



# University Center of Lake County

## Strategic Plan

### 2009 - 2012

#### **Introduction**

The University Center has accomplished many goals through its two previous Strategic Plans, 2002-2005 and 2006-2008. Academic programming and facilities goals are meeting current targets, with room for planned growth into the future. The near- and, probably, long-term realities of state, national, and global economic environments, considered in parallel with emerging technology developments, will present many challenges to the University Center, our student community, and our educational and business partners.

The University Center is dedicated to the ideals expressed in the IBHE's "Public Agenda for College and Career Success," and particularly to its vision of Illinois as a state "where all residents have affordable access to high-quality educational opportunities that prepare them for the jobs of the present and the future." This update for the University Center's Strategic Plan affirms the work accomplished in years past while developing a strong framework within which our organization can meet the objectives of the Public Agenda, while succeeding within the constraints and demands of current realities.

#### **Vision**

***The University Center aspires to be recognized throughout the region as a leader in transforming lives, developing talent, and creating success through innovative and responsive approaches to higher education – emphasizing accessibility, flexibility and choice.***

#### **Core Values**

Services and programs offered by the University Center are measured by their impact on students, as well as on the communities, businesses and industries of the Lake County region. Success includes providing access to opportunities for intellectual growth, professional development, and continuous learning.

To achieve our academic commitments, the University Center strives to provide students of higher education programs with:

- Opportunities for effective and efficient transfer from prior institutions to a University Center member institution.
- An educational philosophy of continuous and life-long learning in constantly changing environments;
- Faculty committed to high academic quality;
- Services and staff responsive to the array of place bound learners and their needs for access, flexibility, and convenience;

- Innovative uses of technology to enhance the learning experience, to enable remote participation and collaboration, and to capture content for e-learning opportunities;
- Facilitated inter-institutional cooperation for program planning and delivery;
- A diverse range of academic programs; and
- Access to both public and private higher education.

To achieve our commitments to members of the Lake County community who are not seeking degree programs or academic credit, the University Center endeavors to provide:

- State of the art facilities for business meetings, workshops, training and conferences;
- Meeting support services to remove logistical barriers to successful knowledge-sharing activities;
- Learning programs to support the continuing education needs of Lake County workers across a variety of industries; and
- Programs and services to enhance networking and business partnership development among Lake County employers and workers.

## **Mission**

***The University Center, a consortium-based center, provides high quality educational opportunities for the residents, workers, and employers of the Lake County region.***

## **Strategic Development Areas**

### ***Bolster Academic Programming***

1. The University Center, via its member institutions, will be identified as a provider of choice for the higher and continuing education needs of individuals and businesses in the Lake County region.
2. The University Center will increase enrollments in existing programs.
3. The University Center will expand degree programming and advanced professional development programs to meet identified student, program, and business/industry needs.
4. The University Center will work both independently and cooperatively with member institutions to increase the marketing reach and effectiveness for all participating institutions.
5. The University Center will strengthen and extend its partnership with the College of Lake County, building on the joint recruiting piece already in use.

### ***Build Alliances throughout the Community and IBHE***

The future of the University Center is dependent upon our ability:

- To maintain community and political support
- To be recognized for understanding and for meeting the needs of the student and business community, and
- To build our brand(s) in the academic, educator, conference, and professional development arenas.

1. The University Center will recruit a senior IBHE administrative staff member appointed to serve as an ex officio member of our Governing Board.
2. The Executive Director and Dean will be an active participant in IBHE's Academic Leadership group to keep them apprised of University Center accomplishments and challenges.
3. The University Center Governing Board will use their networks to raise University Center's profile in the Lake County region.
4. The University Center team (Governing Board, Member Institutions, and Staff) will identify and prioritize the alliances and relationships vital to our future, and establish roles and responsibilities for building and managing those relationships.

### ***Strengthen the Organization***

1. We will define, track and regularly report the measures vital to the effective and efficient management and governance of the University Center.
2. We will strive to be a planful, project-based organization, focused on priorities and effective utilization of resources.
3. University Center staff and Governing Board members will identify key individuals and organizations to target improved communications and follow a plan to increase the frequency and quality of communications to those stake holders.
4. University Center staff will be committed to continuously updating and expanding their knowledge and skills through personal study and continuing education.
5. The Governing Board will identify professional development plans for its members.
6. As the University Center devotes new energy to addressing its professional development mission, it will clarify the roles of members and partners, so that the process of decision-making is coherent, transparent, and accountable.

### ***Establish Financial Stability***

In order to diversify the revenue stream and build a capital renewal fund, the University Center will increase conference center and classroom rentals, establish a professional development program, regularly review member institution and student fees, and develop external fundraising.

1. The University Center staff, Governing Board and Council of Member Institutions will work together to create the materials and model that outline the mission, importance, and success of the University Center and to reinforce this message with the Illinois Board of Higher Education.
2. The University Center will increase conference center bookings through:
  - focused effort to identify potential client companies
  - focused networking into professional and association organizations
  - increased relationship building with the HR, IT, and Meeting Planning contacts in the companies of the Lake County Region
  - creation of a web presence focused on the conference center corporate client
3. The University Center will establish a professional development program that:
  - resonates with learning leaders of the Lake County region
  - extends relationships with member institutions
  - establishes partnerships with professional development providers
  - operates on a rate structure and financial model that supports the overall enterprise

- is competitive in the marketplace for the University Center, for members and partners, and for potential clients and students
4. The University Center's Governing Board will actively pursue new revenue streams such as corporate and private donations and special event fundraising.
  5. The University Center will establish a marketing plan that addresses the array of program areas, and the diversity of the customer base.
  6. Corporate rates will be regularly reviewed to reflect market conditions, and member and student fees will be reviewed on an annual basis.
  7. We will establish and continually update five year capital replacement plans focused on plant and technology assets.
  8. We will develop and maintain contingency plans to respond to fluctuating economic conditions.