define societal values is a major instrument of power, elite groups, in exercising power, manipulate ideas about black womanhood. They do so by exploiting already existing symbols, or creating new ones. Maintaining images of U.S. Black women as the "Other" provides ideological justification for race, gender, and class oppression."¹² Schools, the news media, and government agencies constitute important sites for reproducing these controlling images. It is in the face of these realities that black women have often used these very places (e.g. educational institutions) to create and construct social images that empower black women. Black women have often resisted oppression from race, gender, and class by creating images of self-definition, self-reliance, and independence.

¹¹ Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 5.

¹² Ibid., 69-70.

“Black women lives are a series of negotiations that aim to reconcile the contradictions separating our own internally defined images of self as African-American women with our objectification as the “Other.”¹³ African American nurses continually struggled against images constructed of their ability and skill in the nursing profession. Often faced with a professional image that labeled them as “inferior and other,” and rendered them invisible, black nurses painstakingly constructed an image that through a display of their skill and ability they hoped would portray the opposite of popular discriminatory thought. Black nurses worked twice as hard in helping and caring for their communities, setting up educational institutions and working within a discriminatory and segregated system. From the mid-to-late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century, the history of black women in nursing and nursing education in the United States has been documented to mark milestones in the health sciences legacy, while the impact that nursing has had on the success and aspirations of women and black women particularly has been largely ignored. As there is particular importance in giving voice to black women, black women fashioned the nursing profession into a speech box through which their demands for inclusion, the removal of barriers, equal rights, equal pay, and quality education could be heard. Although African American women have been rendered invisible and insignificant in the histories of the American nursing profession, nursing was envisioned as a way to improve the social status of the African American race, particularly African American women.

Nursing as a Profession

The historical narrative of the development of nursing as a profession reveals a reality much different from the one we normally associate with the women in white. Earlier forms of

¹³ Ibid., 99.

nursing were seen as being equal to the work of a domestic and women were not even allowed to enter the newly erected hospitals. They only gained permission to enter when they agreed to carry on a wide range of activities from housekeeping and cooking to nursing the sick.¹⁴

Although nursing has become a field much appreciated by black women and was utilized in the struggle for equal rights, black women initially had to be convinced that nursing was neither domestic service nor a “warmed-over slavery.” Furthermore, the leaders of the black health care movement felt the need to impress upon black women the notion that they were somehow ideally suited for nursing, indeed that they were imbued with inherent or “natural” proclivities for the kind of work nursing entailed.¹⁵ Nursing was seen as female work by society at large. Women were seen as instinctively caring and nurturing. Historian Darlene Clark Hine contends that during the late 19th century, in the eyes of most doctors and nursing administrators who were male, black nurses represented a fulfillment of those traditional roles and obligations expected of her by the black community and her family, and posed little threat to distinct gender spheres thus eliciting an image of the black nurse as a self-sacrificing, dutiful, warm, and caring mother figure.¹⁶ These images downplayed any depiction of the black nurse as an efficient, autonomous, and assertive professional, sentiments which would change as nurses both black and white worked to redefine the image of the nurse.

Nursing and care have always been in high demand, even before it was a career or profession, as there have always been a need for someone to look after the sick and shut-in. Long before nurses were trained to care for the sick, many women—black and white—

¹⁴ Mildred L. Montag, “Technical Education in Nursing?,” *The American Journal of Nursing* 63, no. 5 (May 1963): 100.

¹⁵ Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Women in White: Racial Conflict and Cooperation in the Nursing Profession, 1890-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 13.

¹⁶ Hine, *Black Women In White*, 15.

volunteered their services during times of crisis.¹⁷ Black women's engagement in nursing extends back to the era of legalized slavery. Early names of black nurses include Jensey Snow, a former slave of Petersburg, VA who once freed opened a hospital and continued for over thirty years to provide healthcare services for the community. Other influential black nurses included Sojourner Truth, Harriett Tubman, and Susie King Taylor, an ex-slave who provided treatment for dysentery and other ailments for black soldiers in Camp Saxton, South Carolina.¹⁸ Sojourner Truth worked as a nurse/counselor for the Freedman's Relief Association during Reconstruction in the Washington area, helping freed men who had migrated from the South find homes and employment in Northern states. Harriett Tubman, during the Civil War served as a nurse in the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina, caring for the sick and wounded without regard to color. She also held the position of matron of nurse at the Colored Hospital in Fort Monroe, Virginia.¹⁹ Many more black women would join the ranks of these famous women in answering the call to care for the sick and ill.

Caring and nurturing considered key aspects of nursing, served to appropriate nursing as a woman's field. In fact, some researchers describe nursing as a natural instinct of women. Robinson wrote, "Woman is an instinctive nurse taught by Mother Nature."²⁰ Because nursing has traditionally been seen as a woman's job it also has historically lacked prestige and power and while the nurse has always been a necessity she has also, however, lacked social status. Robinson, goes on to state "In primitive times, she was a slave, and in the civilized era a domestic. Overlooked by the plans of legislators, and forgotten in the curricula of pedagogues,

¹⁷ M. Elizabeth Carnegie, *The Path We Tread: Blacks in Nursing Worldwide, 1854-1994*. 3rd ed (New York: National League for Nursing Press, 1995), 1.

¹⁸ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 4.

¹⁹ Carnegie, *The Path We Tread*, 8-9.

²⁰ Robinson, *White Caps*, 25.

she was left without protection and remained without education.”²¹ However, women worked to destroy the prevailing image of nursing as a domestic and drudgery-filled task and instead sought to establish nursing as a rigorous profession that would in turn elevate the field of nursing to a position of power and prestige. The rise of nursing is particularly important to study for black women because it is viewed as a profession that provides black women with an opportunity to give back to their communities while also changing their current social and economic positions. Nursing is now seen as a profession that affords women the opportunity to navigate their class position and as such has become one of the “noblest” and “truest” professions for women.²²

The evolution of nursing from a low-status occupation too frequently associated with housekeeping and uneducated and unrefined women into a profession or in the words of the American Nursing Association (ANA) into an occupational group with an “altruistic guardianship over the ethics and performance standards of a vital social service” occurred during the years 1890-1925.²³ Hine argues that by the late 1890s an elite group of white nurse leaders had emerged to give shape and guidance to the professionalization of nursing. “They founded professional organizations, launched journals, created a special body of scholarship, agitated for standardized curriculum, demanded more autonomy for administrators and supervisors, and criticized the gross overproduction of nurses resulting from the proliferation of schools of dubious quality. In addition, they pressed for the implementation of higher admission standards, better working conditions, and higher wages.”²⁴

²¹ Ibid., 25.

²² Mary Kinnear, *In Subordination: Professional Women, 1870-1970* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995).

²³ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 89.

²⁴ Ibid., 89.

Nursing Educational Institutions

The late nineteenth century saw a transformation in the role of nursing, as well as that of hospitals. In the earlier part of the century, nursing was a menial occupation associated with lower-class, poorly educated women; in fact, many hospital nurses were actually convalescing patients. The professionalization of nursing began in 1863 with the establishment of the first training schools for white nurses, founded originally to provide respectable work for middle-class women and to improve the moral climate of hospitals by the introduction of a different class woman to the wards.²⁵ With the increased use of hospitals and increasing complexity of growing hospitals and of patient care, the functions not really nursing slowly became separated and new occupational groups developed. The evolution and progress of medicine subsequently and directly impacted the evolution of professional nursing and nurse training. The push for professionalization and better training for nurses resulted in the establishment of nurse training programs, first in hospitals and later in higher educational institutions.

The development of nurse training programs has taken a dramatic change from the early forms of nursing and nurse training in the United States. Changes in nursing include:

The rise of hospitals and the demise of the diploma-granting schools of nursing after World War II and their replacement by community college programs and baccalaureate-granting nursing schools; a shift during the Great Depression from private duty to hospital employment; a shift from hands-on delivery of care by private duty to hospital employment; a shift from hands-on delivery of care by private duty and prewar hospital RNs to RNs overseeing the delivery of care by non-professional nursing personnel, and finally a return (beginning in the 1970s) to hands-on care by RNs in hospitals and homes.²⁶

²⁵ Vanessa Northington Gamble, *Making a Place for Ourselves: The Black Hospital Movement, 1920-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 12.

²⁶ Nona Y. Glazer, "“Between a Rock and a Hard Place”: Women's Professional Organizations in Nursing and Class, Racial, and Ethnic Inequalities,” *Gender & Society* 5, no. 3, Special Issue: Marxist Feminist Theory (September 1991): 352.

By 1965, the American Nursing Association was working to standardize a formula for the education of nurses. As the ANA pushed for increasing professionalization and educational standards for the nursing profession, it described what it hoped would become the three levels of education for nurses: baccalaureate education for beginning nurse practice; associate degree education for beginning technical nurse practice; and vocational education for assistants in the health service occupations.²⁷ The three levels of nursing are categorized into basic and post-basic nursing programs. Basic programs include those awarding the diploma, bachelor's, and associate degree; post-basic programs include several nondegrees—in public health nursing and nurse-midwifery and then master's and doctoral degree programs.²⁸

Hospital/Diploma Programs

Hospital diploma nursing programs rose quickly to replace early women's nursing schools. Early professional nurse training consisted of a combination of classroom instruction and patient care in hospital schools of nursing. Hine attributes the dominance and control of hospital nursing programs over other nursing training programs to the insufficient capital and lack of endowment of the struggling schools and the increased demand for core scientifically based instruction. Also, the increasing demand of patients for treatment away from the home dramatically fueled the expansion of hospital training.²⁹

The first U.S. hospital-based training programs were established in 1873 at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and New Haven Hospital in Connecticut out of an effort to improve hospitals as well as provide respectable service work

²⁷ Martha A. Nelson, "Education for Professional Nursing Practice: Looking Backward Into the Future," *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* 7, no. 3 (May 2002), Under, "The Spirit of 1965," <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume72002/No2May2002/EducationforProfessionalNursingPractice.aspx> (accessed December 5, 2009).

²⁸ Barbee, "Racism in U.S. Nursing," 347; Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 17.

²⁹ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 5.

for white women as a means of ending the domestic service nature of nursing.³⁰ Formal nurse education began as apprenticeship-type training in hospital schools of nursing in which nursing students provided the majority patient care. Increased training also made it possible for these women to climb the economic ladder. Even though, nurse training was viewed as a way of distancing women from the menial nature of early nursing, in hospital diploma programs nurses were treated as subordinate, underpaid servants. According to Hine, "...student nurses were exploited as an unpaid labor force. In every institution, they performed the domestic and maintenance drudgery, attended the patients and dispensed medicine." Later black nurse training programs would hire out their student nurses in order to supplement the hospital's income.³¹

Although black women for generations had borne primary responsibility for providing nursing care in their communities, few were admitted to the new training schools. These early nursing programs, of which there were 15 by 1880, utilized a quota system to restrict the admission of black students, if black students were accepted at all. The New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston, Massachusetts, the first American hospital with a school for nurses, limited its admissions to one Black and one Jewish student to each class. The first black nursing student at the New England Hospital for Women and Children was Mary Eliza Mahoney admitted on March 23, 1878. Of a class of 42, Mahoney was one of four students who successfully completed the course.³² While, in the South, black women possessed scant opportunity to become "trained" nurses as they were prohibited from attending white institutions and early black institutions had not yet been established.³³

³⁰ Barbee, "Racism in U.S. Nursing," 353; Carolyn J. Godfrey, "African American Nursing Faculty: Where Are They?" *The ABNF Journal* 16, no. 1 (January/February 2005): 11-13.

³¹ Darlene Clark Hine, "Nursing," in *Black Women in America* 2nd ed., edited by Darlene Clark Hine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 445.

³² M. Elizabeth Carnegie, "Educational Preparation of Black Nurses: A Historical Perspective," *The ABNF Journal* 16, no. 1 (January/February 2005): 6.

³³ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 6.

The entrenched racism of the late nineteenth century which operated to deny to a vast majority of black women access to the new schools and hospitals responsible for training nurses, continued throughout the 1960s and 1970s and strengthened the position of State Community College to benefit the community in that it was one of the few programs in the East St. Louis and St. Louis metropolitan areas open to students of color. The nursing profession just like the larger society practiced discrimination. Exclusionary practices included: (a) limiting work opportunities for black nurses to institutions which admitted prescribed numbers of black patients only; (b) supporting separate state boards of nursing examinations for black graduate nurses; (c) membership policies denying admission to all but a few black nurses to professional nursing organizations; and (d) promoting an atmosphere of inferior status for black nurses.³⁴

“Given the starkly drawn battle lines of race and class, the equation was a simple one. If black women were to become trained nurses, the black community had to create the requisite institutions to provide training.”³⁵ As there were no existing nurse training facilities in which black nurses could be trained or the population of blacks cared for, black hospitals were created during the Jim Crow era to care for the sick and ailing, to help black physicians economically, and also to train black women nurses.³⁶ The lack of training facilities and the agency on the part of the black community in constructing educational institutions led to the establishment of some two hundred black hospitals and nurse training schools starting around 1890 and continuing throughout the 20th century. The fact that blacks were not allowed to attend any other institutions made black institutions very important to and for them, allowing them to serve a need created by societal segregation and discrimination.

³⁴ Marie Oleatha Pitts Mosley, “A History of Black Leaders in Nursing: The Influence of Four Black Community Health Nurses on the Establishment, Growth, and Practice of Public Health Nursing in New York City, 1900-1930,” (PhD dissertation, Columbia University Teachers College, 1992), 52.

³⁵ Hine, *Black Women in White*, xvii.

³⁶ Gamble, *Making a Place*, 12.

Nurse training programs established exclusively for blacks, also had their origins in hospitals and led to the awarding of a diploma. Late nineteenth century black physicians, educators, and community leaders helped develop a number of healthcare institutions. Between them they launched a nationwide movement to provide educational opportunities for black women who desired to become nurses. Moreover, these new hospitals aimed to improve the health care available to black citizens while facilitating the professional and economic development of physicians and nurses. Hine argues that white racism, black self-help initiatives, and white philanthropic largesse led to the founding of about a dozen major black hospitals and nursing training schools during the 1890s continuing into the twentieth century. Hine also argues that a major factor shaping the development of black hospitals and nursing schools was the simultaneous emergence of private philanthropic foundations organized by John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and particularly Julius Rosenwald.³⁷ John D. Rockefeller is important to the founding of the first nurse training institution for black women as he and his wife, Laura Spelman Rockefeller contributed funds for Spelman College to create a department of nursing in 1886. Spelman continued to offer a two-year nursing diploma until 1927.³⁸ The few nurse training programs that were established in colleges and universities, like Spelman, Hampton, and Tuskegee, also led to a diploma, as diploma programs were considered sufficient for early nurse training. Between 1891 and 1924, eleven nursing schools for blacks were established in five states—Illinois, Kansas, Pennsylvania, New York, and Michigan.³⁹ But similar to the founding of other educational and non-educational institutions, blacks also

³⁷ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 9.

³⁸ Ibid., 8-9. John D. Rockefeller and his wife Laura Spelman Rockefeller gave funds to establish in 1881 the Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary, subsequently renamed Spelman College.

³⁹ Carnegie, "Educational Preparation," 6.

contributed heavily in the form of financial contributions and non-financial contributions to establish and sustain their institutions.

Segregation being a de facto as well as de jure system of practice demanded that nurse training schools be established for the exclusive education of blacks in the North as well. Training for black nurses in Illinois began with the opening in 1891 of Daniel Hale Williams' Provident Hospital, a twelve-bed private hospital for blacks in Chicago. Williams declared the primary purpose of the new institution to be the opening of "a new field for noble and useful employment for colored women who are otherwise barred from lucrative and respectable occupations."⁴⁰ Carnegie states "Dr. Daniel Hale Williams, first black physician to perform open heart surgery, established Provident because a black woman, Emma Reynolds from Kansas City, had been denied admission to every school of nursing in Chicago."⁴¹ Thirty years later Provident Hospital one of approximately 200 black hospitals and one of the few facilities accredited by national medical organization was a renowned center for the training of black physicians and nurses.⁴²

Other notable early nurse training programs for black women in both academic institutions and hospitals include, the nurse training program in theory and practice established in 1893 by the School of Medicine at Howard University. These students gained clinical experience at Freedmen's Hospital, until 1894, when Freedmen Hospital School of Nursing assumed full responsibility for nurse training. Other hospital programs established to provide training for black women included Lincoln School for Nurses in New York, which according to Carnegie was one of the first training schools to operate independently of the hospital and for the

⁴⁰ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 28.

⁴¹ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 23.

⁴² Gamble, *Making a Place*, 131.

sole purpose of “training black women to care for sick black people.”⁴³ The St. Louis metropolitan area offered a nurse training program at Homer G. Phillips Hospital, the old City Hospital No. 2, in St. Louis, which also awarded a diploma in nurse training. Many black nurses received their nursing credentials from the program, including the first black nurse in the United States to earn a master’s degree, Geneva Estelle Massey Riddle Osborne, the first black instructor at New York University and the Harlem Hospital School of Nursing. She later went back to serve as the first black superintendent of the Homer G. Phillips nurse training school.⁴⁴ Homer G. Phillips would also prove instrumental in the nurse training program at East St. Louis State Community College as the co-director of the nursing program was an alumna of Homer G. Phillips. These institutions served a valuable need in black communities, as they were often the only places that black women could be trained as nurses, a position of importance to them as well as to the betterment of their communities.

Starting in the late nineteenth century, registered nurses established a variety of professional associations. The associations worked to professionalize registered nursing and to raise its status. Starting in 1902, the nursing associations began a state-by-state fight for licensing and “scope-of-practice” acts to define their legal right to do various tasks, which resulted in four states passing nursing licensing laws by 1903.⁴⁵ Black women were shunned and kept out of the white professional organizations through racist sentiment and an adherence to Jim Crow laws. As a means of achieving professionalization and a way of combating the institutionalization of black subordination within nursing, black nursing leaders founded in 1908 the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) which according to Hine

⁴³ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 22.

⁴⁴ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 118-119.

⁴⁵ Glazer, “Between a Rock,” 360. By 1923 all states had passed laws outlining the requirements of good health, good character, three years training and the successful passage of an examination to become a nurse.

“represented black nurses’ determination to achieve a modicum of status as professionals while embracing responsibility and gaining authority for their own personal and professional advance.”⁴⁶ Even with the establishment of training institutions and professional organizations, black nurses were still subjected to discrimination and negative opinions of their professional competence.

Hospital diploma programs provided nurses with a foundation for understanding the needs of the patient and the subsequent care of those needs. Hospital diploma programs were extremely flexible in their training programs. Some hospital diploma programs took nursing school applicants right out of high school, as long as grades and letters of recommendation from teachers and clergy were good and the applicant had adequate physical and emotional stamina.⁴⁷ The qualifications of early nurse applicants are a good indicator of the duties early nurses were expected to perform—physical labor and withstanding the control and subordination of the nursing program. Hospital diploma programs were characteristically controlled by the hospital physician staff, which mirrored patriarchal constructs of society. The role of patriarchy was instrumental in the need to keep nurse training in hospitals. The male world of medicine controlled early nursing education within a hierarchical patriarchy, which served for many decades to increase physicians’ power while diminishing the independence of nurses.⁴⁸

The struggle for professionalization of nursing continued in an uphill battle against the hospital and subordinating positions within the hospital structure. Nurses’ struggle was aided by increased attention from Congress in the form of funding and appropriations. In an effort to train nurses quickly for the war period, beginning with World War II, the federal government

⁴⁶ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 94.

⁴⁷ Angela L. Wadsworth, “Out on Our Own: Women Who Trained as Nurses in North Carolina from 1945-1960,” (PhD dissertation, University of Kentucky, 2002), 1.

⁴⁸ Nancy Carole Barnum, “Leaving Home: Patriarchy, Nursing Education, and Nurse Veterans’ Use of the G.I. Bill,” (PhD dissertation, University of Kentucky, 2007), 34.

increased funds for training and encouraged voluntary associations to train more lower-grade nurses. Congress funded programs to train licensed nurses and nursing assistants and other non-RNs to care for civilian war workers stateside members of the armed forces and their families.⁴⁹ Congress provided the first federal funding for nurse education in 1942 through the Labor-Federal Security Appropriation Act. The money was for tuition and subsistence for students in basic nursing programs and some advanced nursing programs, as well as refresher courses for “retired” nurses re-entering practice. In the spring of 1942, President Roosevelt signed a \$600,000 deficiency appropriation for the further extension of nursing education programs.⁵⁰

After intense battles with segregation in the Armed Forces, black nurses were also finally able to provide and utilize their nursing skills in aid of the country in war. In 1943, through the \$60 million appropriation of the Bolton Bill, the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps program was funded. With an aim to “increase as rapidly as possible the number of nurses in the county,” the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps program benefited both white and black women. According to Kalisch and Kalisch, the subsidized program of the Cadet Nurse Corps proved a boon to black students and by September 1944, there were some 2,000 black nursing cadets representing all but 500 to 600 of the total number of black students enrolled in all nursing schools.⁵¹ Following World War II, professional nursing organizations began an effort to regain control of nurse training through a push for collegiate nursing education. Federal funding also provided a boost in helping to sever ties between nurse training and hospital programs. According to Barnum, the fact that federal

⁴⁹ Glazer, “Between a Rock,” 363.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Philip A. Kalisch and Beatrice J. Kalisch, *The Advance of American Nursing* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1995), 617.

funding was available to nursing schools, and not to the hospitals, gave for the first time, the message that nursing education should be a separate entity from the hospital.⁵²

While hospital diploma programs served the early needs of nurse training, the advancement of science and growing demands of patient care outgrew hospital facilities. According to Connor and McManus, hospital schools could not provide opportunities for students to learn about care in the community, including health promotion and disease prevention.⁵³ It was also argued that if nursing was to become a true profession, it could no longer continue to use only research from other professions but instead nursing had to produce members that were competent to build a scientific body of research, which could only be achieved through college training. While nurses and nurse associations were arguing for the need of advance training, most hospitals and hospital upper level staff—mainly men—rejected the claim that nurses needed collegiate-level training. They frequently questioned the need of a college degree for bedside nursing. There was also resistance from physicians who worked diligently to keep nurses from moving to a professional status as it spoiled them from meeting the needs of the physicians.⁵⁴ Typical of gendered positions in society, nursing was viewed as a position to be controlled by the male dominated ranks of the physicians. Despite the vocal opposition and the determination to keep women in subordinate positions, nursing professional organizations published several reports and documents arguing the case for collegiate-level training.

⁵² Barnum, “Leaving Home,” 48.

⁵³ Mary C. Connor and R. Louise McManus, “Curriculum Revision,” *American Journal of Nursing* 48, no. 6 (1948): 396-400.

⁵⁴ Thetis M. Group and Joan I Roberts, *Nursing, Physician Control, and the Medical Monopoly: Historical Perspectives on Gendered Inequality in Roles, Rights, and Range of Practice* (Bloomington: Indian University Press, 2001), 121.

In 1965, the nursing profession took the position that all education for nursing should take place in institutions of higher education and that by 1985 the bachelor's degree would be required for entry into practice.⁵⁵ The American Nursing Association envisioned this movement as one additional step in fully "professionalizing" nursing. The struggle by nurses to become a recognized and prestigious profession led nursing leaders to call for standard curricula, unified admission criteria, and a separation of ward service from nursing education. Nursing leaders strove to place all programs in institutions of higher learning. Numerous hospital nursing programs black and white alike were affected by the push for sole baccalaureate training.

By 1965, 71 of the 91 black diploma programs had closed, and after 1982 there were no black diploma programs left.⁵⁶ The significance and contribution of diploma programs to the training of black nurses can be felt in the nursing ranks today. There are numerous black nurses, black nursing professionals, black nursing faculty, and black nursing executives whose backgrounds and training were cultivated in black diploma programs. It was thought that this move would increase the professional status of nursing by resolving the service-versus-education conflict inherent in hospital diploma schools and embodied in the image of nursing as a domestic task.⁵⁷ Nursing professionals while appreciative of hospital training programs also saw the move away from hospitals as a training ground as a move away from the patriarchal nature of medicine. Bachelor's degree programs provided women, an opportunity to move away from the subordination of diploma programs. A combination of the continued push for professionalism on the part of nursing associations, a need to relinquish the bonds of hospital training programs on

⁵⁵ American Nurses' Association, "Education for Nursing," *American Journal of Nursing* 65, no. 12 (1965): 101.

⁵⁶ Carnegie, *Paths We Tread*, 41.

⁵⁷ Barbee, "Racism in U.S. Nursing," 353.

nurses, and federal funding helped move nurse training into a field with bachelor's degree requirements.

Bachelor's Degree Programs

While the push for exclusive baccalaureate nurse training got a big push in the 1920s with the 1923 Goldmark Report, which harshly criticized the low standards, inadequate financing, and lack of separation of education from service in the hospital diploma programs and instead argued for adequate finances and support for university schools, the entry of nurses into degree programs of four years began in 1899, when Teachers College, Columbia University, New York established a course for graduate nurses. While, this was not a degree-granting program it did pave the way for advanced educational training of nurses and nursing leadership.⁵⁸ In 1916, the University of Cincinnati established a 5-year program leading to a bachelor's degree in nursing, the first in the country. Although, there were early baccalaureate nurse training programs, hospital diploma programs continued to dominate the training of nurses.

In the 1930s, nursing leaders achieved a major breakthrough in their long struggle to reduce the number of hospital diploma nursing schools by founding the Association of Collegiate Schools of Nursing (ACSN) in 1935. The group worked “to develop nursing education on a professional and collegiate level; to promote and strengthen the relationship study and experimentation in nursing service and nursing education.”⁵⁹ Hine continues that white nursing leaders justified the transition from hospital diplomas to college degrees as essential to liberating nursing education from the service demands of hospitals. They argued that university affiliation would result in a higher standard of nursing care, greater public respectability for the field and

⁵⁸ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 31.

⁵⁹ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 60.

the production of better-prepared nurses.⁶⁰ This cause was furthered by the 1948 Brown Report, which examined nurse training in hospital diploma programs for efficiency, adequacy, and overall preparedness. The Brown Report unlike other reports criticizing hospital diploma programs called for an immediate end to hospital training with colleges and universities taking up the ultimate task of training professional nurses.⁶¹

The advent of baccalaureate training for nurses did nothing to lessen the discrimination and prejudice black women felt within the profession. While elite white nurses embraced the ideology of professionalization, black nurses encountered increased hostility and restricted access both to training schools and professional organizations. Even though black nurses agreed with the push for professionalism they also knew that it held adverse consequences for them. They anticipated that as collegiate programs acquired dominance and a bachelor's degree became the standard credential, black women because of discrimination and exclusion, would find themselves occupying an even more acutely marginal status within the profession, as opportunities for black nurses were ultimately limited during the continued operation of sanctioned Jim Crow in the South and customary Jim Crow in the North.⁶² The new baccalaureate programs like the hospital diploma programs also operated on a quota system in the North and in the South blatantly refused admission to black women, leaving bachelor's degree training for black women up to black institutions.

Discrimination, however, did not stop black women from creating and carving out a space for themselves in bachelor's programs because they knew if they were to become competitive for the top positions in nursing and maintain a viable presence within the profession,

⁶⁰ Ibid., 63.

⁶¹ Shirley H. Fondiller, "The Advancement of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Education: 1952-1972," *Nursing and Healthcare Perspectives* 22, no. 1 (January/February 2001): 8-10.

⁶² Hine, *Black Women in White*, 64.

it was of the utmost importance that they have greater access to collegiate nursing education.⁶³ In 1922, Howard University established a five-year program leading to a bachelor's of science degree in nursing in cooperation with Freedmen's Hospital, which would unfortunately only last three years. In 1936, Florida A&M College in Tallahassee, Florida, established a baccalaureate nursing program for blacks, which subsequently is the oldest continuing baccalaureate nursing program to this day at a historically black institution. In 1942, Dillard University in New Orleans established a baccalaureate-degree program. Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia launched its baccalaureate program in 1944. Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, began offering bachelor's degrees in 1947 and in 1948 Tuskegee Institute in Alabama converted its hospital diploma school into a baccalaureate program. The creation of baccalaureate programs by historically black colleges and universities continued throughout the 1950s. Today there are 24 baccalaureate programs at historically black colleges and universities.⁶⁴ Black nurses are continuing to make gains in achieving bachelor's degrees in nursing. Today, 48% of practicing African American nurses hold at least a baccalaureate degree.⁶⁵ Without the parallel institutions that the black professional class created, successful challenges to white supremacy and institutional discrimination and racism would not have been possible.

Baccalaureate degree nursing programs continued to develop in colleges and universities throughout the 20th century as a means of professionalizing nursing and also increasing the standards and knowledge of trained nurses. An increased demand and push for a bachelor's degree represented an example of nursing leaders awareness of the need for educational reform. Baccalaureate training for nurses got a big push forward with the establishment of the ACSN in

⁶³ Ibid., 65.

⁶⁴ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 46; Katie Lynn Love, "An Emancipatory Study with African-American Women at Predominantly White Nursing Schools," (PhD dissertation, University of Connecticut, 2009).

⁶⁵ Patricia D'Antonio, "Women, Nursing, and Baccalaureate Education in 20th Century America," *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 36, no. 4 (2004): 382.

1935, which marked the expansion of university affiliation from single course offerings for nurses to the establishment of programs and schools which were integral components of colleges and universities.⁶⁶ The ACSN only marked the beginning of the use of organizations in helping to secure prestige and status for nursing through the advent of higher credentials and licensing. By 1995, the Pew Health Professions Commission—along with other organizations like the American Medical Association, American Nursing Association, and even the National Black Nurses Association—began calling for a more concentrated production of bachelor's or higher-degree nurses. Many hospitals not already requiring the Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree have established the "BSN-preferred" policy for new hires. Today almost 43% of practicing American nurses hold at least the baccalaureate degree in nursing.⁶⁷ The bachelor's degree has become synonymous with moving nursing towards an improved workforce more readily able to deal with ever-changing healthcare needs. The bachelor's degree also offered a different type of training for nurses, as its importance lies not in training first time entrants into nursing but providing access to knowledge that allows for sustained success in nursing practice and for preparing those nurses for management positions. As baccalaureate degreed nurses were increasingly trained for management and specialized areas of training and practice, alternate degree programs, like associate degree programs, became responsible for training those nurses specializing in "hands on" care.

Associate Degree Programs

Associate degree programs (ADN) are the latest and last type of basic nursing education program. Community college nursing programs are argued to be the result of the occurrence of

⁶⁶ Sydney D. Krampitz, "Historical Development of Baccalaureate Nursing Education in the American University: 1899-1935," *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 5, no. 4 (1983): 374.

⁶⁷ Bess Stewart, "Enhancing Success in BSN Nursing Education for Minority Nurses," *The ABNF Journal* 16, no. 1 (January/February 2005): 8.

multiple activities which include: interest in and growth of junior colleges, federal involvement in funding and spending, consumer concern and support, and professional responsibility and accountability. Mahaffey adds that there was a burgeoning climate for a different type of nurse created by a nursing shortage, as well as a growing interest in nurse training by the government and consumers of education.⁶⁸ According to Haase, as early as 1945, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), at the time the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC), discussed the possibility of including nursing in the junior college curricula, during a meeting with the U. S. Office of Education.⁶⁹ While a discussion took place as early as 1945, it would take several years before a nursing program and then schools of nursing were established in two-year institutions. The early interest of the two-year institution along with the involvement and support of the AACC would continue throughout the eventual establishment of the associate of applied science degree in nursing, a degree which could lead to individuals becoming registered nurses and continue to the present.

Two-year nursing programs began in 1952 as an experiment by the late Mildred Montag. The earliest two-year nursing program started through the Cooperative Research Project in Junior and Community College Education for Nursing, of the Department of Nursing Education at Teachers College and was carried out over five years in eight cooperating institutions, seven colleges, and one hospital, including one historically black university, Norfolk State University.⁷⁰ It was for preparation of nursing technicians that associate degree programs were originally initiated and developed to prepare men and women for those functions commonly

⁶⁸ Elizabeth H. Mahaffey, "The Relevance of Associate Degree Nursing Education: Past, Present, Future," *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* 7, no. 2 (May 2002), Under, "Abstract," www.nursingworld.org/ojin/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume72002/No2May2002/RelevanceofAssociateDegree.aspx (accessed December 19, 2009).

⁶⁹ Patricia T. Haase, *The Origins and Rise of Associate Degree Nursing* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990).

⁷⁰ Montag, "Technical Education," 101.

associated with the registered nurse. According to Montag, “Its placement in the community junior college was deliberate. The structure and nature of the two-year college made it ideal for a technical program” (open-access, college-based, vocational education oriented, and length of the program). Montag also added “A unique feature of an associate degree in nursing is that it was the first program to be developed through research, rather than as a result of an historical accident.”⁷¹ The associate degree programs represented an additional opportunity for nursing to break away from the apprenticeship model as was happening with the push for baccalaureate education. It also represented an opportunity for nurses and nursing faculty, usually women to exert greater control over the educational experiences of nursing students.⁷²

The first nurses of the associate degree program graduated in 1954, with a combination of general and nursing education courses including clinical experience, developed in accordance with college policy and regulations of the state licensing authority. Graduates of two-year programs were being prepared to give care to patients as beginning staff nurses and to cooperate and share responsibility for their patients’ welfare with other members of nursing and health staff.⁷³ According to researchers, the almost instant popularity of the associate degree programs was unexpected, much like the boom and rise of community colleges during this period. These programs were so successful that, in the 1960’s, they were expanding so rapidly that at times “a new ADN program was opening somewhere in the country every week.”⁷⁴ Haase goes on to describe the innovation and intrigue of the two-year programs as they “attracted innovative nurse

⁷¹ Mildred L. Montag, “Associate Degree Education in Perspective,” *Nursing Outlook* 28 (1980): 248.

⁷² Nelson, “Education for Professional Nursing,” Under, “The Spirit of 1965.”

⁷³ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 38.

⁷⁴ Haase, *Origins and Rise*, 86.

educators who were willing to challenge traditions, experiment with new teaching strategies and take risks as they worked out a new two-year curriculum as preparation for nursing practice.”⁷⁵

By the 1990s, associate degree nursing programs had graduated a vast number of students, had implemented large numbers of programs and had influenced a change in the population of nursing by enrolling greater numbers of older students, with a higher representation of minority groups and males. The nursing students of the two-year program mirrored the student population of community colleges—older, married, widowed, or separated, and normally with children—which differed from traditional nursing programs. Associate degree nursing programs educate approximately 40.3% of today’s registered nurses, as they are among the top career programs in community colleges.⁷⁶ ADN programs are also community based and prepare students for practice in all settings. Mahaffey adds that just as the hospital-based diploma programs are historically intertwined with the evolution of modern hospitals, associate degree nursing education has been important in the growth of community colleges. Associate degree nursing education continues to represent a compelling option for individuals interested in the nursing profession. Mahaffey also adds that characteristics of nursing associate degree programs such as lower tuition rates, geographic locations, completion time, reputation of graduates, dynamic curricula, and effective faculties are extremely influential in the popularity of the programs.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ibid., 86.

⁷⁶ Joan E. Kaiser ed., “Foreward,” in *The Associate Degree Nurse: Technical or Professional?* (New York: National League for Nursing, 1983).

⁷⁷ Mahaffey, “Relevance of Associate Degree”.

Nursing Program at State Community College

Today there are over 1,000 junior colleges with associate degree programs in nursing located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam. State Community College was only one of many two-year institutions to join the ranks of the early associate degree nursing programs. The Illinois Community College Board approved the initial nursing curriculum designed by Betty Thompson and later restructured under Gladys Cox-Givans in 1971. The associate degree in nursing was first offered at State Community College beginning in 1972, three years after the initial establishment of the institution. The nursing program at SCC was met with much enthusiasm, similar to other two-year degree programs that nationally enroll more black students than any other nursing education program. Carnegie argues that were it not for associate degree programs that offered low tuition costs to students and flexible admission standards in terms of age, marital status, and race, many qualified black students would be lost to the field of nursing.⁷⁸ African Americans have often appropriated educational institutions that would best suit and serve their needs. State Community College was established to educate and serve primarily the majority African American population of the East St. Louis metropolitan area as they sought educational avenues in the hopes of changing their current economic position. State Community College and the nursing program were envisioned as one example of the ways in which education could serve the needs of the community.

East St. Louis and State Community College represented a unique geographical and institutional opportunity to study how women, particularly African American women, have utilized the community college as a means of transcending economic and educational barriers compounded by the intersections of race, gender, and in the case of East St. Louis residents, class. The narrative of State Community College's nursing program offers an alternate outcome

⁷⁸ Carnegie, "Educational Preparation," 7.

and goal of community colleges from those who would argue that two-year nursing programs are actually a detriment to the African American nurse. Scholars such as Darlene Clark Hine argue that the rise of two-year nursing programs, led to fewer black nurses being available to assume future leadership roles or occupy influential positions in the profession, institutions of higher education, or government because a BSN or masters degree is often needed for these positions.⁷⁹ What these studies, while recognizing the discriminatory nature of credentials and standards within the nursing profession, fail to realize is that associate degree nursing programs offer students of color, males, older women, and those individuals shut out of four-year colleges and universities an opportunity to become nurses at a cheaper cost, in fewer years, and often in supportive environments.

State Community College came to mean a myriad of things to many different people but no group held the school in such high esteem as the women and few men of the nursing program at State Community College. When interviewees for the study were asked, “Which academic program stood out most for them during their tenure with the institution?” More than half of them responded with, “The nursing program!”⁸⁰ One interviewee in particular expressed his enthusiasm for the nursing program by stating, “And then at that time (1982 and beyond), the nursing program was booming. SCC had the top nursing program in the state of Illinois. I mean if you wanted to be a nurse you went to SCC, just like they talking about going to Ranken to be a mechanic, man them girls was getting, well them girls and guys before they could get out of here, they had jobs.” Mr. Bailey could hardly contain his excitement for the nursing program and enthusiastically explained what the program meant to him as an outsider and offered an

⁷⁹ Gamble, *Making a Place*, 1995; Hine, *Black Women in White*, 1989; Love, “An Emancipatory Study with African-American Women,” 2009.

⁸⁰ This study interviewed 23 people and 17 individuals acknowledged the nursing program as a stellar and standout program for the institution.

explanation of the advantages students gained from the program. He continued by saying “It was that many women down here to get in that nursing program. It was a waiting list. But I mean if you went to SCC and you got a nursing degree it was all over the country. You was shoo...you came in there, you probably come in there...you knew what you was doing. You knew it.”⁸¹

The nursing program represents only one of the numerous programs that State Community College offered to its students, but it provides a lens through which to view how students were able to utilize the academic programs of the community college in their attempts to overcome racist, sexist, and classist discriminations put in place by the larger society.

Women’s struggle for equal access to higher education in America has been a long, hard fight. Not only have women struggled to gain admission to institutions of higher learning, but once admitted they then struggled against limitations in access to the institutions of their choice, areas of study and work deemed unsuitable for women, rates of admissions equal to that of men, and faculty and administrative positions in higher education.⁸² Women operating in a society that more often than not neglects and renders invisible their contributions and needs have used education as a way of combating an oppressive society. In operating in a manner contradictory to the prescribed power relations of society, women have engaged in and created educational experiences through their agency that have changed and manipulated educational institutions to better serve and promote their needs. Women and black women especially have long recognized the power inherent in knowledge and the power related to controlling one’s educational outcome and access to education. Community colleges became spaces women were able to utilize in garnering power. Community college ideology that emphasizes opportunity, individual

⁸¹ Gary Bailey, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, May 12, 2009. Bailey is affiliated with the institution as first a student, then groundskeeper and later an instructor in the Auto Mechanics Department. His tenure with State Community College ran from 1982-1997 and he currently works for the East St. Louis Community College Center through Shawnee Community College.

⁸² Barnum, “Leaving Home,” 4.

development, and ready access makes them ideal places for women who have historically been limited in their educational endeavors.⁸³

The acknowledgement of power related to education was essential for women, influencing a change in the curriculum of community colleges from one that reinforced the social position of women into a curriculum that provided a foundation for women to change their “traditional” and “normalized” roles in society. Frye insists that early junior colleges offered courses that they figured appealed to women but also courses that prepared women for their “positions” in life and society, exemplified in the huge offering of home economic courses. While, the two-year college persisted in seeing its female students from a traditional perspective that stressed their role as homemakers and community volunteers, women in their course selection ignored the traditional vision of their role and sought college programs that would enhance their economic and professional opportunities rather than limit them.⁸⁴ Women cultivated their opportunities in courses in programs such as teaching, nursing and other health care professionals. The community college created real and measurable success for women in obtaining access to higher education and also creating and obtaining professional careers; a more diverse group of women went to college than would have had the two-year college not been created.⁸⁵

Women attend community colleges for a variety of reasons including the accessibility, flexibility, and often inexpensiveness of the program. Being confronted by multiple barriers, such as lack of money and insufficient time to devote to school, women were especially grateful for the community college’s role in helping to lessen and in some cases negate all together those

⁸³ Frye, “Women in the Two-Year College,” 12.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 9-10.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 12.

barriers as they worked to pursue an education.⁸⁶ Lois Weis found that the desire to provide a better life for their family was a major reason for black females to attend community colleges.⁸⁷ This also proved to be a major reason given by the women who attended State Community College. They envisioned SCC as a means of improving their life station and providing the ability for them to offer a better life for them and their children. They were able to provide for a better life by using the community college to gain their “life career.” Nursing at SCC in particular afforded women the chance to not only provide for their families but also to join the ranks of professional career women. When asked why they enrolled in SCC and particularly the nursing program the common reason was to better themselves and their economic position. One former student stated, “Everybody was trying to...the students were trying to further themselves, cause I was one of ‘em.”⁸⁸ While it isn’t known if the nursing program was known all over the state, what is known is that the women and men who enrolled in the nursing program at State Community College were able to utilize their education to become registered nurses and effectively change their economic positions. .

The nursing program at State Community College opened during the swarm of activity surrounding two-year associate degree programs, but also at a time when most segregated black nurse educational programs were closing. While SCC wasn’t established as a strictly black serving institution, the racial dynamics of the community and the area resulted in an institution that serviced a predominantly black community, resulting in a nursing program that was dominated by African American faculty and students. The same conditions that contributed to previous need for black nurse educational institutions were also present in the East St. Louis and

⁸⁶ Laden and Turner, “Viewing Community College Students,” 20.

⁸⁷ Lois Weis, *Between Two Worlds: Black Students in an Urban Community College* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985).

⁸⁸ Norma Brooks, interview by author, St. Louis, MO, August 26, 2009. Mrs. Brooks was affiliated with State Community College as a student in the School of Nursing from 1972-1978.

St. Louis metropolitan area. State Community College established its nursing program within the larger philosophy of the overall institution, which subscribed to “the belief that every individual is worthy of an education and that a planned, organized sequence of experiences can provide this individual with a vehicle that will lead to a meaningful contribution to society and to himself.”⁸⁹ The creators of the nursing program pushed for the development of nursing out of an earnest awareness of the benefits of a nursing career to the students and the opportunities that nursing would have on the community, not to mention the excitement and continued development of associate degree nursing programs.

Then president of State Community College, Clifton Woods, III, in discussing the establishment of the nursing program espoused the hope of the future program, “It is envisioned that the two-year program should lead easily to employment as there is a great demand for registered nurses.”⁹⁰ The nursing program was open to students who had first obtained admission to State Community College, and in keeping in line with an open access policy, the nursing program was open to those students who had a high school diploma or GED, a GPA of a 2.5 or better, and an ACT score of 15 or above. The students were also required to have prior courses in at least basic Math, Chemistry, and Biology of which they had to have a C or better in those courses. Lastly, because they were entering the medical profession, the students were required to be of sound mental and physical health, which was determined by medical records, an interview, and letters of recommendation.⁹¹

⁸⁹ James B. Holderman and Fred L. Wellman, “The Public Community College System of the State of Illinois,” October 3, 1972, Illinois Community College Board Papers, Illinois State Archives, Springfield (hereafter cited as ICCB Papers).

⁹⁰ Tony Canty, “SCC: New President Believes East St. Louis Institution,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 19, 1970.

⁹¹ Gladys Cox-Givans, phone interview by author, January 8, 2010.

State Community College's nursing program was important to the residents of the East St. Louis metropolitan area in that it was one of a few programs in the area open to blacks wanting to become nurses. As mentioned earlier, the nursing educational programs in the United States operated under systems of both de jure and de facto segregation. Even though SCC's nursing program did not open until 1972, de facto segregation and discrimination left those individuals in the East St. Louis metropolitan area interested in nursing with few opportunities to fulfill their goals. The co-coordinator of the nursing program at State Community College in response to her biggest accomplishment with the institution talks about the scarcity of nursing programs in the area. She states:

You will have to know that uh there are not...there were not that many schools of nurses who admitted African American students and I guess I was committed to the fact that there were going to be some African American young men and women who could enter the workforce. Because on both sides of the river there were just not schools that were willing to admit African American students. You know, maybe one or two, three or four, so State Community College had the task of producing more African American nurses in the metropolitan East St. Louis area.⁹²

Former students of the nursing program also echoed an awareness of the reluctance of area nursing programs in admitting black students. Norma Brooks shares her experience in applying to a hospital-based nursing program at her place of employment, St. Louis's St. Johns Mercy Hospital, which had a diploma training program for its employed nurse aides to become qualified registered nurses. She relates her experience as such:

When I applied to St. John's program they would not hire, they would not put me in the program. And they and the cousin instructed me about the college in East St. Louis. Now St. John's took and hired girls that didn't even have their diplomas. They hadn't even finished high school. They set up a program for them, where they brought in the GED. Well I didn't need a GED, but I was vocal in unfair treatment that I saw there. And that's probably why they wouldn't let me in their program.⁹³

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Brooks, interview.

The reluctance of programs in the area to admit black students was not limited to black women as one of the male graduates of SCC also stated his experience with resistance in a local four-year program.⁹⁴ The lack of opportunity for residents in the area made the offerings at State Community College that much more important. As with anything else, SCC sought to rectify and remedy segregation in an affordable educational institution and by establishing a program of nursing sought to keep the door to professional medicine open to those disadvantaged by other programs.

Institutions such as State Community College whose impetus and focus are to provide educational and economic training for minority and underrepresented students provide an educational space that is supportive, caring, and attentive to students' needs. While studies show that most African American nurses are trained in predominantly white two-year nursing programs they also show that these institutions are failing to provide supportive academic and social environments for African American students, making it all too important for institutions similar to State Community College, predominantly black serving institutions to be supported and cultivated.⁹⁵ African American students are more likely to report satisfaction and succeed when there are sufficient numbers of African American faculty to assist in providing academic, social, and cultural support for African American students. Also, historically black schools and by extension those schools specifically devoted to serving minority and underrepresented students have supported and participated in the struggle for inclusion of African American women in healthcare, and have done it well. According to Laura McQueen and Lynn

⁹⁴ Reginald Wince, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, August 18, 2009. Wince talked about his experience at a four-year predominantly white university and the resistance he felt in the program. He states, "Uh I wanted to say that going to SIU-Edwardsville was one of the, I want to say was one of the worst decisions I made in my life. Personally, I think so because after getting there and trying to get in the nursing program at SIU, I felt shunned. I felt like they really didn't want me in the program in there."

⁹⁵ Lucille D. Coleman, "Experiences of African American Students in a Predominantly White, Two-Year Nursing Program," *The ABNF Journal* 19, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 8-13.

Zimmerman, educational institutions that cater to minority populations are aware of the needs of their students and invest time and resources to ensure that their students succeed. In this case, the nursing faculty at State Community College saw to it that their students were well prepared to take and pass state licensing exams. McQueen and Zimmerman also state, “the close-knit community in an HBCU nursing program creates an atmosphere of trust and care that is often the cornerstone to students gaining that extra piece needed to “get in the testing game.””⁹⁶ Historically black schools have shown strong evidence in providing what’s needed to educate and move minorities toward a career in nursing.

Instructors and administrators in the nursing program at SCC took their job of educating and preparing competent nurses very seriously and heralded the position as one of great importance. The instructors and coordinators were willing to do whatever it took for their students to succeed and ultimately become nurses. In discussing preparing students for the National Council License Exam for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) exam, Mrs. Cox-Givans, former coordinator of the program, talks about the extra study sessions available to the students as a way of making sure they could pass the exam on the first try, given the extra responsibilities of the “new” nursing students—married, working full or part-time, children, household duties—which could prove to be a burden for the students. Former students of the nursing program also feel as if the faculty went beyond the duties of their profession in seeing to it that the students were prepared to succeed.

And it was just a, everybody looked like they cared about us progressing. But our learning...yeah they worked with us, they didn’t want embarrassments on State Boards, so they asked you, “Are you understanding this material?” And you weren’t passing because we were in the city of East St. Louis, where you feel you got to help them. You had to know your material. You didn’t pass because you were a minority. The instructor made sure you knew the material. And I’m not talking about...it went past the

⁹⁶ Laura McQueen and Lynn Zimmerman, “The Role of Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the Inclusion and Education of Hispanic Nursing Students,” *The ABNF Journal* 15, no. 3 (May/June 2004): 53.

classroom, we were invited to their homes, where they worked with us, one on one, if it was our choice. But in general, we had to pass the same state boards anywhere else nurses had to pass. And if we left here and went to other places and practiced nursing we had to do the same thing. So we were qualified to do it when you left SCC.⁹⁷

The assistance and instruction went beyond the classroom and the homes of instructors as some instructors constructed formal study programs for the larger population of student nurses in the area. The instructors were wedded to the belief of the students succeeding and provided quality instruction and services so that success would be the final outcome.

The students also talked about their impression of the program and add to the perception that the nursing program at State Community College had it “going on.” When asked to describe their experience at State Community College, one former nursing student replied:

Oh, I absolutely loved my instructors at State Community College because they really prepared us for the exam, I feel. That’s me...But yeah the nursing classes, the instructors were very concerned that we learned information because we would have to be tested at the state level. Everybody would have to undergo certification exams and they wanted to make sure that we had access to the information so that we would have successful results at State Boards. I don’t know how that all went but there were a lot of questions about whether or not students were going to SCC were measuring up with the rest of the state. And so there was again a negative connotation. It was not that the instructors did not give us access to the information, it was the learning on behalf of the student not that the information was not presented to us. Ok? I really want to make that clear. [Laughter] Ok.⁹⁸

The students were keenly aware of negative perceptions of them and their program. Thus they were all the more determined to show that yes they had received a great education in the city of East St. Louis and in a community college nonetheless. That determination was showcased in their ability to pass the NCLEX-RN exam, which demonstrated their ability and capacity to become registered nurses.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Brooks, interview.

⁹⁸ Wince, interview.

⁹⁹ Laura McQueen, Patricia Shelton and Lynn Zimmerman, “A Collective Community Approach to Preparing Nursing Students for the Nclex Rn Examination,” *The ABNF Journal* 15, no. 3 (May/June 2004): 55-58. They argue that HBCUs are closely scrutinized if their passing or “success” scores on the NCLEX-RN exam fall

Not only were the instructors competent and the curriculum up to par but State Community College provided students with the equipment and learning opportunities necessary to succeed in the field of nursing. One student noted,

...We had a whole new lab that was off to itself. We had our own classrooms and the instructors...we were in one particular section of the school building and we were just...it was just the nursing section. And so the classes, they were conducive to learning. We had the equipment that we needed. And we had access to clinicals in that we went to St. Mary's Hospital in East St. Louis and City Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri, where we did our clinical rotations. We had exposure to uh the disease process or entities that we were studying in school so that we could actually have hands-on and put together what the book was reading and what was actually taking place...Um and I don't think that the equipment or the education that we had, um received was second hand to anyone...¹⁰⁰

Despite the negative thoughts that surround East St. Louis and its education system, the nursing school offered a quality program to meet the standards of the field and was also proficient in educating and preparing its students. Quality of education has traditionally been the instrument for achieving equality of opportunity and upward mobility in America. The instructors of the nursing program acutely aware of this tradition, capitalized on its position to provide a quality education so that their students could partake in the economic and educational opportunities that awaited them.

The nursing program at State Community College graduated its first class of nurses in 1974 and graduated the last class in 1992, when the program facing problems since 1990 was stripped of its accreditation. The Department of Professional Regulation placed SCC's nursing program on indefinite probation on February 16, 1990 because National Council License Exam for Registered Nurses test scores of the program's graduates fell below 75% for two consecutive years.¹⁰¹ Accreditation for SCC's nursing program was contingent upon the number of students

below the passing testing standard for nurses in the country. This is so because most programs catering to minority students are plagued with charges of inadequacy and ineptness.

¹⁰⁰ Wince, interview.

¹⁰¹ "College Seeks to Improve Nursing Program," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 22, 1990.

that passed the NCLEX-RN; passing rates on the NCLEX-RN is very important in that those numbers are used to measure the quality of nursing programs throughout the country. “The action was taken to ensure that the nursing program produces top-notch nursing graduates,” issued in a statement by department spokesman Michael Manning.¹⁰² As Mrs. Cox-Givans stated, “Standards are set in all schools of nursing. And one of [the] things that, you know, state boards have a responsibility of achieving is to ensure that the graduates you graduate, you know, are safe, safe practitioners. So they want to make sure that when you teach subjects that the young people are able to write the state board and pass successfully, the first, you know, first time.”¹⁰³

In the probation clause, SCC agreed to undertake a number of steps including: hiring a consultant or consultants with expertise in nursing education and minority students; accepting students who demonstrated a 12th-grade reading level, had a grade-point average of at least 2.3 on a 4.0 grade-point scale and scored 85 percent or better on a standardized mathematics achievement test; design a preparatory course on studying and taking a test and on reading comprehension; and designing a remedial course for students who failed the test.¹⁰⁴ The orders of the probation were late as many instructors were already engaging in much of the activities put forth by the Department of Professional Regulation. Despite the nursing program making significant progress toward achieving many of the recommendations by the Professional Regulation team, it did not comply fully and unfortunately the college was stripped of its nursing accreditation in 1992. While the nursing program may have been called into question with regards to standards and quality as most minority serving institutions are, the skills and

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Cox-Givans Interview.

¹⁰⁴ “College Seeks to Improve Nursing Program.”

knowledge of the graduates spoke volumes of the quality of the program. As Gary Bailey mentioned those women and men of the program knew what they were doing.¹⁰⁵

Interviewees' narratives make a compelling argument for the need and importance of predominantly black serving institutions and also minority serving institutions in educating nurses. African American nurses while constituting a large majority of nurses with BSN's often get their start in associate nursing programs, as these programs educate the majority of minority nurses. State Community College joined the ranks of these educational institutions committed to providing quality, low-cost nursing education to its students. Associate degree nursing programs have also proved beneficial for women of color as four-year nursing programs and the push for the baccalaureate as the beginning professional degree often focus on high school grades and SAT and ACT test scores both of which are argued to reflect racial bias and can be a hindrance to admission. While community colleges often not adhering to as stringent testing scores provide a more viable and easily accessible option for those traditionally and continuously shut out of four-year programs.¹⁰⁶ This is not to say that community college nursing programs do not have standards but they provide an alternative route to four-year colleges and universities whose admission policies' center on test scores. Institutions like SCC provided an alternative opportunity to the subordination and exclusion, students of color feel in predominantly white institutions. As Darlene Clark Hine would argue, "Separate institutions and organizations founded by and under the control of black people remain, important weapons against racism."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Cox-Givans, interview.

¹⁰⁶ McQueen and Zimmerman, "The Role," 52.

¹⁰⁷ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 193.

Black Women in Nursing

Black women became nurses for a variety of reasons. According to Hine, a powerful combination of parental prodding, head-on collisions with racial discrimination, and desire to reduce suffering encouraged quite a few black women to consider a nursing career. Personal and familial influences were undoubtedly important motivations; still the lack of choices and opportunities played a more decisive role in channeling black women into nursing. The majority of black women did not have ample employment or educational opportunities. Because of their sex and race, the larger society provided little for, and expected less of, them.¹⁰⁸ So they utilized nursing as means of change. Also for many African Americans, nursing was the most accessible of all the professions especially during the early part of the twentieth century. Nursing provided a comparatively open gateway through which young black women of working-poor backgrounds could cross toward dignified employment, and a middle-class lifestyle, while rendering much-needed services to their people. Black women entered nursing for a variety of reasons centering on multiple aspirations, some of which included a determination to escape poverty and a yearning for occupational mobility, as expressed by one woman interviewed for this research project.

The historical development of black women in nursing is a narrative that is aligned with societal discrimination and oppression. Black women engaged in a constant struggle to acquire nursing education, to end economic discrimination, and to win professional acceptance. White nurses relied on constructions of “whiteness,” and “womanhood” to define the parameters of professionalization in the field thus leaving black women out of opportunities available to “professional” women. Black women nonetheless viewed nursing as one of the best possible avenues for aspiring black women possessed of few other means to achieve the moral status,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 134-136.

self-fulfillment, and economic autonomy so fervently desired.¹⁰⁹ While black women worked to reconstruct nursing into a profession that would be beneficial for their economic and intellectual wellbeing, they were often plagued by incidents of inferior education, discrimination in the job market, and a lack of training and professionalization opportunities.¹¹⁰ Hine posits “As far as white nurse educators, administrators, supervisors, and leaders were concerned, black nurses’ low status in the profession was a result of their allegedly inferior training, lack of executive skills, limited intelligence, weak character, and inability to withstand pressure.” Hine also provides a scenario of how black nurses were treated by white nurses, “Only when she dealt with the black patients did the black nurse stand a chance of being referred to as a competent and adept professional. Only to the extent that she remained stationed within the black community, caring only for black patients, could she earn praise and respect from her white counterparts.”¹¹¹ The treatment of black nurses by white nurses is a prime example of the institutionalized racism and discrimination that blacks are forced to contend with in both their personal and professional lives. Institutionalized racism remained visible and palpable for black women nurses.¹¹² Moreover, the institutionalized racism that African American women encountered and still encounter “relies heavily on racial segregation and accompanying discriminatory practices designed to deny U.S Blacks equitable treatment.”¹¹³ Although racial segregation is now organized and experienced differently than in prior eras, being black and female in the United States continues to expose African American women to certain common experiences.

¹⁰⁹ Hine, *Black Women in White*, xviii.

¹¹⁰ Pitts Mosley, “A History of Black Leaders,” 54.

¹¹¹ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 101.

¹¹² James M. Jones, *Prejudice and Racism* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1972). Institutional racism refers to the intentional or unintentional manipulation or toleration of institutional policies that unfairly restrict the opportunities of particular groups. This restriction of opportunities often involves a differential distribution of resources in society among what are defined as racial groups. Institutional racism is ingrained in the workings of society’s formal institutions, and it is subtle and insidious.

¹¹³ Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 23.

In the field of nursing those common experiences usually centered on discrimination and prejudice and fighting for acceptance and inclusion while etching out a professional persona that highlighted their competence and ability to care for their patients. “During the time of slavery, black women were expected to take care of the sick in the families that owned them, breast-feed the white babies, and care for their own families and fellow slaves. Although the term nurse was not applied to them, their activities were clearly within the definition of nursing.”¹¹⁴ This tradition continued as black nurses, in response partly to the discrimination black nurses faced and the need and want to take care of the black community, in the early 20th century provided nursing care in many of the most disparate communities in the country. Common with Jim Crow sentiment and thought during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, racist policies and behaviors dictated that black nurses would, for the most part, serve only in black communities or administer only to black clientele of various public and private agencies. Nevertheless, because they considered themselves professionals, black nurses yearned to advance their careers and tried to adhere to the highest ideals of the profession.¹¹⁵ Black healthcare workers during this time were essential to poverty-stricken black communities lacking access to health care.¹¹⁶ Although the quality of black nurses’ skills and training was judged deficient by white nurses, the black community still holds its nurses in high esteem.

The first generation of black nurses as well as later generations were from working-class backgrounds. Nursing has been and continues to be a particularly important skilled occupation for black women. “Nursing became a means of upward mobility and a method by which these

¹¹⁴ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 1.

¹¹⁵ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 160.

¹¹⁶ Sarah Ann Johnson, “Healing in Silence: Black Nurses in Charleston, South Carolina, 1896-1948,” (PhD dissertation, University of South Carolina, 2008), 14.

women could address the myriad of health problems in the Black community.”¹¹⁷ The lure of the middle-class identity attracted people of all backgrounds into the nursing profession but especially women as they worked to distance themselves from gendered positions in society that resulted in lowered pay and ensuing poverty, like the work of domestics.¹¹⁸ Several researchers debate rather or not nursing given its background and often low-stature should actually be considered a profession let alone leading to a position in the middle class.¹¹⁹ Whatever the debate, there is no doubt that within black communities, black nurses enjoyed economic stability, social respect and prestige that located them within the communities’ elite.¹²⁰ Not only did nursing represent an opportunity for increased social class but it also provided a profession in which women could do meaningful work. According to D’Antonio the “middle-class” nature of nursing descends from the achievements of Florence Nightingale. She goes on to say that “An identity as a nurse gave these women, both by association and by virtue of their special training, a place among the more educated members of their communities.”¹²¹ Nursing represents real economic and professional opportunities for women, as nurses seem to be relatively privileged in comparison with women of similar racial and ethnic backgrounds. Nursing became a profession

¹¹⁷ Barbee, “Racism in U.S. Nursing,” 354.

¹¹⁸ Melissa R. Gilbert, ““Race,” Space, and Power: The Survival Strategies of Working Poor Women,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 88, no. 4 (1998): 595.

¹¹⁹ Tanya Buchanan, “Nightingalism: Haunting Nursing History,” *Collegian* 6, no. 2 (1999): 28-33. Mary C. Corley and Hans O. Mauksch Corley, “Registered Nurses, Gender, and Commitment,” in *The Worth of Women's Work: A Qualitative Synthesis*, ed. Eleanor M. Miller and Hans O. Mauksch Anne Statham (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), pp. 135-149; Emily Freidman, “Troubled Past Of “Invisible” Profession,” *The Journal of American Medical Association* 264, no. 22 (December 12, 1990): 2851-2852, 2854-2855, 2858. The argument against nursing as a profession centers on the premise that some women label nursing as a “calling.” These researchers argue that by labeling it a “calling” evokes emotion and caring which negates and distances nursing from a profession. The other argument against nursing as a profession hinges on the subordinate position of nursing within the medical profession and argue that this position make it unlikely that they could be professionals. Daniel F. Chambliss, *Beyond Caring: Hospitals, Nurses, and the Social Organization of Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Whereas, the affirmative position of nursing as a profession argues that the training, educational credentials, job performance, and behavior amount to professional status for nurses.

¹²⁰ Flynn, “Race, Class, Gender,” 2003.

¹²¹ Patricia D’Antonio, “Revisiting and Rethinking the Rewriting of Nursing History,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 73, no. 2 (1999): 274.

in which women could support themselves, was highly portable, and provided job security. D'Antonio goes on by saying, "Nursing women sought—each class group in its own way—to create new opportunities for themselves."¹²² Black women especially created new opportunities for themselves as they sought out nursing as a means of transforming their economic position, providing educational opportunities, and improving the quality and health of their community. Nursing became a female world of almost unparalleled autonomy, control, and professional status and despite the discrimination and prejudice of the nursing profession black women gained membership into that world.

Black nurses continuous struggle and fight to gain a foothold in the nursing profession and receive both monetary and nonmonetary benefits from nursing began to change in the 1930s. According to Hine's *Black Women in White*, "The nursing student in 1936 had more pre-conceived notions of the nursing profession; had more often selected nursing as a means of livelihood and less often as a means of service, and were more vocal in their stance against discrimination and prejudice within the nursing community." The student nurse of the 1930s was also "keener to detect supposed flaws in the system of education, in professional ethics, and in the professional demands for conformity rather than its reasons for conforming."¹²³ Black nurse leaders during this time renewed their will and determination to fight against the oppression and discrimination in the nursing profession. According to Hine,

Black women nursing leaders possessed of tremendous energy, optimism, and leadership potential refused to accept the second-class status to which they had been assigned within the profession. These women chafed under the denial of educational opportunities and discriminatory hiring and wages. They objected to the prevalent attitude that the color of their skin and the texture of their hair meant that they were inferior nurses, unworthy of fair and equitable treatment and respect. These conditions lead to a move to break the shackles of their oppression.¹²⁴

¹²² Ibid., 274.

¹²³ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 144.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 108.

In fighting the oppression in both society and their profession, black nurses turned to their professional organization—National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN)—as a means of aiding in their quest for acceptance and inclusion in the profession of nursing. NACGN established in the early 20th century as a means of bringing professionalism to black nurses who were effectively shut out of other nursing associations because of segregation and discrimination, redefined its mission in the 1930s to include a full-blown plan of action to win integration of black nurses into “mainstream” American nursing, establish open access to the best nursing schools, and increase job opportunities with equitable salaries for all.¹²⁵

During the 1940s, black nurses continued to fight and demand change in their positions within nursing as nursing had quickly risen to the second largest profession for women by 1940. The rapid ascension of nursing was accredited to the expansion of hospital facilities, the development of public health programs, and the establishment of nurses’ training.¹²⁶ The continued pressure by black civil rights groups, and civic organizations, as well as the threat of a world war, combined with government legislation and vigilance and demands by black nurses, helped to bring some modicum of change to the status of black nurses during the 1940s. On January 20, 1945, military policy was enacted that accepted nurses without regard to race into the Army Nurse Corps and in 1948, the American Nurses Association extended membership to black nurses. In the same year, the ANA appointed a black nurse as assistant executive secretary

¹²⁵ Ibid., 109.

¹²⁶ Margaret Supplee Smith and Emily Herring Wilson, *North Carolina Women: Making a History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 228.

in its national headquarters and elected Estelle Massey Riddle Osborne to the board of directors.¹²⁷

As black nurses continued making noticeable gains with visible success combined with the implementation of black nurses into mainstream nursing associations and nursing facilities, black nurse leaders voted to dissolve the NACGN in 1951. According to a press release by the Executive Secretary and President of NACGN, the organization terminated its works because it felt that its program of activities was no longer necessary. The number of state associations prohibiting black nurses from membership had been reduced from a high of seventeen to five. The number of schools admitting all qualified students had risen from approximately 28 prior to World War II to 330 by 1950. It also emphasized that an unprecedented number of black nurses had been integrated into the staffs of hospitals, public health agencies, and military and veterans' services.¹²⁸ According to Hine, by the 1950s, black nurses were well equipped with resources and additional strength to tackle the ever-present racism of society. She argues that several factors contributed to their empowerment, including the quality and substance of training programs and the connections graduate nurses forged with the diverse communities they served. She sums up the argument by saying, "The constructive relations back nurses enjoyed with their communities had a significant impact on their professional identities and on their self-esteem. Regardless of how they were perceived or portrayed by whites, black nurses found confirmation of their worth from their people. Thus they could never imagine themselves as victims, powerless to combat racism."¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 153, 181-183. Estelle Massey Riddle Osborne was the first black nurse to earn a masters degree in nursing at Teachers College in New York. She also was a pioneer in organizational administration.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 185.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 187.

With the 1960s came additional pressure and legislative acts that mandated the prohibition of racial segregation and discrimination in institutions of higher education, and also provided funding and policy aimed at increasing the presence of minority students in the nursing profession. In 1964, the Nurses' Training Act and its later revisions provided for special project monies to be expanded to increase the number of disadvantaged and minority students in schools of nursing, which was the first federal law to provide comprehensive financial help for nursing education.¹³⁰ This law also helped to increase the number of minority students in both four-year and two-year nursing degree programs. The advent of financial assistance combined with the decrease in educational barriers, resulted in a large increase in the number of black women and increasingly men educated as nurses. The 1960s also saw a change in the places that black nurses were employed, as large numbers of black nurses became able to enter the hospital as nursing staff as white hospital personnel departments began to drop racial bars. By the 1970s black nurses had become, along with other minority nurses, the mainstay of many inner-city, municipally operated hospitals.¹³¹ As a result of all the hard work and struggle by early generations of black nurses often likened to architects because of their role in upgrading the quality of opportunity, practice, and education, the number of black nurses continued to grow.¹³²

Nursing from its very beginning struggled with self-identity and confusion over its place in the professional world. Nursing continuously fought for recognition of its importance in the medical field, while society deigned it to be less valuable because its work encompassed society's prescribed roles for women.¹³³ The available literature on the history of black women

¹³⁰ Carnegie, *Path We Tread*, 50; Myrtle M. Clinton, "Black Psychiatric Nurses: Historical Perspectives, 1964 to 1984," *Journal of Black Studies* 24, no. 2 (1993): 214.

¹³¹ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 188.

¹³² Althea T. Davis, *Early Black Leaders in Nursing: Architects for Integration and Equality* (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 1999), 100.

¹³³ Barnum, "Leaving Home," 65.

in nursing while acknowledging the concept of the stratified powerlessness of black women in nursing also highlights how black women were able to unite, struggle, and resist in collective ways that allowed them to create a space albeit initially segregated for their expansion and growth in the field of nursing. Black women's presence and role in nursing was not a silent acceptance of racism but one that was a vocal and constant struggle against discrimination. Nursing represented an opportunity for black women to shift the traditional societal work roles of women and change their destinies, and that of their community through nursing.¹³⁴ Black nurses' existence is characterized by creative women strategizing to surmount perceived impossibility, the achievement of racial uplift, women's rights, and social justice in health care.¹³⁵ Black nursing staff and nursing students were able to successfully use nursing and the nursing professional as a means of gaining civil rights.

The community college became an institution, which the nursing profession was able to utilize in making the nursing degree more affordable and accessible to countless women, particularly women of color, who are most often represented in the community college student population. The ease and accessibility of the associate degree nursing program provided an additional avenue that women of color could take in utilizing nursing as a means of changing and challenging their current positions. Associate degree nursing programs remain a highly popular choice for students entering the field of nursing and not just as nurse aides, but as registered nurses, as the community college programs educate approximately 60% of entry level graduates each year.¹³⁶ State Community College became one such two-year institution, which proved invaluable to educating African American nurses. State Community College sought to fill an educational and economic void for the residents of East St. Louis by introducing and creating

¹³⁴ Johnson, "Healing in Silence," 144.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 114.

¹³⁶ Mahaffey, "Relevance of Associate Degree."

programs that were viable to their professional and personal success. The closing of State Community College and thus the closure of the nursing program are similar to the closing of most black institutions, post-*Brown v. Board of Education* and post-Civil Rights movement. With the closing of these institutions came the loss of black cultural institutions dedicated to the promotion and celebration of black accomplishments and traditions. According to Darlene Clark Hine, the closure of these institutions “signaled the end of a unique social, political, and professional environment which had both nurtured and exploited black women.”¹³⁷

Despite the relative success of black women in nursing, there still remains a great need for increased numbers of minorities in nursing schools, nursing practice, and institutions conducive to these students needs in which to train them, as African Americans make up only 4.6 percent of the nursing population. Beacham, Askew, and Williams contend that the lack of minority nurses exist for a number of complex reasons including: past discrimination, financial barriers, problems related to academic and social adjustments, low high school achievement, and a lack of academic preparedness.¹³⁸ Associate degree nursing programs in predominantly minority-serving institutions provide a replicable prototype to easing these problems in that their programs are readily accessible, inexpensive, and provide support systems and support programs that enable success.

¹³⁷ Hine, *Black Women in White*, 187.

¹³⁸ Tracilia Beacham, Rebecca W. Askew and P. Renee Williams, “Strategies to Increase Racial/Ethnic Student Participation in the Nursing Profession,” *The ABNF Journal* 20, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 69-72.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FUTURE IS NOT PREDICTABLE: CLOSING OF STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 1989-1996

Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened.¹

If East St. Louis residents were asked to visualize the future of State Community College at any point during its existence, the response would include a variety of visions some quite modest and others bordering on grandiosity, but no one would have envisioned the close and demise of their beloved two-year institution. When State Community College opened residents envisioned a school that would serve the community until the end of time. Residents recalled their reactions to the establishment of State Community College in East St. Louis. “There was a lot of community excitement.”² “At that time, the school was, was, you know, bubbling with students, all kinds of students.”³ “Oh I was excited about it...I thought that was very good.”⁴ “My aunt was so happy because East St. Louis finally had their own college.”⁵ “I think that with the creation of SCC in 1969 things were still very hopeful for East St. Louis. There was still a thriving downtown retail area, and other areas of the city seemed to prove a relatively stable

¹ E. Lynn Harris, *Basketball Jones* (New York: Doubleday, 2009) 190.

² Penny Lane, telephone interview by author, February 25, 2009. Lane initially began working at SCC in 1969 as a part-time business instructor. She continued in that position until 1985. She then became a member of the local board in 1994 and continued until 1998 when the institution was dissolved.

³ Ruth Claybourne, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, April 20, 2009. Mrs. Claybourne began working at State Community College in 1973 as a counselor and later became the director, and finally left the institution in 1996 as Dean of Student and Counseling Services.

⁴ Edna Allen, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, August 7, 2009. Edna Allen was a lifelong resident and educator of East St. Louis. She was a member of the local board for two terms.

⁵ Evelyn Shaw, interview by author, St. Louis, MO, June 6, 2009. Mrs. Shaw was a high school teacher at Lincoln Senior High School, the historically black high school in East St. Louis for 34 years.

economic support areas.”⁶ One interviewee recalling SCC states, “It was a great thing because um, where else would it be needed but in a community like East St. Louis. And for our students to have to drive and not have cars and this is of course before the time of Metrolink [light rail system]. This is a great opportunity for people to be within walking distance, for many people and at least those who weren’t in walking distance at least you had a bus system that could get students here.”⁷ State Community College meant a great deal to the city of East St. Louis. Faculty, staff, students, and residents relished the opportunities of their educational institution.

Faculty, staff, and students of State Community College along with residents of East St. Louis saw a future filled with eager students in crowded, lively classrooms. Despite well wishes, hope, and faith in the continued success of State Community College, the institution was in fact dissolved on June 30, 1996. In 1989, the Illinois General Assembly amended the Illinois Public Community College Act to abolish State Community College as an “experimental district.” Critics of the institution said the measure would “attack a festering problem in the East St. Louis area—namely State Community College.”⁸ The bill was introduced as a last ditch effort at keeping the institution from being completely destroyed. In amending the Public Community College Act, the General Assembly presented the residents of East St. Louis with two options to restructure and ultimately save their local community college. The fate of SCC involved two ballot options to be decided by a referendum vote in November 1994. One option was to create a new district within the existing boundaries of State Community College supported by a local tax in the city of East St. Louis to become effective July 1, 1996. The second option was to vote

⁶ Sis interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, April 29, 2009. The name of the interviewee was withheld by mutual agreement. Sis was an instructor and administrator at SCC for twenty-six years. She began teaching English in 1970.

⁷ SCC Instructor, interview by author, East St. Louis, May 18, 2009. The name of the interviewee was withheld by mutual agreement. SCC instructor has taught at SCC, MCC, and is currently employed by the East St. Louis Community College Center.

⁸ Gerri Aston, “Senate Backs Expansion of Scott,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 1, 1989.

against creating a new district and instead choose to annex the State Community College territory with the Belleville Area College District creating a merger between the two institutions effective July 1, 1996. On June 30, 1996, State Community College ceased to exist as Illinois' only community college to operate solely on state and federal funds.⁹ Residents of East St. Louis chose to support through local tax support an autonomous community college to be named Metropolitan Community College (MCC).

The closing of State Community College marked an end to a tumultuous but wonderful chapter in the educational history of East St. Louis. As a result of economic problems and racial discrimination, State Community College was established through community action and formal politics as a means of improving economic and educational opportunities in East St. Louis. As an institution with unsurpassable value to the community, the closing of State Community College was bittersweet, for the city finally had control both administratively and financially over its local institution but it also lost an educational institution that had been apart of the community for twenty-seven years. This chapter examines the events that resulted in legislation seeking to abolish State Community College. This chapter also explores the meaning of the closure to the community and its resulting effects on higher educational opportunities for residents of East St. Louis.

State Community College closed June 30, 1996 to a much different tune than the one it experienced when it opened. During its final days, SCC generated nostalgia from those deeply connected to the institution and generated relief that a legislative sore spot was finally being alleviated for those who for years had questioned the existence of the state supported institution. State Community College closed amidst a range of emotions and feelings. However, one

⁹ Public Community College Act, S.B. No. 629, 86-722, *Illinois Compiled Statutes*, secs. 2-12.1, 4-1, 4-2 4-6.1 and 4-7 (1989). Ed Geppert Jr., Assistant to the President, Department of Organization, Memo to Members of Local 3912 & 4408, February 8, 1993. Personal Papers of Ruth Claybourne.

prominent reaction to the closing of State Community College was one of pure devastation, for many members of the community felt as if they had not only lost an educational institution, but a second home that serviced a host of needs. State Community College became a home for faculty, staff, and students and when it closed it was as if they had lost a part of themselves. “It was a tremendous loss to the community.”¹⁰ While loss was a prominent emotion for quite a few people, there was also some joy that now would be a chance for the institution and community to embark on a different journey. “I remember the shock and disbelief of most of the staff members, while at the same time, the board members and staff members who were instigating the shut down were jubilant.”¹¹ The contradictory range of emotions that surrounded State Community College reflect the contradictory feelings and thoughts that surrounded the continued operation of the school.

The initial legislation that established State Community College as an experimental college did not include a definitive date on which the school would cease to exist nor did it provide a limitation on the number of years the institution would be funded. It was always expressed that there was continued hope that the institution would aid in the comeback and turnaround of the city thus providing the basis on which the city could fund its local institution. Several East St. Louis community leaders, residents, faculty and staff at State Community College hold faith in a common lore that State Community College was established with a definite 25-year time limit on how long the school would be funded by state appropriations. Several interviewees expressed this same belief. “We did not have the tax base to fund an autonomous community college. So as I recall, I believe the funding...the legislation was for 25

¹⁰ Gladys Cox-Givans, telephone interview by author, August 18, 2009. Mrs. Cox-Givans was an instructor and director of the Nursing Program at State Community College for 25 years.

¹¹ Sis, interview.

years.”¹² “There was a piece of legislation that was in place upon the inception of SCC. It was legislated to exist for 25 years and at the close of that period, it would shut down.”¹³ “From the college’s inception, leaders in the East St. Louis metropolitan area had known that the legislative act establishing the college called for voters in the area to choose whether to merge the college with an existing community college district or operate it independently on local revenue at the end of the 25 year period.”¹⁴ While Illinois state legislators did not envision that it would support the institution indefinitely, it did consider that it would be some time before the city of East St. Louis could fully support and sustain a locally financed community college and refrained from putting a termination date on state funding. While there is no legislative evidence to support this common belief, many in East St. Louis subscribe to this notion. What is true is that State Community College was besieged by numerous problems, many of which stemmed from the beginning of the institution and may be ones that state legislators figured that after twenty-seven years of no relief, it was time to try an alternative solution to educating residents in East St. Louis.

Problems Encountered by State Community College

State Community College faced threats of closure from its very inception. During its twenty-seven year history, there were numerous attempts to modify the operation and governance of the college in efforts to both address criticisms of SCC and provide a quality education for the students. Legislators of the Illinois General Assembly (IGA) repeatedly

¹² Lane, interview.

¹³ Janet Finch, phone interview by author, February 9, 2009. Finch was the dean of instruction at State Community College beginning in 1994 and assumed presidency of the institution in 1994. She was also the President of Metropolitan Community College from 1996-1998.

¹⁴ Teresa J. Williams, “Students' Perceptions of Metropolitan Community College as an Effective Institution of Higher Education,” (PhD dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1999), 2.

threatened to abolish the college and merge it with either Southern Illinois University or Belleville Area College, the two existing schools in the area. Legislators argued that repeated findings of mismanagement and incompetent college administrations were reasons enough to abolish the college outright.¹⁵ For years, legislators, taxpayers, and community leaders pointed to the problems that SCC faced. “For a long time the college was struggling.”¹⁶ The city of East St. Louis and its social institutions were no strangers to problems that threatened their very existence. East St. Louis in 1996, when State Community College closed, was a community plagued with financial, educational, structural, governance, and environmental problems. The problems were so extensive that the State of Illinois took unprecedented action by imposing fiscal oversight authorities over city hall and the school district.¹⁷ Issues specific to State Community College but which could have occurred at any institution in East St. Louis included problems with financial management including fraud, political influence and patronage, questions related to quality of educational programs, tension in the relationship between the local SCC Board of Trustees, and the Illinois Community College Board, and finally ill thoughts toward and negative perceptions of the institution. A former administrator and faculty member at State Community College echoing this assessment of problems stated, “lack of a local funding base, too much political influence in hiring, finances and operation of administrators and staff,”¹⁸ were just a few of the problems that State Community College faced.

Financial Issues

Operating in “a state of crisis” became standard procedure for government in the city of East St. Louis post-1960s. East St. Louis experienced fatal declines in its economic base which

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Claybourne, interview.

¹⁷ Andrew J Theising, *Made in USA: East St. Louis, the Rise and Fall of an Industrial River Town* (St. Louis, MO: Virginia Publishing, 2003), 13.

¹⁸ Sis, interview.

affected its social institutions and further corroded its political system. East St. Louis's economic base crippled by the loss and flight of industry continued to experience extreme devastation. Although the city had tremendous financial difficulty, the various administrations were quite successful in acquiring outside financial aid. For the fiscal years 1974 to 1985, East St. Louis received only 40% of its municipal budget from local revenues. Forty-nine percent came from federal assistance and another 11% came from the State of Illinois.¹⁹ A new state office building was built in downtown East St. Louis, spending \$4.5 million and creating 330 jobs and a new federal courthouse was constructed as well as a new transit authority garage. The Federal Emergency Employment Act contributed \$5.6 million, \$11 million in urban renewal funds, and \$760,000 for worker training on interstate highway construction.²⁰ Federal funds represented a chance for East St. Louis to regain some of its former glory and during this period with assistance from land-clearance urban renewal funds, East St. Louis won the All-American City award by *Look Magazine* and the National Municipal League for 1959.²¹ Nonetheless, by the late 1970s, East St. Louis began to lose critical federal revenue sharing funds a trend that continued throughout the 1980s.

A study by the U.S. General Accounting Office found that the flow of federal dollars to East St. Louis slowed during the years of Mayor Carl E. Officer (1979-1991). During the fiscal years 1977 through 1979, total federal funding was about \$100 million annually. HUD provided over \$131 million to aid the people and the city of East St. Louis from fiscal year 1974 through 1985. From the various HUD Assistance programs, East St. Louis received over \$30 million in

¹⁹ Theising, *Made in USA*, 28.

²⁰ "For State Community College: Trades Training Proposed," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 14, 1971.

²¹ Theising, *Made in USA*, 193. The 1959 awards were announced in 1960 and East St. Louis won for cleaning up the city and its reputation for being a lawless city. Theising argues that the criteria by which East St. Louis won painted a "very bleak picture of the city." The city was honored because it had established four new welfare agencies, expanded charitable medical care, created a labor-management code of ethics (in response to labor disputes), made park improvements and built new schools, and also reduced levels of illegal gambling and vice.

community development block grants, over \$67 million for public housing, and over \$12 million for urban renewal projects.²² Grants and direct federal spending that once totaled \$100 million per year had fallen to a quarter of that. Federal financing cutbacks accelerated the fall of many cities as they often depended on federal funds to stay afloat.²³ During the 1980s and 1990s, East St. Louis was characterized by immense poverty. It was a tough time financially for everyone as a major recession combined with continuing decline in industry bases in the United States caused one of the worst economic times the United States had seen for quite some time. East St. Louis as usual felt the brunt of economic problems at a much higher and more noticeable level than other cities. The city was stuck in a tough financial position as it had been since it was established as an industrial town, with a low economic base that could not unfortunately keep itself afloat during hard times.

The city's continuing economic decline from the sixties through the early nineties proved to be an unbearable load for the city to carry. In 1990, East St. Louis had a debt estimated between \$34 and \$50.5 million. The Illinois Governor's office, estimated the city's debt to be \$50.5 million because of delinquent pension payments for city employees, misspent state and federal funds and the city's failure to pay its bills. It was also concluded that the city had not had

²² Resources, Community and Economic Development Division, "Community Development: Revenue and Demographic Characteristics of East St. Louis, Illinois," Washington, DC: United States General Accounting Office, 1986, 7.

²³ Alex Kotlowitz, "Urban Wastelands: In Some Small Cities, Poverty, Crime Top Metropolitan Levels," *Wall Street Journal*, June 22, 1988. It was important to note the Mayor of East St. Louis during that time because Mayor Officer was elected on a platform of turning the city the around, infusing the municipal coffers with much needed cash and bring economic developments to the city. Michael D. Sorkin, "Mayor Officer Says Bailout is Unnecessary, Unwanted," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 5, 1988. Officer was also known for his strenuous relationship with state government officials and the many disagreements over the level of debt and mismanagement in East St. Louis. Officer's administration was also charged with misusing its motor-fuel taxes by putting the money in its general fund or using it to pay employees. To which Officer replied that it had been occurring long before his term and that other municipalities did the same thing, a statement which implies that it was okay for his administration to engage in such improprieties.

an audit since 1985.²⁴ The number of businesses in East St. Louis had fallen to 383 from 1,527 in 1967 and the number of residents employed by these firms dropped from 12,423 to 2,699. By the 1990s the unemployment rate in East St. Louis had increased from 10.4 to 24.5% and its poverty rate had risen from 11 to 39.2%, prompting the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to identify East St. Louis as “the most distressed small city in America.”²⁵ East St. Louis was functionally bankrupt and used almost a third of its general operating expenses to pay delinquent bills and judgments. Cash shortages caused the city to forego expenditures for normal repairs and maintenance, utilities, basic services, capital needs, and other fringe benefits like health care.²⁶ The seemingly insurmountable economic problems of East St. Louis greatly diminished the quality of life for East St. Louis residents.

The city’s enormous debt and nonexistent tax base along with charges of corruption made the city a prime candidate for the Financially Distressed Municipalities Act—set up as a semi-financial rescue squad for troubled cities using resources of the Illinois Development Finance Authority—endorsed by then governor of Illinois, James R. Thompson.²⁷ Governor Thompson signed the bailout legislation on August 30, 1990, under which East St. Louis received a \$4 million short-term loan to provide adequate police, fire, and trash-collection services. In

²⁴ Tim Novak, “E. St. Louis Taxes May Increase,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 14, 1990. The city of East St. Louis owed an estimated \$20.9 million for pensions, including \$3.4 million to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund, \$8.8 million for firefighter pensions, and \$8.7 million for police pensions. \$18.5 million for bonds, including \$5.1 million for judgment bonds used to pay delinquent utility bills. \$4.3 million to the U.S. Department of Labor due to a dispute over the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, a defunct program and \$2.9 million to the Illinois Department of Transportation for funds the agency contended the city had misspent.

²⁵ Kenneth M. Reardon, “Combating Racism through Planning Education: Lessons from the East St. Louis Action Research Project,” *Planning, Practice, and Research* 13 (1998): 422.

²⁶ Ibid. One service affected by the economic problems was garbage service which was interrupted in 1987 after the contractor filed suit to collect \$250,000 in back payments and services were not resumed until 1990 and in some areas not until 1991.

²⁷ Lorraine Kee Montre, “East St. Louis Aldermen Approve Bailout Negotiations with State,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 24, 1990. On May 9, 1990, Governor Thompson appointed a financial advisory board that recommended that the city receive a long-term \$30 million loan to stabilize the city’s debt and a short-term \$4 million loan for emergency repairs and services. The \$4 million loan was made available by earmarking money collected as one-time revenue to the state.

addition, \$30 million was available to stabilize the city's debts. However, East St. Louis was not given free reign to spend the money as it saw fit. In fact receipt of the money were contingent upon several factors. The state's assistance came in the form of a fiscal oversight commission, the East St. Louis Financial Advisory Authority and an executive director of the commission and a city manager of East St. Louis to make the day-to-day spending and administrative decisions.²⁸ The bailout plan gave a five-member oversight commission the power to withhold state aid to East St. Louis if it did not draw up an acceptable financial plan and a balanced budget. The plan stipulated that the oversight commission would remain in place for a minimum of ten years or ten balanced budgets; however the oversight commission could be reactivated if the city slipped back into debt anytime during the life of the loan from the state.²⁹ Under the legislation, no city budget was legally operative unless approved by the oversight panel; all decisions about spending the \$34 million had to be approved by the panel; and any contracts the city entered into were not binding on the city unless approved by the panel.³⁰ Through the bailout plan the state was providing 60% of the city's \$6 million general funds budget and had set a precedent for state "takeover" of city services. State oversight of the city's finances mirrored state oversight of finances at State Community College. The city faced the same difficulties as SCC in developing a working relationship with the state as both fought to maintain control in daily operations.

²⁸ Kathleen Best, "Thompson Backs Plan for Bailout," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 18, 1990.

²⁹ Kathleen Best, "Vote Nears on Plan for East St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 2, 1990.

³⁰ Safir Ahmed, "Bickers, State Panel in Dispute," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 16, 1990. "Long Road Back for East St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, September 17, 1990. As East St. Louis generally handled problems internally, abiding by the guidelines set by the oversight panel proved to be great difficulty. At the first meeting of the East St. Louis Financial Advisory Authority on September 8, 1990, the authority voted unanimously to withhold approval of state loans to the city until a balanced multi-year financial plan was submitted for approval. W. Lamb, "Oversight Authority Will Act on East St. Louis Budget Plan/Officials Blame Delay on Struggle to Balance Costs/City Meets Second Deadline," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 4, 2003. Under the oversight commission the city had continuous difficulty setting forth a balanced budget as the city was frequently behind schedule in getting their budget passed. For example, in 2003, the city was two month's behind in submitting a balanced budget to the commission because city officials had difficulty reconciling declining revenues with rising expenditures to bring the \$55.2 million budget into balance.

Funding related issues were very big problems for State Community College. The school along with the city faced numerous charges of fiscal mismanagement, debt, and charges of fraud. These charges of financial mismanagement were exacerbated as the state began to face economic problems, causing many to use the chronic complaints and accusations of funding mismanagement in the city of East St. Louis to rethink sole funding for State Community College. However, problems relating to financial management did not begin in 1989 when state legislators decided to end State Community College's run as a state financed institution. More than a few of the earlier problems for State Community College and its finances were concerns regarding who actually controlled financial affairs at State Community College and ultimately who had the final word in how and for what purposes funds would be used.

State Community College received its first encounter with money issues almost immediately, when the East St. Louis Board of Trustees questioned members of the Illinois Community College Board about the manner in which the institution's revolving fund was handled and voiced concern about details surrounding the procedure for paying bills. State Community College funded through state appropriations did not have a petty cash fund during its first year of operation, forcing the school to rely on a "revolving fund" for miscellaneous payments.³¹ While this was technically a question of financial management and financial procedures, what was clear was the question of control. The local Board of Trustees pointedly asked who controlled the revolving cash fund and what specifically was the role of the local board in financial matters. Not only was the local board concerned with who controlled the institution but it was also worried about the image and perception of the institution and proper and correct procedures.

³¹ "State Turns Down SCC Audit Request," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 29, 1970.

Despite A. Wendell Wheadon's inquisition, problems with the revolving fund did not stop during the first year. Almost a year later the local board once again concerned about the revolving fund and improprieties turned to the state board this time by asking for an audit of the fund, after one trustee termed the college's revolving fund "a slush fund," and another said the handling of the fund "stinks." The local board was particularly critical of several practices, which included a personal loan to the institution for \$1000 and that some employees made out-of-pocket purchases, later being reimbursed by the college.³² Wheadon particularly concerned with financial fraud stated, "The most serious charge that could be made against the local board is fiscal irresponsibility."³³ Little did he know but the institution would eventually face charges of fiscal irresponsibility. The battle of who controlled finances at State Community College did not end with this disagreement; the lack of control of institution finances proved to be a source of great contention between the local Board of Trustees and the Illinois Community College Board.

Financial problems for State Community College continued in the form of formal charges of fraud, financial irregularities, and inept fiscal management. One interviewee speaking to the financial problems of the institution stated:

Funding, that was one of the key problems that they had. Not so much so that they didn't have money but there is always the discussion that funds were missing. Funds were missing! Funds were missing! So I think one of the big problems is perhaps misappropriation of funds that came through the school. And I don't know if they had an efficient method for checks and balances. That I just don't know. But apparently that was one of the problems because there was always questions of where is the funds and what happened to equipment that was supposed to have been purchased.³⁴

Larger financial issues for the community college involved financial aid for students, work-study programs, and financial affairs as it related to students. In 1972, President Clifton Woods cited

³² "'Slush Fund:' SCC Board Wants Audit," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 27, 1970.

³³ "Board Wants Control: SCC 'Revolving Fund' Questioned by Trustees," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, February 2, 1970.

³⁴ Reginald Wince, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, August 26, 2009. Wince graduated from State Community College with an RN in nursing. He attended the institution from 1981-1983.

complaints with the “overall management of fiscal affairs of the institution.”³⁵ According to Woods, this financial mismanagement was evidenced in the budget and the school having problems with matching funds for the work-study programs. Woods arguing that fiscal mismanagement was the cause of many of State Community Colleges problems stated, “SCC faced a serious financial situation.”³⁶ He also added that there had been some instances of fiscal mismanagement, and as a result the college “may have to diminish part of the education program, putting SCC in a serious financial situation.”³⁷ In 1976, federal student financial aid funds to SCC were suspended on order of the U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) because of repeated irregularities in the program. In 1975, a state audit of the federal student financial aid program was halted when auditors discovered about \$200,000 missing. It was alleged that a former SCC accountant had stolen the funds. While in 1972, three former college administrators were convicted in connection with a federal investigation of thefts of federal financial aid funds; in 1975, the former director of special programs of State Community College was convicted of stealing more than \$10,000 in federal money from the school.³⁸ In addition to the theft of federal funds, there were two major administrative problems in the programs: ineligible students receiving grants, and many students failing to repay loans.³⁹

³⁵ “Fiscal Officer: SCC Trustees Rebuff Move to Fire Campbell,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, March 10, 1972.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ “U.S. Sues Jacox for Stolen Funds,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, March 3, 1978. Robert F. Jacox, former director of special programs. Jacox was sentenced to two years in prison in 1975 after he admitted stealing more than \$10,000 in federal money from the school. The suit filed in federal court charged that he diverted \$15,000 of a check issued to the Scotia School of Cosmetology to his own use in 1972, while he administered federal Health, Education and Welfare student assistance funds at the college. He pleaded guilty in June 1975 to charges that he diverted in excess of 10,000. The new action also charged that Jacox diverted a \$19,127 check issued to the Metro East Vocational Technical Training Housing Program to his own bank account, and seeks the return of that money with interest. In all the federal government ordered the college repay \$1,072,000 in stolen and misspent student assistance money.

³⁹ Larry Spohn, “State May Repay Missing SCC Funds,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, July 25, 1976.

While the first local advisory board in East St. Louis called for an audit of the revolving fund to ward against any financial misgivings, future audits of the institution found that unfortunately financial impropriety was a normal occurrence at State Community College. Financial audits proved to be a great concern for SCC and their lack of proper preparation and problems within the audit reports were often used against the institution. “They [legislators, ICCB] talked about bad audits. SCC would get all kinds of negative publicity about a 9-page audit exception.”⁴⁰ Audit reports continuously stated that necessary financial statements often were not prepared and internal audit controls were lacking.⁴¹ “There may have been probably budgetary problems, probably. I think basically it was budgetary.”⁴² For several years, faculty and staff at State Community College were aware of discrepancies and problems with accounting practices at the institution and worried that audits would be a devastating problem for the institution, resulting in severe state action like closure. “Well the problems always ended up as a result of the accounting system and the audits that were conducted. There were just, there was one discretion after another that kept attention on our institution. Things that weren’t done correctly and weren’t following guidelines and consequently that was the source of the problems.”⁴³ “There was actually so many issues and many of them were financial issues. But financial support was certainly a very serious issue there, because there was no tax base.”⁴⁴

The problems echoed by faculty, staff and students of State Community College were major charges that SCC faced in reports issued by the Illinois Auditor General’s (IGA) office. For example, a 1977 report issued by the IGA heavily criticized the lack of written policy for

⁴⁰ Richard Bonnor, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, May 12, 2009. Dr. Bonnor was president of SCC from 1987-1991.

⁴¹ Editorial, *Belleville News-Democrat*, April 1, 1996.

⁴² Mrs. Carter, telephone interview by author, May 2009. Mrs. Carter earned both an Associate’s Degree from SCC and also worked in the business purchasing office from 1971 until 1996.

⁴³ SCC faculty, interview.

⁴⁴ Finch, interview.

administering and monitoring grants, substandard management, and patronage hiring, claiming that the college had not been operating effectively.⁴⁵ The trouble with the 1977 audit, which was also the first year that State Community College was locally governed and controlled, was the first in a long line of problematic audits for the institution. The 1977 audit while representing major problems for State Community College was not the first problematic audit for the institution. Personal correspondence between the Executive Secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board and a board member revealed that records at State Community College were so bad the first year (1969-1970) that auditors could not complete any analysis of the local revolving fund. The 1970-1971 school year's audit further highlighted a lack of appropriate financial records and a lack of follow-through and implementation of appropriate financial procedures at State Community College.⁴⁶ Budgetary and financial problems were an issue that SCC experienced from its beginning.

Each subsequent audit, State Community College was charged with being noncompliant with its accounting systems, internal monetary tracking systems, and problems in its administrative structures. While each audit was subsequently problematic, it was the audit for the 1987 fiscal year released in 1988 that garnered major attention. In 1988, the audit reported that the college ran its financial aid and grant programs improperly. The audit further stated that, because the college had no written policy for monitoring and administering grants: (1) an unused grant operations fund had a balance of \$210,000 from November 1986 until June 1987; (2) the

⁴⁵ Illinois Auditor General, *General Status Report of State Community College*, (Springfield: State of Illinois, 1977), 10. The Illinois Community College Board placed SCC on probation in 1975 primarily because of financial management problems. Probation was imposed after SCC was found in violation of eight policies by the State board. SCC was required to submit a unit cost study, a statement of use of the advisory committee, a local board policy manual, a policy on curriculum development, a statement of development of a job placement center, a policy on conducting evaluation of instructional programs, and a statement indicating that a system was being used to provide security for student records before its probation was lifted in 1977.

⁴⁶ Fred L. Wellman, Executive Secretary of IJCB to Rey W. Brune, IJCB Board Member, letter, January 24, 1972. Illinois Junior College Board Board Meeting Files, 472.019, Illinois State Archives, Springfield (hereafter cited as ICCB Meeting Files).

college lost financing for the Special Programs for Assistance to Students because of poor coordination between grant program directors and the lack of overall administration; and (3) the college had failed to provide an evaluation of the grant programs' effectiveness.⁴⁷ The audit also charged the institution with violating competitive bidding laws and criticized its bookkeeping and accounting practices. Senator Sam Vadalabene, D-Edwardsville, a senior member of that year's Legislative Audit Commission replied, "In my opinion, State Community College should be abandoned and a vocational school be put in its place. There has never been a year when there has been a college audit that was accepted. They have done a terrible, terrible job of operating the college."⁴⁸ The state audit report released in 1989 charged the institution with operating ineffectively, this time for employing nearly three times as many administrators and twice as many instructors and civil-service employees as comparable institutions.⁴⁹ These reports elicited severe responses from state legislators and gave vocal critics more ammunition to support their calls to abolish the institution. Following the audit findings of the 1988-1989 school year, Rep. Ted Leverenz, D-Maywood, expressing his disappointment in the findings stated, "Enough is enough," and introduced legislation to merge State Community College with Southern Illinois University.⁵⁰ Representative Leverenz's threat to merge or abolish the

⁴⁷ Phil Luciano, "Audit Faults State Community College Over Aid," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 20, 1988. The audit report stated that the grant inadequacy prevented the college from determining whether it had made an "adjustment" of \$324,000 in excess financial aid. Such adjustments are usually made by reimbursing the federal government or by carrying the money over to another year.

⁴⁸ Safir Ahmed, "Replace East St. Louis College, Key Illinois State Senator Says," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 10, 1988.

⁴⁹ Geri Aston, "Audit Raps College In E. St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 7, 1989. The audit cited the state board's own findings that State Community College has twice as many faculty members per student as 10 comparably sized community colleges, almost three times as many administrators and more than twice as many civil-service employees. Average enrollment at the 10 schools - the smallest in Illinois' community college system was about 1,200 students, while the average enrollment at State Community College was about 750. The average ratio of students to faculty members at the 10 schools was 56 to 1; it was 28 to 1 at State Community College. Similarly, the average ratio of students to administrators at the 10 schools was 145 to 1 and 56 to 1 at SCC. The average ratio of students to civil-service staff members staff was 52 to 1 and 21 to 1 at State Community College.

⁵⁰ Christopher Wills, "Audit Alleges Fraud, Improper Grants At East St. Louis College," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 25, 1990.

institution was a common response to the financial problems that State Community College faced.

The findings of the 1990 audit of State Community College resulted in additional charges of poor management on the part of college administrators that time for giving more than \$213,000 in financial aid to ineligible students. According to the auditor's report, the figure was the sum of two years worth of grants awarded to more than 280 students who did not meet the 'ability to benefit' criteria.⁵¹ Other charges against the institution included: failing to hire a collection clerk, resulting in an increase in accounts receivable for bills over 180 days old; inadequate salary scales for faculty; failure to adequately supervise staff and workers; and also increasing staff by 30 percent while student enrollment dropped 15 percent from 1980 to 1990. In the end, State Community College was cited for 64 findings, up from 27 findings in the 1989 audit.⁵² Showing a complete lack of faith in the college's ability to rectify its longstanding practice of noncompliance with State fiscal requirements, the audit writers reported their concern with the College's poor record in correcting prior audit findings. State Rep. James Keane, D-Chicago, responding to the audit's findings called the school a "total ripoff." His subsequent response foreshadowed State Community College's future, "For 14 years, I've been looking at these reports, it's disgusting. I will vote to shut it down."⁵³ Once again the answer was to shut the institution down.

In 1993, the Illinois Auditor General once again found problems at State Community College; the audit released in September of 1993 cited that the institution committed several actions not in accordance with auditing guidelines. State Community College had delayed

⁵¹ Lorraine Kee Montre, "Audit Faults State Community College 64 Times," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 2, 1991.

⁵² Illinois Auditor General, *General Status Report of State Community College*, (Springfield: State of Illinois, 1990).

⁵³ Montre, "Audit Faults."

collecting delinquent student accounts until the end of the fiscal year rather than after each semester and failed to conduct 23 of 27 internal audits beginning in 1990. Also, State Community College failed to reconcile its bank account for tuition and fees and auditors found that the college balanced its account only once during the past 12 months. One last cited infraction included the schools failure to request that a vacancy on its board be filled by Gov. Jim Edgar. The college did not dispute the problems and instead stated that it would fix them.⁵⁴ State Community College was always criticized and scrutinized for problems with its audits. The criticism was usually a resounding “close it down.” State Community College would go on to face future charges of noncompliance with accounting procedures until the institution closed in 1996.

The yearly audit report that each year pointed to a different or continuing problem at State Community College was reason enough for legislators, state officials, and taxpayers to push for legislation restructuring State Community College’s existence. Legislators, cautious of the money going into the institution and irregular financial procedures regularly highlighted in state audits, stated, “With the way the city has been operating, it would be like throwing money down a rat hole. Change without state help is unlikely.”⁵⁵ Financial problems were a huge concern for State Community College because without state funds there would be no institution. Legislators across the state used this threat of pulling funds from the institution as a means of keeping those involved with the institution “in line.” Senator Terry Bruce, Assistant Majority Leader, D-Olney, explained that any trouble but especially financial trouble was not a luxury the

⁵⁴ “Audit Faults Accounting at East St. Louis Community College,” *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, September 3, 1993.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

school could afford since many in the General Assembly objected to the fact that SCC didn't have "an autonomous board on their own tax levy."⁵⁶

The precarious nature of State Community College was confounded by its reliance on the state for funding. The future of the institution was closely tied to the state's ability and willingness to continue funding. Measures to ensure accountability as a basis for institutional aid affect Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) disproportionately because these colleges and universities lack the resources by which to maintain the so-called high standards such measures require, exhibited in the problems faced by State Community College.⁵⁷ Over the past four decades, statewide coordinators, planners and governing boards have considered various structural alternatives for achieving excellence and affordable access for diverse student populations. These alternatives included diversifying campus missions, facilitating transfer and articulation agreements, and providing mechanisms to demonstrate accountability. During the 1990s, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness were at the forefront of state policymakers' agendas.⁵⁸ An increased call for accountability and measures of standards were a big problem for State Community College. Illinois legislatures quickly connected SCC's problems with its audits as an indication of the academic quality the school was able to offer and the ability of the college to provide an academic program that met and exceeded standards. Institutions that are not able to support themselves or face severe financial problems like State Community College are undoubtedly at the mercy of sociopolitical forces that ensure these institutions will continue to struggle. State Community College established because of its limited financial resources was

⁵⁶ Larry Spohn, "Senate Panel Adds Funds for SCC," *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, April 29, 1976.

⁵⁷ Benjamin Baez, Marybeth Gasman, and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, "On Minority-Serving Institutions," in *Understanding Minority-Serving Institutions*, eds. Marybeth Gasman, Benjamin Baez, and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 5.

⁵⁸ Michael N. Bastedo and Patricia J. Gumpert, "Access to What? Mission Differentiation and Academic Stratification in U.S. Public Higher Education," *Higher Education* 46 (2003): 342.

at the whim and insight of Illinois legislators to see the continued need for the institution's existence despite rhetoric that the State was committed to educational access for all. Baez, Gasman, and Viernes Turner arguing that state and federal funding patterns contribute to the instability of minority-serving institutions contend that "Decreases in state funding to higher education and in federal financial aid to their students seriously undermine the stability of MSIs and, consequently, the successes of the students they serve."⁵⁹

Political Problems

"Back to politics. The politicians wanted to run it. That was the underlying problem."⁶⁰ This key statement by a business education instructor and one-time Chairman of the Board of Trustees summed up one of the key problems that many viewed as instrumental in State Community College closing. Political influence, political corruption, and patronage are themes that resonated with multiple interviewees in describing the problems that State Community College may have encountered that contributed to the state's decision to seek a dissolution of full state support for the institution. While these themes aren't necessarily substantiated by concrete evidence, their responses are indicative of the historical influence of politics in East St. Louis and how far the political system in East St. Louis permeates its institutions. A long-time educator in an East St. Louis' high school public education system whose response was one short statement, "Oh, politics got in it," sums up her feelings for what she describes as a "deplorable" political system.⁶¹ Other responses include: "There was some political involvement."⁶² "The problems that I was trying to describe and didn't describe well about the East St. Louis political

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Lane, interview.

⁶¹ Shaw, interview.

⁶² Bonnor, interview.

atmosphere. That everything hinged on who you were connected to politically.”⁶³ One interviewee let the reputation of East St. Louis politics speak for itself with her response of, “You know how the political setup in the city was at that time.”⁶⁴ The final President of State Community College, Janet Finch, recalled, “Politics had a lot to do with the manner in which SCC functioned.”⁶⁵

Political problems were not new for East St. Louis in 1989, when legislation to restructure SCC was introduced or 1996 when the institution closed. East St. Louisans can talk for days about the political nature and structures in place in the city and the subsequent effect on social institutions. Politics in East St. Louis have long been characterized by corruption and patronage. While political corruption and patronage were not new in East St. Louis, they were especially problematic for State Community College. When State Community College was established in 1969, state legislators supporting the bill espoused the hope that there was finally a social institution in East St. Louis free from the grasp of politics. From the first year the school was opened, community leaders and residents wanted to make sure the local community college board did not “continue in the patronage and contract favors that were openly tolerated in the past on other boards and councils.”⁶⁶ They were concerned that their grand push for a quality institution would be damaged and/or jeopardized by patronage, contract and bidding kickbacks, and political conflicts of interest. While the intentions for State Community College were pure and noble, the school quickly faced charges of attempts of political patronage and corruption.

⁶³ Delores Ray, telephone interview by author, June 6, 2009. Ray was a lifelong resident of East St. Louis and a member of the Illinois Community College Board in the 1990s.

⁶⁴ Lena Weathers, interview by author, Belleville, IL, April 20, 2009. Mrs. Weathers worked at SCC as a student services counselor and was also a member of the local advisory board in 1996.

⁶⁵ Finch, interview.

⁶⁶ “Washnis Calls for Junior College Probe,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 8, 1969.

One of the first administrators of the institution, the dean of business affairs, announced his resignation early on stating that attempts were being made to use the new, state-financed school for political purposes; that he had been relegated to supervising janitors, buildings and security; and that A. Wendell Wheadon, chairman of the local board, had adopted a possessive attitude about the school. A. Wendell Wheadon, however, denied the claims stating, “We have done nothing in secret, in fact we are for full citizen participation in the affairs of the college and the citizens can best determine what direction we are going in.”⁶⁷ When the first sign of political problems was mentioned during the first year of operation, Senator John Gilbert, who originally backed the legislation creating the school argued that the creation of a political machine or political patronage through the new school was exactly what backers of the college had not wanted. He went on to state, “One of the reasons for seeking the school for East St. Louis was that it would be devoid of political entanglements.”⁶⁸

Individuals were adamant about not seeing the community college go the way of other institutions in the state, which were plagued by political corruption and patronage. “It should have absolutely no opportunity to involve patronage or any other of the earmarks of the spoils system that has sucked the lifeblood from City Hall and the East St. Louis School District for many years. It should be concerned about how the college can serve the community, not what someone can get from it either financially or in terms of political support for other goals.”⁶⁹ Part of the vehemence against political patronage despite it being corrupt and discriminatory was that it blighted the image of the institution that everyone felt was much too important to the community. The political accusations would also jeopardize funding and continued

⁶⁷ “Ware Stays on SCC Job until Jan. 30,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 21, 1969.

⁶⁸ “Junior College Funds in Danger,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 28, 1969.

⁶⁹ “State Board Bears Responsibility for East St. Louis Junior College,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, November 30, 1969.

appropriations for the school. Problems with political corruption and political patronage would continue to haunt the institution and cause strife and friction between state legislators wanting to keep the institution open and those wanting to close its doors.

One key political issue for State Community College was determining who controlled and governed the local institution. Inherent in this question was in what ways would local politicians be able to control the institution for their political gain. By obtaining local control, which occurred in 1977, the local board, which during the first 10 years of operation consisted primarily of precinct committeemen, the school's jobs could be used as political leverage and patronage jobs as they would then control hiring and firing personnel. The utilization of State Community College as a source of patronage jobs was a huge problem for the local board of trustees. A former board member espousing problems with political patronage and State Community college stated, "They [politicians] tell Board members who ought to be hired and who ought not be hired."⁷⁰ Other interviewees speculating on the influence of politics in State Community College affairs and the impact on the future outcome of the institution places full blame with East St. Louis's politics.

SCC began to be politicized and people were clamoring, "They didn't want the state to have total control. That we should be able to have control over our own institution," and you know, you have trade-offs. This community could not financially support an institution, unlike any other community college in the state, it just wasn't there. And I had a very, very negative idea about how SCC was being run and I used to tell anyone and everyone who would listen and increasingly there weren't people who wanted to listen, I said the problems and the job in SCC are too serious, too complex for on the job training. SCC needs to be able to attract and keep an experienced, competent President and allow that person to run the institution. Well, the politics of East St. Louis...and so they began putting politically, well-connected people into the administrative positions, not people who had the expertise that would be necessary. Cause I always felt it took one kind of person to start the institution and that person was Rosetta Wheadon. And it took, it would take another kind of person to build the institution, whole different skill sets and then another person, kind of person to stabilize the institution. But SCC kept going back

⁷⁰ Rev. John Rouse, interview by author, February 22, 2009, East St. Louis, IL. Rev. Rouse was a member of the local advisory board on several different occasions.

to whoever was in political favor at that time and I don't think SCC ever had someone who had previously, successfully experience at running a community college, at the helm of the school.⁷¹

The debate over political patronage was “exposed” in a *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article highlighting the difficulties in the local Board of Trustees selecting and hiring a president. The difficulty was attributed to one board member pushing and voting for a candidate that was his wife's friend.⁷² This example is just one of many that residents point to as a historical trend in politics and its impact on SCC.

Political infighting, patronage, and politics as usual in East St. Louis also lead to the decrease in public approval and acceptance of State Community College. James Reeves, former accountant at State Community College, stated, “With all the infighting and political patronage going on, students don't want to come here.”⁷³ Bickering between local board members and top administration including the president created an image of constant instability for the institution. They often disagreed on hiring procedures, school policies and operations, and funding issues. Most staff and faculty felt that the hands-on nature of politicians in East St. Louis and in Springfield were detrimental and counter productive to continued long-term operation of the institution. “State Community College began with a sense of pride and expansion of educational opportunities; however, local politics and real or imagined charges of racism derailed these efforts.”⁷⁴ Politics in East St. Louis during the years leading up to the closing of SCC were a fiasco. Corruption and patronage, which historically underlined the political system of East St.

⁷¹ Sis, interview.

⁷² Lorraine Kee Montre, “College Search Delayed: 2 Candidates Withdraw From Presidential Race,” *St. Louis-Post Dispatch*, February 22, 1991. A board member speaking to the paper anonymously stated, “Hudlin was trying to force the candidate on others and that she was a close friend of his wife's. He attempted to pressure the board with is personal choice or put restraints on the more qualified candidates.” Hudlin disputed the claim saying he had been referred to the candidate by his former wife but he had called her only to find out if she knew of any potential local candidates.

⁷³ Patrick E. Gauen, “Union At State College Criticizes Management,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 21, 1989.

⁷⁴ Sis, interview.

Louis resulted in the “crooked condition of East St. Louis politics” during the late 1980s and continuing throughout the 1990s. The city was plagued with a history of financial and political mismanagement all of which aided in the state’s decision to cease funding State Community College. “You know, anytime something closes or open, it’s some political in it somewhere. I mean you ain’t gone get around that.”⁷⁵

Relationship with the Illinois Community College Board

The tension, conflict and often public bickering between the local Board of Trustees at State Community College and the Illinois Community College board represented an additional problem the institution was forced to deal with and threatened stability at the college. One of the main issues was the language spelling out the responsibilities and duties of the local board in East St. Louis and their role as an “advisory” board. State legislation in 1969 establishing State Community College also established by statute that a local board be elected in an advisory position to the Illinois Junior College Board. The contentious relationship between the two boards was made public when the *Metro-East Journal*, a local East St Louis newspaper, asked the local Board of Trustees if it wasn’t true that the local board did in fact have only an advisory role, with control of the college vested in the Illinois Junior College Board. To which A. Wendell Wheadon responded “the word advisory is not in the enabling legislation and the local board had control over the college administration.”⁷⁶ Gerald Smith, Executive Secretary of the State Board and Acting Executive Director of the College, in response said, “I hope we are not going to get tied up in whether the local board is advisory when it was a “recommending

⁷⁵ Gary Bailey, interview by author, East St. Louis, IL, May 12, 2009. Bailey worked as an instructor at State Community College and currently works for Kaskaskia Community College.

⁷⁶ “Ware Says Board ‘Skirting the Issues,’” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 1, 1969.

board.”⁷⁷ While the ambiguity of the situation angered East St. Louis trustees, it disappointed the state board. Smith commenting on the situation said:

I’m disappointed that there might be some argument on the position or power of the local board as related to that of the state board. Adding that the law made it clear that the state board was responsible for establishing, maintain and operating the school, providing for a local board subject to rules and regulations established by the state board. No expenditure, no employment was legally complete without state board action and that the East St. Louis board knew its actions had to be concurred by the state board to make them legal.⁷⁸

This early wording and attention of the local board to the term “advisory” would set the stage for future fights between the “local” board and the “state” board.

There were also charges of “a complete breakdown” in communication between the local board and the Illinois Junior College Board.⁷⁹ As a result, claims were made by the local board that the “state board was not attuned to the needs of the institution as they saw them locally.”⁸⁰ The local advisory board perceived actions taken by the state board as an indication that their recommendations “seemed to be hung up in limbo somewhere and were not being adequately transmitted to the state board” for their consideration.⁸¹ A. Wendell Wheadon expressed, “the state board did not specifically spell out its responsibility in handling SCC funds and that it had approved programs for the college before the local board of trustees were given a chance to review the programs negating the Board being able to make recommendations and review policy.”⁸² Continuing problems between the two boards involved hiring procedures and who possessed jurisdiction to actually hire and fire employees. Wheadon said trustees “have been

⁷⁷ “Not Needed: State Official, SCC Probe Deferred,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 1, 1969.

⁷⁸ “Guidance, Not Investigation, Urged at SCC,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, December 2, 1969.

⁷⁹ John Shaffer, “Wheadon Says SCC Has ‘No Communication’ With State,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, September 29, 1970.

⁸⁰ “‘Slush Fund:’ SCC Board Wants Audit,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, October 27, 1970.

⁸¹ Shaffer, “Wheadon Says.”

⁸² Ibid. More specifically Wheadon was critical of the state board “approving, signing, and delivering,” the Manpower Development Training Act program financed by a \$260,000 grant before it was reviewed by the local board.

struggling” to get an understanding from the junior college board that the local board would have a chance to review all matters before action by the state board.⁸³ The problems that the first local advisory board faced set the foundation for future problems between the East St. Louis advisory board and the Springfield governing board. These problems that at times seemed to be an impassable gulf were issues of governance and control, communication, political mistrust, and misperceptions and misunderstandings on both sides. Both boards felt that the other was in some ways trying to sabotage the future of State Community College. On more than one occasion each board accused the other of wrongdoing as it related to operating State Community College.

The community resented the state’s role, making the task of government that much more difficult, state board members exclaimed.⁸⁴ President Finch stated, “There was, I don’t know, it was always my sense that people in East St. Louis were like, “No we want to be able to do what we want to do.” And the local board, the local board of trustees, just really had difficulty being receptive to guidance and input from ICCB.”⁸⁵ Others commenting on the relationship between the two boards stated,

Well it...that relationship [between the local board and the state board] towards the end was always rocky. But it was always a struggle and a fight for the legislators and the representatives here because they...after a while it was the thought that they were pouring money into a black hole, so to speak. And there of course then there was probably conflict between the local board and the ICCB...but toward the end, it was very rocky because, you know, I guess, the politics of the time were not in favor of the college maintaining its own you know, autonomy.⁸⁶

Some community members viewed the Illinois Community College Board as a group of outsiders with little to no understanding of the community and its needs and no commitment to seeing those needs met. On the other hand, there were residents who welcomed the added

⁸³ “SCC Board Rejects State Action in Hiring Attorney,” *East St. Louis Metro-East Journal*, February 23, 1971.

⁸⁴ Joyce Mercer, Struggle in East St. Louis, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 9, 1994.

⁸⁵ Finch, interview.

⁸⁶ Claybourne, interview.

oversight of the ICCB and its safeguarding against politics and political schemes in East St. Louis.

I really, really liked the idea, for me, and this is personal, the idea of state control because it required that you followed certain guidelines, you were and you could not be controlled by the politics. If you were to be controlled by the politics then it were on you and you would put yourself in jeopardy of really getting in deep trouble because you talking about following the state law, you know, so you had to be under the law. That way you was kind of protected against the bid working and having to get involved in kickbacks and all of that kind of thing. See what I'm saying? And that's where politics, that's where the politics plays in that and that's what had happened to East St. Louis a lot as you are aware. If you just look in the past history at people who have gotten in trouble in the city due to kickbacks on bidding and all that kind of thing. Well that's the reason I left, when the state didn't control. [Laughter]⁸⁷

As individuals summed up the progress of State Community College during its final years, the summation was that the experimental institution failed. The Illinois Community College Board was penned a likely culprit in this failure, which Representative Wyvetter H. Younge, D-East St. Louis and chairman of the House Committee on Higher Education said “had done a terrible job of leadership.”⁸⁸ She stated that “The board was highly critical of the college when its mandate was to help the college be everything it could be.” What happened instead was blame placed on the institution, which Younge likened to blaming the victim. Others questioned the State Board’s ability to govern from 100 miles away. Delores S. Ray, East St. Louis native and ex-member of the State Board said, “The experiment was fraught with problems because there were no recognized rules.”⁸⁹ Other individuals directly blamed the Illinois Community College Board for the school closing. A former instructor stated, “I don’t think it was a good relationship. I really believe they [ICCB] starved SCC for it to close. Well, it’s just a lot of funds that we didn’t get. And they always said we, you know, SCC had misappropriated funds. I believe down the line that they knew what was going on. They knew that they was gone close

⁸⁷ Carter, interview.

⁸⁸ Mercer, “Struggle in East St. Louis.”

⁸⁹ Ibid.

SCC.”⁹⁰ In defense of the state board, James M. Howard, deputy executive director of the state board, said the board had not always received the support it needed from the college’s administration adding to problems encountered in running the institution. He claimed that reports came in late, administrators didn’t show up for expected legislative hearings, and deficiencies in accounting or other areas were noted during audits and they weren’t quickly fixed. Howard did go on to note that with the interim president, Robert L. Randolph, appointed in Summer of 1993 that there were changes implemented at the school. In response, long-time administrators at the college stated that it had been a struggle to operate under a microscope, particularly when some state legislators were hostile to the institution’s very existence and sponsored bills to shut it down.⁹¹

The concept of “shared governance”—collaborative management of an institution⁹²—for State Community College did not work out quite the way legislators imagined. There is a historic contentious divide between local and institutional governing structures and state governance quickly evidenced in interactions between the two governing boards of SCC. Scholars argue that issues related to how decisions are made, who has decision-making authority, and over what, represent a constant dilemma, one that was never resolved in East St. Louis.⁹³ Academic governance is based on the premise that the extent to which an institution can effectively make decisions has significant consequences for institutional quality and vitality and when there are problems in the governance structure, the ability and quality of the institution is

⁹⁰ Bailey, interview.

⁹¹ Mercer, “Struggle in East St. Louis.”

⁹² Keetjie J. Ramo, *Assessing the Faculty's Role in Shared Governance: Implications of AAUP Standards* (Washington, DC: American Association of University Professors, 1998). Of the three shared governance models, collaborative, stratified and consultative, SCC and the State Board had a stratified system in which certain constituents made decision according to decision types (e.g. local board recommended faculty appointments and staff hires while the state board determined policy and budgetary issues.

⁹³ Ibid.

undoubtedly questioned.⁹⁴ The response in public higher education has been to increase the centralization of governance structures, particularly in response to a declining share of state resources available for higher education and the corresponding concern for efficient use of funding and stringent accountability measures.⁹⁵ The lack of harmony between the governing boards of State Community College and the Illinois Community College Board while not the only rationale for the closing of State Community College when combined with the other problems of the institution suggest a broad set of intentions and influences that ultimately changed the nature of higher education in East St. Louis.

Negative Attitudes and Perceptions About Educational Quality

The quality of education in East St. Louis's schools was questioned for many years, but no years in East St. Louis educational history measured up to the scrutiny the education system received during the late 1980s continuing into the 1990s. Public education in East St. Louis faced tremendous problems throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Administrators of the local school district 189 admitted to irregularities and discrepancies in financial management, hiring practices, and academic procedures resulting in a school district riddled with debt, ridiculed for swollen payrolls, charges of outrageous acts of nepotism, and a student population with very low test scores. For example, the school district used funds earmarked for accounts to pay current bills and to pay for educational programs.⁹⁶ In 1991, public education in East St. Louis was depicted as the bottom of the barrel by Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities*, which scrutinized

⁹⁴ James T. Minor, "Groundwork for Studying Governance at Historically Black Colleges and Universities," in *Understanding Minority-Serving Institutions*, eds. Marybeth Gasman Gasman, Benjamin Baez, and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 169.

⁹⁵ Michael R. Mills, "Stories of Politics and Policy: Florida's Higher Education Governance Reorganization," *The Journal of Higher Education* 78, no. 2 (2007): 164.

⁹⁶ Kathleen Best and Safir Ahmed, "Safety, Illegality Cited in East St. Louis Schools," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 19, 1990.

the quality of and commitment to education in East St. Louis.⁹⁷ Kozol's work drew a parallel between the economic and political conditions of the city and the quality of the education system. Near the end of its existence State Community College faced similar charges of providing ineffective and poor quality educational programs for its students. For years SCC faced problems with claims that it was not adequately preparing its students for jobs and careers. Postsecondary institutions, which enroll a large number of economically and academically "at risk" students, often have difficulty with perceptions about the quality of their academic programs.

While State Community College faced tangible problems with its audit system and encountered problems with academic programs, the two-year institution also faced skepticism about the need for its existence along with negative perceptions of its academic quality and as one interviewee stated, "Bad publicity!"⁹⁸ "Spoon-fed" was a popular moniker for State Community College as many throughout the state held firm to the belief that East St. Louis and its social institutions were aided and bailed out when they should have been left to their own devices. By continuing to provide funding to East St. Louis with what the public thought no measures of accountability, government programs were unintentionally nurturing a culture of dependency in the East St. Louis community. "SCC was viewed as receiving special treatment with respect to funding."⁹⁹ Despite the thought and belief that East St. Louis was getting a handout in the form of state support for SCC, they were no different than other institutions in Illinois funded to a certain degree by the state, they just received a bigger portion of their funding from the state. Since the first year of operation, taxpayers had loudly proclaimed their disgust

⁹⁷ Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991).

⁹⁸ Bailey, interview.

⁹⁹ Claybourne, interview.

and hatred of the idea that money was being poured into East St. Louis and particularly the freely operating State Community College, especially as the school faced mounting charges of shoddy management and patronage hiring.

State Community College had some difficulty in employing a long-term president, a claim substantiated by the fact that the school had eleven different presidents with an average tenure of 2.5 years during its twenty-seven year existence.¹⁰⁰ Overall, staffing issues represented an insurmountable problem not only in satisfying audit requests but also in solidifying stability and strengthening the longevity of the institution. “Probably some of the main problems was staff. I think in some cases they didn’t have the people that they needed. For some reason there was always some problem with management, business management and so forth. And if they got people, they had not had that responsibility of money management before.”¹⁰¹ Capable and competent leadership at all levels is instrumental in producing and maintaining an institution’s ability to carry out its purpose and provide services to its students. NCACS stated that the Board of Trustees needed to “better define its role, comply with state financial standards, develop plans to reverse declining enrollment, develop a long-range educational plan, conduct a study on the needs of the community, and design its services to meet those needs.”¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ See Appendix B for Chart of presidents at the school.

¹⁰¹ Allen, interview.

¹⁰² Lucinda Harper, “Pride and Mistrust: Racial History Spurs Illinois Town to Try to Save Local College,” *Wall Street Journal*, August 20, 1993. SCC instructor, interview. Illinois Community College Board, ICCB Meeting Minutes, October 20, 1995, ICCB Meeting Files. In 1989 NCACS placed the college on probation for lack of a clearly defined mission and the inability to maintain leadership in the office of the president. In 1991, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools threatened the school with a loss of its accreditation completely because of trouble in placing its graduates in jobs and the instability in leadership for the school—evidenced by 3 presidents in 5 years. Quality of education at State Community College was also called into question because of the lack of what seemed effective and consistent leaders and administrators at the institution. While the institution did not lose its accreditation from the NCACS in October of 1991, the Illinois Community College Board did place State Community College on “recognition interrupted” status in October 1995 for failing to rectify noncompliance standards cited in the Board’s January 1995 meeting. As an instructor of State Community College would say this action was taken because SCC failed to “satisfy the ICCB’s requests to keeping an orderly institution.” ICCB felt that SCC gave it no choice but to follow through with the action. Board members felt the action, “illustrated a realistic ICCB assessment of the college and sent a strong message that ICCB will not stand by an institution [that]

For the last several years of its existence, an image of a badly run, poorly managed institution surrounded State Community College. Rep. Monroe Flinn, D-Cahokia, a vocal critic of State Community College and sponsor of HB 629 to restructure State Community College stated, “It’s nothing but a patronage hole, and it does nothing to educate the kids.”¹⁰³ James Howard, on loan from the Illinois Community College to aid in the transition of State Community College into Metropolitan Community College, reflected on what he felt was popular thought about the institution. He argued that for much of the college’s existence there were many who felt it should be self-reliant and independent, since the school’s objective was not to provide quality education but instead was more concerned with providing employment for community residents. He stated, “They [institutional officials] have an opportunity to leave only to memory an institution that has experienced somewhat limited success and has suffered substantial trauma in the media and with state and federal officials.”¹⁰⁴ Rep. James Keane, D-Chicago, another highly vocal and visible critic of State Community College, pushed quite adamantly for restructuring and eventually closing the institution. Keane a member of the Legislative Audit Commission for 12 years in 1990 argued that previous promises by State Community College to remedy its past problems were hollow. He further stated, “It looks like 1990 is going to be a worse year for audit purposes than 1989. Education cannot take place in the midst of chaos and that’s what East St. Louis community college has been since I’ve been

can not demonstrate quality.” The Illinois Community Board felt that it could use that situation as an opportunity to improve the college. ICCB used the “interrupted recognition” status to provide assistance to SCC in developing a plan to address budgetary, programmatic, and other relevant issues. The executive director of ICCB, Geraldine Evans stated, “State Community College could benefit from the expertise and oversight of the ICCB, and while its financial constraints would still present a challenge, the recurrent issues it faced may be solvable with the implementation of ICCB’s emergency measures.”

¹⁰³ Gerri Aston, “Senate Backs Expansion of Scott,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 1, 1989.

¹⁰⁴ James M. Howard, “A Plan for Establishing a New District Replacing State Community College District #601: Executive Summary,” unpublished manuscript. Prepared for presentation to the Illinois Community College Board and North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, May 17, 1996, 2, 16. From the personal papers of Ruth Claybourne.

aware of it. When the audit comes in, if there's not significant changes, I'm going to push to do away with the existing governing system and give it to someone who can or just close the place down."¹⁰⁵ Keane later went on to say, "it has been the same old story" at SCC. "My feeling is we're not doing anyone a favor by letting the operation continue on as it has been."¹⁰⁶ He argued that students suffered most because of the problems.

One growing problem for State Community College was its declining enrollment. Enrollment at the institution declined from 2039 in 1974 to 769 in 1989, the year the General Assembly passed legislation restructuring the institution. "SCC began struggling for enrollment because as I said when SCC first started all they had to do was be there to get students to come."¹⁰⁷ "One problem, I think [was] enrollment. Once the district began to lose population and it could not have the, and it did not have the number of residents that a Class A community college [needed], the minimum, then the monies stopped coming."¹⁰⁸ The college was criticized for paying more than any other college to educate each student enrolled while it had the lowest enrollment in Illinois, according to statistics from the Illinois Community College Board.¹⁰⁹

The popular, negative lore that precedes all things East St. Louis also preceded State Community College and its continued operation often the source of much of SCC's criticism. State Community College's last five years of operation were marred by much criticism from state legislators, newspaper editorials, and even local residents; criticism that at times seemed unfair because it was crouched in people's perception of East St. Louis. The Illinois audit reports and legislators on the Audit Commission that seemed to take great pleasure in lambasting

¹⁰⁵ Kathleen Best, "East St. Louis Campus Pulling Out Of Slump, School Officials Say; Legislator is Skeptical," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, November 29, 1990.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Sis, interview.

¹⁰⁸ Bonnor, interview.

¹⁰⁹ Kathleen Best, "College Is Given Deadline: E. St. Louis School Warned To Reform," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 2, 1990.

the institution frequently cited inept financial management and procedures and lack of quality education for the failure of the institution. These charges while aimed at specific practices and imagined outcomes of State Community College are also part of a larger and more historical criticism of institutions whose primary goal is to serve underrepresented students. These institutions are often criticized for real and imagined problems of curriculum, location and its student population demographics. In the case of State Community College, its location in the politically controlled industrial suburb of East St. Louis was more than enough to condemn the institution and the quality of the programs. Student enrollment was used as an example of how the institution had failed when in reality the negative press surrounding the school was enough to keep students away. State Community College while serving the needs of the African American community of East St. Louis was also labeled as an institution for the city of East St. Louis which kept a multitude of students away, a sentiment echoed in the larger population of HBCUs for example, who despite having an open-door policy are still seen as schools only for blacks. These institutions are steeped in an image that at once describes a place and role for them and also refuses to acknowledge the institutions for the great service they provide.

The charges of inadequacy and the negative perceptions that followed these charges were part of a growing response by the public for accountability in higher education. While the public has pushed for greater accountability on charges of inadequate and low-quality academic programs, most of these are claims of what post-secondary institutions should be doing and not an accurate picture of what they are exactly doing. While most colleges and universities are called to task for their practices and faults, Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) like Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black-Serving Institutions (PBIs) have historically faced and continue to face repeated criticism of providing an intellectual

disservice to their students. These institutions have long faced charges of insufficient financial resources, underpaid and incompetent teachers, lack of competent faculty and staff, and a semiliterate student culture.¹¹⁰ Despite the positive benefits to both students and the community, one common perception about Minority-Serving Institutions is that they are still less stable, less productive, or less educative compared to predominantly white campuses. One reason for such negative perceptions results from questions surrounding governance policies and practices employed at these institutions. Financial fragility, accreditation challenges, and even closures are associated with poor governance practices.¹¹¹ All-black institutions were pronounced substandard for their very racial makeup. “The stigma of inferiority associated with all-black institutions (whether by law or practice) has resulted in a constant question of their rationale for the nation’s black colleges.”¹¹² Couple this traditional thinking with the problems faced at State Community College and you have an institution ridiculed for its faults and on the brink of closure.

Despite the avalanche of criticism heaped upon them, institutions serving black students continue to provide a needed service to their students and manage to create an environment in which African Americans are educated regardless of academic preparation, test scores, socioeconomic status, or environmental circumstances.¹¹³ These institutions despite their modest beginnings have served black students with considerable effectiveness in that they invested in the

¹¹⁰ Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, *The Academic Revolution* (New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1968); J. Junod, “Are Black Colleges Necessary?,” *Atlanta Magazine* 27, no. 6 (1987): 78-119; Earl James McGrath, *The Predominantly Negro Colleges in Transition* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1965); Thomas Sowell, *Black Education: Myths and Tragedies* (New York: McKay, 1972).

¹¹¹ Minor, “Groundwork for Studying Governance,” 170.

¹¹² Marybeth Gasman, *Envisioning Black Colleges: A History of the United Negro College Fund* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2007), 1-2.

¹¹³ Walter R. Allen and Joseph O. Jewell, “A Backward Glance Forward: Past, Present, and Future Perspectives on Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” *The Review of Higher Education* 25, no. 3 (Spring 2002): 241-261; Mikyong Minsun Kim, “Historically Black Vs. White Institutions: Academic Development among Black Students,” *The Review of Higher Education* 25, no. 4 (Summer 2002): 385-407.

quality of their programs while maintaining a commitment to individual student development.¹¹⁴ Institutions like State Community College are necessary because of their ability to educate many African American students who otherwise would not be able to study at the college level. Dr. Richard Bonnor, former president of State Community College, echoing this sentiment stated, “if it had not been for SCC the significance is there are a lot of people who would not have had degrees.”¹¹⁵ Scholars like Fleming, claim that these institutions can best uplift the unprepared students and simultaneously stimulate the competent ones.¹¹⁶ Black colleges and universities foster a nurturing family-like environment, and faculty members are supportive of African American students. These institutions also house students that are more satisfied, engaged in the community, and well adjusted, students that go on to complete their college degrees.¹¹⁷

Were it not for institutions like State Community College that cater to large populations of students shut out of traditional institutions, many students of color would have significantly lower chances of attaining postsecondary education. According to Benjamin Baez, Marybeth Gasman, and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner, the importance and strengths of Minority Serving Institutions derive primarily from their collective missions to educate and graduate students from underrepresented groups, the culturally sensitive programs they provide students from underrepresented groups, and the public service they perform for their racial and ethnic communities.¹¹⁸ “In spite of what the educational literature says about the poor quality of segregated schooling of African Americans, the voices from the community told another side of

¹¹⁴ Julian B. Roebuck and Komanduri S. Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger 1993), 7.

¹¹⁵ Bonnor, interview.

¹¹⁶ J. Fleming, *Blacks in College* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1984)

¹¹⁷ Walter Allen, “The Color of Success: African American College Student Outcomes at Predominantly White and Historically Black Colleges,” *Harvard Educational Review* 62 (1992): 26-44; Fleming, *Blacks in College*, 1984.

¹¹⁸ Baez, Gasman, and Viernes Turner, “On Minority-Serving Institutions,” 3.

the story.”¹¹⁹ Educational institutions are significant and hold great value for communities of color despite the ever-increasing popular belief that African Americans in particular do not value education. State Community College had a definite purpose of providing educational and economic opportunities for residents of the East St. Louis metropolitan area and it sought to achieve those goals in the face of negative criticism and repeated calls for the institution to close.

Final Outcome of State Community College

Decisions surrounding the future of State Community College became a long drawn out battle between state legislators and officials, community residents and leaders, staff, faculty, and students at State Community College and virtually anyone who possessed an opinion about the institution. The fight over State Community College’s future began in 1969 when Governor Ogilvie signed legislation creating the institution. While discussions about the future of the institution took place for many years, it was not until the late 1980s in the midst of growing financial and management problems that discussions turned to restructuring the institution as a means of remedying its problems. In January 1989, the Illinois Community College Board made suggestions that would later be drafted into legislation that local control of State Community College in East St. Louis should be removed and the college should focus on vocational and technical education to provide much-needed job skills for East St. Louisans. These suggestions and later legislative recommendations became the issue on which proponents and opponents of State Community College found themselves divided.¹²⁰ Senator Kenneth Hall, D-East St. Louis,

¹¹⁹ Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), xii.

¹²⁰ Safir Ahmed, “Changes At State Community College Urged,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 7, 1989. The board also recommended that the college be deemed “non-community college territory,” a change that would bring the East St. Louis area under the district boundary of Belleville Area College. The college contract, when feasible, with other colleges in the area to provide educational programs and support services.

a longtime supporter of the college, in an attempt to explain why the state had proposed the changes stated, “They [the Illinois Community College Board] look at us and say, ‘You mean to say that in 20 years, you still can't get your act together?’”¹²¹ The changes recommended by the Illinois Community College Board were also introduced as a means of clearing up any ambiguity as to whether SCC was a state or a local college as recommendations for a new governing board consisting of members both inside and outside of the district strongly set out that the school would be a state college with a state governed board. These recommendations by the ICCB were yet another remedy in the long line of solutions for the problems plaguing State Community College.

While the recommendations by the Illinois Community College Board were just another remedy in a long line of remedies, their recommendations provided the foundation for future bills regarding the future of SCC. In April of 1989, Sen. Kenneth Hall introduced a bill modifying ICCB’s January recommendations by adding a referendum option to allow for local input and calling for abolishing the board of trustees in East St. Louis and replacing them with a seven-member board to be appointed by the Governor to include four members from within the district and three members from outside the district.¹²² By appointing members from outside the district, East St. Louis residents could then attend other schools to take courses and programs not available at SCC without paying out-of- district fees. The bill also pushed the community college to redefine its mission so that it focused more closely on vocational and adult education. HB 629 sponsored by Rep. Monroe Flinn, D-Cahokia, amended the State Community College bill by causing the Governor within 60 days after he signed the Bill into law to appoint a new Board for State Community College which would take over January 1, 1990 and operate the

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Geri Aston, “Audit Raps College In E. St. Louis,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 7, 1989.

school for the next five years in their present location. Additionally in 1994, an election would be held for the people living in the community college district to vote whether or not to keep the school and run it on their own by paying taxes themselves or to join then Belleville Area College.¹²³ Illinois legislators finally reached a decision regarding State Community College and its future in the form of HB 629 passed June 21, 1989 after three readings with a vote of 113-0.

This bill represented a compromise by all involved parties on the future of State Community College. Speaking of support for the bill, Rep. Flinn, stated, “I know of no opposition at the time.”¹²⁴ Rep. Flinn could make the statement with certainty because of the compromises that took place to ensure this measure didn’t meet the same staunch opposition of previous measures to merge or abolish State Community College. What was key in this bill was that the people of East St. Louis were involved in deciding the future of SCC. Rep. Younge in support of HB 629 stated, “I believe this is the essence of democracy, it’s the essence of life and self-determinism, so I’m very happy with this solution.”¹²⁵ Another representative reacting to the bill stated, “I think, what you’re attempting to do is very notable in attempting to correct an experiment, pilot program that had been going on for 20 years.”¹²⁶ One final approval of the bill stated, “I think this is an excellent move towards attempting to resolve a situation that’s been a bit of a problem for a number of years and hopefully this will get everyone on the right track so that these people in that area will have the opportunity to go to a good quality community college.”¹²⁷

¹²³ Illinois Public Act 86-722.

¹²⁴ State of Illinois, 86th General Assembly, House of Representative, Transcription Debate, 60th Legislative Day, June 21, 1989.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 31-32.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 32.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

While HB 629 passed in June 1989 restructured the school's board of trustees and amended its operations and mission statement, state officials concerned with continuing audit problems were still issuing threats of abolishing the school if it didn't get its "act together." James F. Keane, chairman of the Legislative Audit Commission, stated, "If it continues the way it's going, I think legislation will be introduced in the spring session to terminate the college and put it under Southern Illinois University or Belleville Area College." Keane argued that the only way to get a good educational institution in the city of East St. Louis was to strip it away from the current administration and governing board and give someone else a chance to run the city and educate the students.¹²⁸ Despite legislation giving State Community College and its leaders the opportunity to address problematic issues, other senators and representatives who sat on the audit commission said their patience was nearly at an end. Senator Calvin Schuneman, R-Prophetstown, said, "I've already sort of thrown in the towel. It just isn't fair to the rest of the taxpayers of Illinois. Probably the better thing to do is scrap it and start all over." The local board was encouraged to make tough decisions like closing or terminating programs and firing individuals, basically whatever it took to get the school in top running order.

Legislators strongly favored a merger between the East St. Louis institution and Belleville Area College. While, legislators of the Illinois General Assembly highly favored merging the East St. Louis institution with the two-year institution in Belleville, residents and legislators from East St. Louis were staunchly against this plan fearing that a merger would give outsiders control over their local institution. What was clearly feared by residents in East St. Louis stemmed from past and present relationships with the city of Belleville, which centered

¹²⁸ Kathleen Best, "College Is Given Deadline: E. St. Louis School Warned To Reform," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 2, 1990. In a response to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Keane said, "The real tragedy of the situation there is the students. We need a good educational institution in East St. Louis. And if the present administrative structure can't provide, then we've got to get people in there who can."

around race. As a result of the exacerbating racial tension between both cities, East St. Louis residents feared that a merger would not bring better opportunities to their students but instead would aid in the students being forgotten. According to Representative Wyvetter Younge, D-East St. Louis, “There was a question of whether we have faith in black educators, whether we have the capability to design a vision and then implement it in terms of what our aspirations and goals are as a people and a community.”¹²⁹ On the other hand, according to Cary A. Israel, executive director of the Illinois Community College Board in 1994, the merger of SCC into Belleville with its three campuses was the best option. She stated, “The problem is one of size. SCC simply doesn’t have a large-enough district, in size and wealth, to have a large student enrollment. So our interest is in preserving a college there, but not necessarily preserving it as an independent campus.”¹³⁰

SCC, however, had the confidence and support of the community. “It made us feel better about ourselves having a college in town. I always felt good being able to say that we had a college in East St. Louis and felt good knowing that people that were not able to get scholarships to go away to school such as I did, or were not able to go to college could still get an education. And that made me feel very good and it made me think that the city was stronger by our having the community college.”¹³¹ “State Community College was the only school...it was the only college in the city.”¹³² These feelings propelled faculty, staff, and students of SCC, along with residents of East St. Louis, to embark on a campaign to stop the institution from being merged or closed, despite the perceived savings from the merger. In the end, residents of the city chose to support an autonomous institution supported mainly through local funding. Of most concern to

¹²⁹ Mercer, “Struggle in East St. Louis.”

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ray, interview.

¹³² Harriet Cartlidge, interview by author, Cahokia, IL, August 26, 2009. Lifetime East St. Louis resident, one-time State Community College student and current East St. Louis Community College Center student.

residents was the local support of the institution and how residents would be able to afford the institution without having to raise their property tax.¹³³

State Community College did not close without ramifications for the larger East St. Louis community. Faculty, staff and student workers depended on SCC for their livelihood and the closing of the institution jeopardized the quality of life for these individuals. When East St. Louis residents voted in a 1994 referendum to establish a new autonomous community college in East St. Louis, they envisioned that they would get a new institution, with a new beginning but what they didn't envision is that the entire staff of State Community College would be fired.¹³⁴ The board of trustees fired the entire faculty and staff of State Community College on grounds that since SCC was dissolved so too were obligations to its faculty and staff. Administration of the new institution, Metropolitan Community College (MCC) stated that some faculty would be hired back after they went through a rehiring process. Nonetheless, almost none of the faculty and staff were rehired. These events left a sour note in the mouth of much of SCC's faculty many of whom had been at the institution since it opened. Geraldine Thomas said, "I've been here for 26 years—I'm too young to retire and too old to be hired by anyone else. To be put off with no severance pay, and no transition package, and to be sent home to pay taxes for grossly inflated salaries of carpetbaggers...doesn't sit too well."¹³⁵

A severe crisis of opportunity for higher education compounded by inadequate financing, failure to address the educational needs of an exploding population of students of color, inadequate investment in increasing space for a growing population, and major reversals of civil

¹³³ Margaret Gillerman, "'Brilliant' Tax Idea? 'Half-Baked,' Says Mayor: Voter's Opinions Sought on Support for College," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 7, 1993.

¹³⁴ Margaret Gillerman, "Staff, Faculty of State Community College Sue to Save Jobs," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 9, 1996. In March 1996, the College Board of Trustees fired all 154 employees, including about 20 full-time teachers. The trustees said they had to fire all the employees—from the president on down—before the new institution and board started.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

rights policies have changed the face of higher education.¹³⁶ In the 1990s, financing higher education had become the single most overwhelming problem for American higher education and most state systems were forced to decide which programs to retain in the face of declining enrollments and limited resources. The American public was also calling for greater measures of accountability and standards from higher education institutions and it was in this ever changing perception of American higher education that State Community College found its future being decided. Public disenchantment with educational institutions, pressures for accountability, and declining resources are but three factors that precipitated a renewed interest in quality in higher educational institutions.¹³⁷ Not surprisingly, State Community College, a 100% state supported institution, found itself having to justify and prove the necessity of its existence like never before. In the end, the state of Illinois decided to end nearly \$1.8 million in annual subsidies that had helped to sustain SCC since its inception.¹³⁸

State Community College, however, faced a host of other problems besides accountability and effectiveness charges from the public that legislators point to as contributing to the demise of the institution. The problems that afflicted State Community range from legislators and taxpayers feeling as if East St. Louis was a black hole in which money was pumped but no results were seen, financial mismanagement, fraud, political corruption and influence, and substandard and low-quality educational programs. In short, SCC was charged with not living up to its end of the bargain in being a state supported institution with certain measures of accountability. Monroe Flinn, sponsor of the legislation that restructured SCC,

¹³⁶ Patricia Gándara, Gary Orfield, and Catherine Horn, *Expanding Opportunity in Higher Education: Leveraging Promise* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 1

¹³⁷ Clifton F. Conrad and Robert T. Blackburn, "Program Quality in Higher Education: A Review and Critique of Literature," in *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research, volume I* ed. John C. Smart (New York: Agathon Press, 1985), 283-308.

¹³⁸ Lucinda Harper, "Pride and Mistrust: Racial History Spurs Illinois Town to Try to Save Local College," *Wall Street Journal* August 20, 1993.

stated, “It’s nothing but a patronage hole, and it does nothing to educate the kids.” The solution was sought through major restructuring of governance and administration of the institution leading to the eventual closing of State Community College.

Some would argue that the eventual closing of State Community College was inevitable from the moment the 76th General Assembly passed legislation in 1969 establishing the institution. They would also argue that the political structure in East St. Louis was one that would never allow any institution to operation unscathed by political patronage and corruption. They would continue to argue that the economic base in East St. Louis from its early inception as an industrial suburb would never allow the city to climb out of its economic descent to ever be able to support the institution, despite the fact that education and State Community College was to provide the solution to that economic decline. They would also argue that the educational systems in East St. Louis had never been up to par and were so riddled with political appointments and nepotism that it should never have been imagined that it would “save” the city from economic ruin. In fact, naysayers would say that they had simply been biding their time for 27 long years, until the city of East St. Louis began to show its true colors and they welcomed the end of State Community College. They would also say, “The demise of State Community College seemed inevitable from the day it opened its doors. The tenuous nature of the development of the institution and the ultimate belief by the state government that eventually the school would be able to sustain and promote itself seems foolish when one looks back at the social context of the time period and the historical economic and social development of the city.” Who in their right minds would think East St. Louis could support a postsecondary institution. And the supporters and believers in State Community College would say that they believed the

city could support its own institution. Hence, the residents' of East St. Louis decision to support an additional tax so the community could establish and operate a local community college.

State Community College of East St. Louis began as a monumental experiment for the city of East St. Louis and the state of Illinois. Its twenty-seven year existence is viewed by many as a monumental flop and is also viewed by just as many as a monumental celebration of the city's ability to provide educational and economic opportunities for its residents. State Community College meant a lot to the residents of East St. Louis. Their response to the question "What do you see as the biggest accomplishment of State Community College," highlights the "good" that came out of State Community College despite the constant negative image while it was open and the controversy and strife that surrounded it closing. According to a former board member, "SCC did some good. We did educate quite a few people."¹³⁹ "There're students all over East St. Louis that have graduated from SCC, that are still here. That are still working and still contributing, that are doing great things here and other places all over the world."¹⁴⁰ "We did get the students to began to think more positive about themselves and about the journey they were on."¹⁴¹ "I just think that State Community College was one of the greatest colleges going. It bought jobs. It changed economic standards. People benefited from it and I think whenever you take away a source of learning and higher education, you do great damage."¹⁴² Through education East St. Louis residents felt they would be able to shift the lens away from the traditional deficit view of East St. Louis. For East St. Louis residents, education was its own form of capital that would buy the city a different future.

¹³⁹ Rouse, interview.

¹⁴⁰ Claybourne, interview.

¹⁴¹ Bonnor, interview.

¹⁴² Norma Brooks, interview by author, St. Louis, MO, August 26, 2009. Brooks graduated with a RN nursing degree from SCC.

State Community College and the later Metropolitan Community College were a source of both ‘aspirational’ and ‘social’ capital. Aspirational capital is the “ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers,”¹⁴³ witnessed in the community’s faith to maintain SCC even when legislators repeatedly threatened to close the institution in light of very real problems. Residents, community leaders, politicians, and faculty and staff at State Community College all maintained hope that State Community College would prosper. Social capital refers to “networks of people and community resources” that exist to help communities of color navigate social systems.¹⁴⁴ The social capital of State Community College was a direct consequence of its mission and history. Minority-serving institutions like State Community College provide a rich source of social networks to students, fostering an empowering educational climate. Palmer and Gasman contend that the social capital available at these institutions include professors and administrators who are accessible and display a willingness to form supportive relationships with students; faculty and staff that possess empathy to foster a better connection with students; accessibility to peer groups which significantly influenced student achievement as well as access to role models and mentors who were a significant factor in academic success; and finally the supportive and caring environment of the institution.¹⁴⁵ Yosso’s Community Cultural Wealth Model allows us to see the agency of East St. Louis residents and the self-empowerment and self-determination present in establishing and supporting a community college envisioned as a major contribution to the economic and educational mobility of East St. Louis and its residents.

¹⁴³ Tara J. Yosso, “Whose Culture Has Capital?: A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth,” *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 1 (2005): 78.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁴⁵ Robert Palmer and Marybeth Gasman, “‘It Takes a Village to Raise a Child:’ The Role of Social Capital in Promoting Academic Success for African American Men at a Black College,” *Journal of College Student Development* 49, no. 1 (January/February 2008): 52, 61.

State Community College represented the opportunity for East St. Louis to shed its negative perception, rebuild its economic institutions, and above all educate and prepare its residents for success and prosperity and was also the state of Illinois's opportunity to embody its educational plan of providing postsecondary education within reach of every Illinois resident. Interviewees response to if they felt that State Community College had changed the negative attitudes and perceptions of East St. Louis and its residents speaks volumes to the institution's value in the community.

On that end yes because people say where you go to school. State Community College, East St. Louis. East St. Louis got a college? I heard that two or three times. Yeah they couldn't conceive of it. So I think it helped. That was one of the few positive things for the people. And it was good. It was good.¹⁴⁶

Joe Cipfl, former Chief Executive Officer of the Illinois Community College Board stated:

Education is always a valuable tool. It enhances the quality of life and the opportunity for employment and I believe that the college has had a significantly positive impact upon the community. Because of the education it provides and the source of employment empowerment it offers.¹⁴⁷

One interview mulling the question over replied, "Some may be the realization of how the city is being run, um, cause they could compare it with before they got their degree from SCC and some of it is a greater understanding of what the city needs."¹⁴⁸ Ruth Claybourne, former Dean of Student Services at State Community College expressing her belief in SCC and its empowering nature, noted,

Oh yes. You can not help but to change some of the images, to this day, I don't care where people go or what they do, that has gone to SCC, they may have master's degrees and bachelor's degrees and da, da, da, da but if they graduated from SCC that's their love. That's where they got and you can ask them. They don't make any bones about telling you that. I think there's a sense of pride that having been a participant is just as strong as and it's just as cherished by them now as it ever was. A definite lighthouse in

¹⁴⁶ Rouse, interview.

¹⁴⁷ Joe Cipfl, telephone interview by author, March 12, 2009. Cipfl was President and chief executive officer of the Illinois Community College Board.

¹⁴⁸ Weathers, interview.

the community! That lasted and is the residual affects are still here. And I do hope some of that was transferred onto the institutions that have come after that.¹⁴⁹

Noting on SCC's opportunity for the city, former board member replied,

There was an opportunity for the city to get its act together and to begin to turning the negative feelings and thoughts that outsiders had of East St. Louis into positive ones. The biggest accomplishment at that time was that it gave access to higher education to people who did not have access to it who could not afford it at that time. But it gave that access and in that process also gave some hope to their children and their children's children.¹⁵⁰

State Community College's impact on the community did not go unnoticed evidenced in this statement, "Well it was, you know, there was always something positive coming out. Uh, they was always doing something in the community."¹⁵¹ East St. Louis resident always aware of the contradictions in its community and the outcomes of the city's institutions were not remiss in noting this about State Community College, "I think it could have. And let me say it like this. Yes it did but the longevity did not last. And I say it like that because yes there're people who would not have been where they are if it had not been for SCC."¹⁵² An additional interviewee concurring stated,

You know, I don't think uh, when you really think about that, I really can't say that anybody can change people's views of how they feel about something. I think East St. Louis is a better place than anybody else's. It is! I think it's a little more than a college can turn about people's views.

A former board member also agreed, "I can't say that I'm aware of any perceptions that it changed, uh but it made us feel better about ourselves having a college in town."¹⁵³

State Community College's graduates were also implicated in their role of helping the institution impact perceptions and ideas of the city. "I think once, you know, many of our

¹⁴⁹ Claybourne, interview.

¹⁵⁰ Sis, interview.

¹⁵¹ Bailey, interview.

¹⁵² Bonnor, interview.

¹⁵³ Ray, interview.

graduates went on to graduate schools and they returned to the community and they were employed in productive positions. I think that helped a great deal.”¹⁵⁴

One interviewee noting the impact of the teachers and their commitment to the institution and in turn the city, stated, “I think so. I mean I can’t just pinpoint exactly what it could have been. But I think it did. Because, I mean they had teachers there that wanted to be there. That was teaching the, you know, the people that was there and they could have advanced at that time.”¹⁵⁵ Additional agreement was espoused on State Community College’s influence in helping to change some of the negative attitudes and perceptions of East St. Louis,

Oh yeah! I really do. Um, going to school you get access, you have the opportunity to learn information and things that you have not been exposed to or maybe you’ve been exposed to but not in a systematic manner. Yes the lives of a number of residents had been changed and it did help.¹⁵⁶

An alumna also agreed, “Yes, yes!! Attitudes being, we know what came out, we see products of it, you know.”¹⁵⁷

While the responses were varied, what they highlight is even if the negative image and perception that permeated East St. Louis could not be changed or challenged by the presence of the community college, the community college was still important and valuable to the community. One interviewee explained that it wasn’t the job of the community college to change the image of the city, it was the community college’s job to change the economic and social position of its students and State Community College achieved that goal.

¹⁵⁴ Givans, interview.

¹⁵⁵ Cartlidge, interview.

¹⁵⁶ Wince, interview.

¹⁵⁷ Brooks, interview.

Metropolitan Community College, 1996-1998

The amendment to the Illinois Public Junior College Act that closed SCC on June 30, 1996 also provided legislation to open the locally controlled and financed Metropolitan Community College of East St. Louis on July 1, 1996. When the question of whether to change the status of State Community College to a locally financed institution or merge with Belleville Junior College came up in 1994, it struck a chord with East St. Louis voters. The city was the site of weeks of parades for the college's independence from state control. Posters were tacked up all over town asking voters to approve autonomy for the school. The residents of East St. Louis imagined and believed that they could support an independent community college to meet the postsecondary educational needs of its residents. It was this belief and faith that propelled them to vote in 1994 in a 4 to 1 margin to support and establish an autonomous locally supported and controlled community college district, even though the action required them to pay higher property taxes. The efforts of the East St. Louis community combined with support from state legislators ended in the Illinois Community College Board approving a transition plan to replace State Community College District #601 with Community College District #541, Metropolitan Community College, effective July 1, 1996. Community leaders and residents felt as if the new college could give East St. Louis a new start. The action was called, "a positive move for the people in the East St. Louis area." Geraldine A. Evans, ICCB Executive Director stated, "The new college promised to be a stronger addition to the Illinois community college system."¹⁵⁸

Rep. Wyvetter Younge, D-East St. Louis, a proponent of the change stated, "I believe the community has been given a tremendous opportunity to develop a very special and unique

¹⁵⁸ Press Release, *ICCB NEWS*, May 17, 1996, Springfield: Illinois Community College Board. After a November 1994 referendum vote to abolish State Community College and establish a new district, the new institution was set to operate the same way as others in the community college system being locally governed with authority to select its own board of trustees and to levy a tax to partially fund its operations.

institution.” “We just want to be treated like everyone else.” Surinder Sabharwal, a mathematics teacher almost since the college began, stated, “It’s not going to be the same institution it used to be.” “All the horror stories you heard, those are of the past.” Officials at the newly created institution were also ecstatic. The Dean of Finance at the school stated, “In the university and college environment, you very seldom get the opportunity to help establish a new school, it’s really corny, but I look at this as the phoenix rising.”¹⁵⁹

Metropolitan Community College represented a new day in higher education and in educational opportunities for residents of East St. Louis. It afforded the city the chance to continue providing local educational services, resulting in the continuation of State Community College’s legacy. Metropolitan Community College was established as a way of constructing and defining a new identity, new existence, and new reality for the East St. Louis community. This sentiment felt by all in the area was echoed in the dedication speech by Senator James Claybourne who stated, “This college has been given another opportunity to show what it can do. We have to make sure our children, our people, have the opportunities they need to succeed.” Metropolitan Community College hoping to begin a new era in postsecondary education in East St. Louis pushed forth with a new vision and mission statement, one officials at the institution hoped would help in turning the institution around but one that would also more closely align with the needs of both the students and the community. The new vision statement put forth by MCC was one that would develop a world-class workforce to compete in a global economy and to contribute to the holistic growth and development of the community.¹⁶⁰ As part of its new plans, Metropolitan Community College was set to offer 17 new programs in health care fields

¹⁵⁹ Margaret Gillerman and Kevin McDermott, “Independence Day: State Community College Changes Hands,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 1, 1996.

¹⁶⁰ Metropolitan Community College District #541 Board of Trustees, Special Meeting #1 Agenda & Materials, August 2, 1996.

such as nursing and dental hygiene, as well as aeronautical repairs. MCC was granted accreditation by the North Central Association and enrollment increased by 16% in its first year of operation. In working to distinguish itself from SCC, board officials of Metropolitan Community College developed a vision and mission that focused directly on workforce preparation and the creation of an extensive network of key partnerships with other colleges, universities, and community and statewide entities to expand its programmatic and service offerings.¹⁶¹

Despite the new vision, new administrators, and new curriculum offerings, Metropolitan Community College was not able to completely free itself from similar problems that haunted its predecessor. “They acted as if they thought they had won a big victory and would be able to run the school in any way they wanted to. Unfortunately, they were unaware of the lack of adequate funding and the sad lack of administrative experience they faced.”¹⁶² This sentence summed up the first set of problems Metropolitan Community College faced—failure to conduct an audit for the fiscal year ending June 1997. The failure to produce the audit due in October 1997 resulted in a visit by the Illinois Community College Board in April 1998 to conduct a financial review.¹⁶³ The Illinois Community College Board sent a financial task force to take control of the finances at MCC in May 1998, saying the school overrepresented enrollment by 30 percent, failed to turn in an audit, and lacked financial control. The financial task force was to help develop a new budget, provide a clear accounting of the revenues remaining for the fiscal year,

¹⁶¹ Margaret Gillerman, “Staff, Faculty of State Community College Sue to Save Jobs,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 9, 1996.

¹⁶² Sis, interview.

¹⁶³ Roy Malone, “Community College in E. St. Louis Faces Loss of \$700,000 in ‘99: School May Get Oversight Panel,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 14, 1998. The financial task force was to include ICCB state board staff members, MCC’s finance administrator, administrators from 2 other community colleges, and a private sector person from East St. Louis. The initial audit was due October 1997 but an outside auditor was not contracted to do the work until December 1997. The audit team was still unable to do its work because the college couldn’t provide the necessary records.

and help the staff use accounting software the college owned but had not utilized.¹⁶⁴ Not only was a financial oversight panel implemented to monitor the school's budgets and contracts but the school also faced a loss of \$700,000 in state money for the following school year because of the inflated enrollment figures.¹⁶⁵ When MCC was placed under financial oversight to continue through June 1999, it became the fourth governing entity in East St. Louis—joining the city, housing authority, and the school district—to be placed under state oversight and the first community college in the state to get such scrutiny. As a result of these problems, the Illinois Community College Board also convened a special study committee to determine the institution's viability.¹⁶⁶

The “special study committee” comprised of community college officials throughout the state was implemented according to Cipfl “to make certain that quality opportunities and quality services were available to students.” The main questions surrounding continued operation of MCC was, “Is there enough money and are there enough students,” according to Joseph Cipfl, President and Chief Executive Officer of ICCB in 1998.¹⁶⁷ He referred to the manner in which MCC kept its financial records as putting that quality in jeopardy. The special study committee's main tasks were to determine what was needed to improve the school or whether the district should be dissolved.¹⁶⁸ The committee comprised of four members of the Illinois Community College Board staff and eight officials of other community colleges throughout Illinois explored

¹⁶⁴ Paige Fumo, “State Panels Begin Reviews of College in E. St. Louis: Dissolving MCC is an Option,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 20, 1998.

¹⁶⁵ Malone, “Community College,” May 14, 1998.

¹⁶⁶ Roy Malone, “Strapped College Cuts 20 Workers: Some Employees may be Rehired After Reorganization,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 30, 1998.

¹⁶⁷ Roy Malone, “State, Local Officials Ponder Future for MCC in East St. Louis: Dissolving School is among the Possibilities,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 29, 1998.

¹⁶⁸ Paige Fumo, “State Panels Begin Reviews of College in E. St. Louis: Dissolving MCC is an Option,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 20, 1998.

MCC's shortage of students, inadequate funding, and charges of financial misconduct.¹⁶⁹ The committee's findings painted a picture of a college in "disarray," with no accurate tracking of money or students, no development of courses, and an administration paralyzed by internal bickering. According to the written report, which charged the trustee board and college administration as being nonfunctional, facilities were in a state of disrepair, and essential supplies and equipment were depleted.¹⁷⁰ In its final report, the committee cited numerous reasons for the recommendation to close, including: (a) lack of qualified faculty and staff, (b) high drop out and absentee rates due partly to inadequately prepared students, (c) financial disarray, (d) low tax base, (e) a declining city population, and finally (f) failure to provide an audit which was then a year late.¹⁷¹ The study committee found the Metropolitan Community College district to have insurmountable organizational, financial and academic problems.

As a result, the Illinois Community College Board voted unanimously to close MCC in part because of the financial difficulties the school possessed, as well as the low assessment values and low population in the city. The population base was 54,500, below the 60,000 limit of community college districts. While the equalized assessed valuation was at nearly \$89 million, far below the \$150 million threshold deemed necessary to generate enough property taxes. The Illinois Community College Board voted in a 10-0 unanimous decision on October 16, 1998 to shut down Metropolitan Community College, citing "disarray" in the school's finances and programs. The motion passed by the state board called for Metropolitan Community College to be dissolved December 31, 1998. The state panel suggested another college should offer basic

¹⁶⁹ Roy Malone, "E. St. Louis Mayor Wants College President Fired," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, July 18, 1998.

¹⁷⁰ Kevin McDermott, "State Oversight Board Unanimously Votes to Close Community College in E. St. Louis," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 17, 1998.

¹⁷¹ Robert Goodrich, "Panel Recommends Closing E. St. Louis College: Insufficient Tax Base, Mismanagement are Cited," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 14, 1998.

and remedial education, vocational programs, and provide administration. In deciding to close MCC, state officials argued that the college plagued with problems since its opening had become so dysfunctional that its numerous deficiencies couldn't possibly be fixed. By the time the school closed it faced similar charges of cronyism, carelessness, and secrecy charges faced by other East St. Louis public institutions. As MCC continued to face a downward spiral, individuals who were once ecstatic at the new opportunities the school represented were forced to face a new reality, "We see little hope that Metropolitan Community College can rise from the ashes of SCC's failure." In response to why the institution would be run by another institution, Joe Cipfl replied, "We have let local people control it for a whole lot of years. There is a history of a lack of success."¹⁷² The closure of both SCC and MCC were unprecedented. According to MacNeil and Wright, only two community colleges had been shut down in what they called recent memory in 1998, one was in Baltimore and the other was State Community College of East St. Louis.¹⁷³

Many in East St. Louis felt a sense of ownership in the institution and opposed it closing. Students responding to the closure stated, "It's morally wrong to strip us of our educational system. We won't lose MCC without a fight." It was important to the residents to have a community college in East St. Louis. Gordon D. Bush, mayor of East St. Louis in 1998, when MCC closed stated, "I think it is key to the morale of the community to have its own college." The decision to close MCC was met with anger, allegations of racism and the threat of a suit

¹⁷² Barrett Marson, "State Urges Dissolution of MCC," *Belleville News-Democrat*, October 14, 1998. A state study committee gave the following rationale for closing Metropolitan Community College: A tax base that fell 41 percent below the \$150 million required by state law. A declining population that was already 10 percent below the 60,000 required by state law. A student population that had fallen to 689, less than one-third of what had been the goal. Lack of properly qualified faculty and staff. High dropout and absentee rates, due partly to inadequately prepared students. Failure to provide an audit for the year ending June 30, 1997. Financial disarray and more than \$1 million worth of missing equipment.

¹⁷³ William MacNeil and Scott W. Wright, "East St. Louis Fights to Keep Its College and Its Hopes Alive," *Community College Week* 11, no. 8 (November 11, 1968): 2.

from a contingent of public officials. According to Edna Allen, MCC board member, a local institution was “a matter of life and death to the community.”¹⁷⁴ Proponents of East St. Louis and its local community college fought every attempt to close the school. They waged campaigns, fought as a collective group and used every ounce of agency they could muster to prohibit not only SCC from being closed but MCC as well. In response to the Illinois Community College Board voting to close MCC, Rep. Wyvetter Young of East St. Louis stated, “The people of the college district are being unlawfully divested of property and voting rights in violation of state statutes and in an insulting and unconstitutional way.”¹⁷⁵ In the end, an inadequate tax base and low enrollment figures were the reasons cited for closing Metropolitan Community College. From an outside perspective it would seem as if MCC was SCC in disguise, with the same problems, same future and exact final outcome—closure. But to many community leaders, educators, and students, MCC was the opportunity, albeit one that was lost, for the city to control, and fund a local community college, providing countless educational opportunities to its residents. Summing up the aftermath of SCC closing and the opening and closing of MCC one resident stated, “When the smoke settled on it all, the community lost.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Kevin McDermott, “State Oversight Board Unanimously Votes to Close Community College in E. St. Louis,” *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 17, 1998.

¹⁷⁵ MacNeil and Wright, 3.

¹⁷⁶ Claybourne, interview.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN STATE CONTROL IS GONE: POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IN EAST ST. LOUIS, 1996-PRESENT

*Our very existence consists in our imagination of ourselves.*¹

“Imagine living in a city where nearly every municipal function is controlled by outsiders.”² That unfortunately is the reality for the residents of East St. Louis. When State Community College and later Metropolitan Community College (MCC) closed, that ended the city’s operation of a locally controlled and locally governed community college. Residents of East St. Louis having strong faith in the power of education and its abilities to empower and uplift not only students but also the entire community relished the opportunity to provide educational options for its students with the establishment of a “new” community college, MCC. African Americans have always envisioned schools established by and for them as a chief means of achieving independence, equality, political empowerment, and some degree of social and economic mobility—in essence, full citizenship.³ Walter Allen posited that historically black colleges and universities were established and continue to operate around six specific goals

¹ Richard Delgado, *The Rodrigo Chronicles: Conversations About America and Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), xii.

² There was a state appointed three-member oversight panel to take control of local School District 189 in 1994, who was experiencing a projected budgetary deficit of between \$5 million and \$9 million. The oversight panel remained in place until 2004. Other educational institutions in East St. Louis controlled by state appointed boards included both State Community College and Metropolitan Community College. SCC was governed by a state appointed governing board. MCC was under the charge of a state appointed financial panel. Currently the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market controls the East St. Louis Community College Center. There is also the Financial Advisory Authority in place to provide financial oversight for the city of East St. Louis appointed in 1991 by Gov. Thomas as a requirement of the Financially Distressed Cities Law.

³ Christopher M. Span, *From Cotton Field to Schoolhouse: African American Education in Mississippi, 1862-1875* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 9.

aimed at educating an African American community shut out from other educational institutions. These six goals revolve around a) maintaining the black historical and cultural tradition; b) providing key leadership in the black community; c) providing an economic function in the black community; d) providing black role models in the black community; e) producing graduates with special competence to deal with the problems between the minority and majority population groups; and f) producing black agents for specialized research, training and information dissemination in dealing with the life environment of black and other minority communities.⁴ Additionally, HBCUs provide assets for black students that are unavailable and unattainable in white institutions, including an accepting environment with emotional support, being repositories for black heritage; fostering ethnic pride and self-esteem, enhancing opportunities for the development of leadership roles, offering programs designed to meet the unique needs of black students and the black community, and educating many black students with learning deficiencies.⁵ The continued underrepresentation of African Americans in predominantly white institutions, juxtaposed with the success of African Americans who attend black colleges, shows that black institutions are an essential fixture in American higher education.⁶ These institutions have continuously provided tremendous opportunities and access to higher education for African American students, a goal State Community College actively strived to achieve.

Minority-serving institutions serve a purpose that extends beyond merely educating large numbers of underrepresented students. The minority-serving community college has in the past, and continues to fulfill a critical social-justice function in America by providing a more collegial

⁴ Walter R. Allen, "The Color of Success: African American College Student Outcomes at Predominantly White and Historically Black Public Colleges and Universities," *Harvard Educational Review* 62, no. 1 (February 1992): 26-44.

⁵ Julian B. Roebuck and Komanduri S. Murty, *Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Their Place in American Higher Education* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 8.

⁶ Maybeth Gasman, "Brown v. Board's Legacy and Contemporary Black Higher Education," *Diversity Digest* 8, no. 2 (2005): 9.

and supportive learning environment for students and faculty. Strayhorn and Hirt argue that there are six elements to social justice. Social justice is concerned with challenging the powers that be or societal forces; social justice is also focused on changing material conditions and balancing out inequalities in society; social justice seeks that all voices be heard and power is given to the disempowered; social justice emphasizes education as a vehicle for cultural conservation and critique; equality of opportunity is also central to a social justice framework; and finally democracy and citizenship are key to a social justice framework.⁷ State Community College and later Metropolitan Community College were institutions created, established, and maintained to meet the postsecondary educational needs of the community through a social justice framework.

The first construct of the social justice framework is power; power refers to the authority, control, and influence of individuals and institutions.⁸ State Community College wielded tremendous power in the East St. Louis community as it sought to provide an affordable postsecondary education for residents. State Community College was one of the only postsecondary institutions in the city of East St. Louis making its accessibility and affordability invaluable to the residents. “Oh it [SCC] was close. It was in walking distance and everyone in the city was going there. It was the only school...it was the only college in the city. I mean SIU was there but didn’t very many people talk about going to SIU. Everybody went to SCC.”⁹ State Community College challenged the institutional powers that denied East St. Louis and its

⁷ Terry L. Strayhorn and Joan B. Hirt, “Social Justice at Historically Black and Hispanic-Serving Institutions,” in *Understanding Minority-Serving Institutions*, eds. Marybeth Gasman Gasman, Benjamin Baez, and Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 205-206.

⁸ Strayhorn and Hirt, “Social Justice,” 208.

⁹ Harriett Cartlidge, personal interview by author, Cahokia, IL, August 26, 2009. Lifelong resident of East St. Louis, current student at East St. Louis Higher Education Center.

residents inclusion in existing community college districts thus eliminating the limitations originally placed on their educational and economic opportunities.

Social change is related to addressing problems in society and implies changing the material conditions of society and balancing out inequalities.¹⁰ By providing job training and teaching students employable skills through vocational and technical education courses, State Community College was one such venue through which economic changes were sought for East St. Louis and was envisioned as an additional economic catalyst for the community. SCC's commitment to challenging the economic position of its students reflects elements of social justice. Its mission statement also reflects an adherence to the remaining principles of the social justice framework—empowering the disempowered, cultural maintenance and critique, equality of opportunity, and promoting democracy and citizenship. State Community College's establishment reflects an earlier Illinois motto "School as a force for social improvements."¹¹ Legislators, community leaders, and especially residents were optimistic of the empowering ability of State Community College. East St. Louis envisioned its two-year institution as providing educational opportunity to community members to gain more knowledge, to attempt to reinvest in the process of gaining knowledge and to improve the quality of life for students at the Community College. State Community College was envisioned as the venue through which young and old alike would have the opportunity to better themselves and alter their surroundings. In the historical tradition of providing access and opportunity as well as a commitment to uplifting residents, East St. Louis envisioned the development and growth of State Community College.

¹⁰ Strayhorn and Hirt, "Social Justice," 208.

¹¹ John Pulliam, "Changing Attitudes Toward Free Public Schools in Illinois 1825-1860," *History of Education Quarterly* 7, no. 2 (Summer 1967): 202.

The closing of both State Community College and Metropolitan Community College; however, made it very difficult for African American residents of East St. Louis to continue educating their own. As a result, postsecondary educational opportunities were drastically altered in the city of East St. Louis. Black communities became deeply involved with their institutions. Campus activities, cultural, and athletic events become part of the community life, as students, their families, and anyone who had an interest participated in activities on campus. The colleges became more than just classrooms; they became vibrant social entities embedded in the communities. When these institutions closed, black communities lost their social networks and spaces.¹² State legislators for years called for the closing of State Community College and a merger with Southern Illinois University and then Belleville Area College as a solution for the problems that plagued State Community College. Residents thought that by establishing Metropolitan Community College they were free from legislators pushing for closing the institution however, a year and a half into the operation of Metropolitan Community College that institution faced the same problems and same calls for it to be closed. This time though, state legislators were able to close the school down for failing to meet audit requirements and it was in this turn of events that the two-year institution in East St. Louis was absorbed into Southern Illinois University and Belleville Area College as a member of an educational consortium. On the one hand, residents lament the community's inability to offer a quality education to its residents, yet state officials argue that by abolishing the institution and giving control of postsecondary educational needs to an outside entity, the residents were finally able to get the

¹² Janet E Guyden, "Two-Year Historically Black Colleges," in *Two-Year Colleges for Women and Minorities: Enabling Access to the Baccalaureate*, ed. Barbara K. Townsend (New York: Falmer Press, 1999), 94.

educational opportunities they deserved from a community college, which unfortunately had not been occurring under the two previous institutions.¹³

While East St. Louis residents did lose local control of two community colleges, state officials cognizant of the need for postsecondary education in the city turned postsecondary educational needs of East St. Louis residents over to the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market (SICCM).¹⁴ The SICCM in conjunction with the Illinois Community College Board renamed Metropolitan Community College, which closed December 1998, the East St. Louis Community College Center (ESLCCC), which opened for classes in January 1999, operating under control of outside administrators and with state control of all finances. The four community colleges and two universities work under the Illinois Community College Board to provide classes and services to the East St. Louis region. The residents of East St. Louis now must decide between several community colleges when deciding on a major area of study, as the SICMM contracts with Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC), formerly Belleville Area College, Shawnee Community College and Kaskaskia College to provide classes for East St. Louis residents. SWIC offers occupational, adult basic and secondary education, developmental and business training courses. Shawnee offers courses for nurse assistant, addiction counseling and a truck driving certification. Lake Land College provides classes at the Southwestern Illinois

¹³ Editorial, *Belleville News-Democrat*, October 14, 1998.

¹⁴ Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market Board of Directors, "SICCM History," Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market, http://www.siccm.com/siccm_history.html (accessed June 10, 2010). The Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit corporation organized in 1973, governed by a Board of Directors composed of presidents and chancellors of participating institutions. SICCM was organized to provide a means of sharing human and material resources in higher education to fast-growing institutions within the consortium whose members include John A. Logan College at Carterville, Kaskaskia College at Centralia, Rend Lake College at Ina, Shawnee Community College at Ullin, Southeastern Illinois College at Harrisburg, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Correctional Center, and Kaskaskia College offers classes in child-care.¹⁵ With the new community college consortium in place in the East St. Louis area, residents are free to attend the institution of their choice as long as they are accepted into one of the main schools. This allows individuals to be enrolled in a community college and still take classes in their hometown of East St. Louis.

Residents angry in 1998 and in vocal opposition to the state take-over of Metropolitan Community College and the subsequent closing of the institution, still feeling apprehensive about the sequence of events and the manner in which they feel the residents and the institution were treated, reluctantly admit that as long as the educational needs of the residents are being met, they will take it in whatever form it comes. "I don't have a problem. And the reason I don't...is because it's capable of meeting the needs of our people. As long as the community is being served educationally it's fine."¹⁶ "They've kept classes in East St. Louis that have assisted in people being able to continue their education."¹⁷ "Well I'm glad that we're still here at least. I'm just pleased that they haven't shut it down."¹⁸ The ESLCCC continuously works to be an educational and cultural center of the community by providing for the development of intellectual, social, personal and productive skills to all persons who reside within the community. Administrators at the center feel that education is the key to preparing individuals to meet the economic, social and multicultural issues of the new millennium. The East St. Louis center remains dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families in East St. Louis and

¹⁵ Roy Malone, "E. St. Louis Community College Gets State-Mandated Makeover: Troubled Institution Gets a New Name and Governing Structure, Some See Racial Agenda in Moves," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 30, 1998.

¹⁶ Rev. Rouse, interview.

¹⁷ Delores Ray, interview.

¹⁸ SCC instructor, interview.

surrounding urban areas.¹⁹ While the face of postsecondary education in East St. Louis has changed several times since 1969, East St. Louis residents still have hope, the most plentiful resource in East St. Louis, in the power of education to transform conditions in East St. Louis.

¹⁹ East St. Louis Community College Center, "Mission Statement," Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market, <http://www.eslccc.com/mission.html> (accessed June 11, 2010).

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APPENDIX A

PRESIDENTS OF STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Clifton Woods	(1970-1973)
Jefferson Ware	(1973-1976)
Rosetta Wheadon	(1976-1977, Acting President) (1977-1984, President)
Roger Connors	(1984-1985, Interim President)
Johnnie Hill	(1985-1986)
Roger Connors	(1986- 1987, Interim President)
Richard Bonnor	(1987-1990)
Terry Lewis	(1990- 1991, Acting President)
Cynthia Pace	(1991-1993)
Robert L. Randolph	(1993-1994)
Janet Finch	(1995-1996, Acting President of SCC) (1996-1998, MCC)

APPENDIX B

ENROLLMENT OF STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

School Year	Enrollment
Fall 1969	1,050
Fall 1970	1610
Fall 1971	2436
Fall 1972	2762
Fall 1973	—*
Fall 1974	2916
Fall 1975	2353
Fall 1976	—
Fall 1977	1690
Fall 1978	1306
Fall 1979	—
Fall 1980	—
Fall 1981	1686
Fall 1982	—
Fall 1983	—
Fall 1984	1375
Fall 1985	1324
Fall 1986	—
Fall 1987	1173
Fall 1988	1184
Fall 1989	1041
Fall 1990	1236
Fall 1991	1119
Fall 1992	1268
Fall 1993	1255
Fall 1994	982
Fall 1995	886
Fall 1996	838
Fall 1997	1095
Fall 1998	776

Source: Illinois Community College Board, "State Community College/Metropolitan Community College Enrollment/Graduation Completions. * Data missing from state records.