

DAU Hosts WACUC Strategic Learning Symposium

Building Bridges—Pursuing Partnerships

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Representatives of government-industry corporate universities gathered from across the area on Nov. 8, 2001, to attend the Washington Area Corporate University Consortium (WACUC) “Strategic Learning Symposium.” The WACUC, founded three years ago, is a forum for collaboration and partnership among businesses, government, and higher education organizations applying the corporate university model.

Its membership includes professionals in business, government, and higher education who promote networking, partnership, and cooperation. Their efforts focus on providing the very best educational experiences for people who are constantly growing and learning as they move through their careers.

Hosted by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), Fort Belvoir, Va., the Symposium featured distinguished speakers, presentations and workshop sessions, a plenary session, as well as exhibits from industry and government.

DAU Symposium Coordinator Wayne Glass welcomed the participants to the Fort Belvoir main campus and acknowledged two distinguished visitors—Dr. Jerome F. Smith, DoD Chancellor of Education, and Dr. James “Jim” McMichael, Director of Acquisition Education, Training and Career Development, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition Initiatives). Glass also expressed gratitude to all the speakers and exhibitors who contributed to making the Symposium a success.

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—Dr. Toni Ungaretti
Johns Hopkins University



Opening remarks by Toni Ungaretti, member of the WACUC Board of Directors.

Closing remarks by Dr. John Wells,
Corporate University Enterprise, Inc.



Meridian Knowledge Solutions Exhibit.

Strong As Our Membership

Dr. Toni Ungaretti, member of The WACUC Board of Directors and Assistant Dean and Director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies in the School of Professional Studies in Business and Education, Johns Hopkins University, began her remarks by saying, “We, at

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DAU President Frank J. Anderson Jr., Symposium keynote speaker (right), reviews exhibits with DoD Chancellor for Education and Professional Development, Dr. Jerome F. Smith.



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From Government Training Institution to Corporate University

Setting the tone for the Symposium, Anderson said, “There is no doubt that the challenges we face as an educational institution, in terms of achieving goals and performance objectives, are really significant. Today, I’m going to share with you the transformation process that we’re going through, and this is the experience of one corporate university.” He also stated that any transformation initiative, or major initiative, requires a



DAU e-Learning Exhibit



John Hickok, DAU Knowledge Management Officer and PM CoP Co-Lead, conducts workshop on Knowledge Management and Communities of Practice.

Workshop—Linking Skills, Training, and Documentation with Human Resources Workforce Development



WACUC, are very excited to have this opportunity to be here at the DAU’s beautiful facilities. We’re delighted with our host, and we are absolutely grateful to all who worked tirelessly to make sure that this all happened.”

WACUC allows members the opportunity to network, to talk to each other, to get to know each other, and to make sure that each of the member organizations is the best at providing high-quality education. The Consortium is also an excellent forum for members to really think about how to expand corporate value through learning.

Introducing the keynote speaker of the day, Frank J. Anderson Jr., DAU President and member of the WACUC Board of Directors, she told the symposium attendees, “...to sit back, relax, enjoy, learn, and network—that’s what the day is going to be all about.”

significant amount of communication and partnership.

Partnerships like WACUC are the best way to share best practices, borrow ideas and concepts, and share experiences. In the last few years, DAU changed greatly

MORE ABOUT WACUC

A Model for Workforce Education

Founded in 1999, WACUC was created to offer opportunities for learning about the trends and transitions that businesses and higher education experience in designing and delivering workforce education programs. The Consortium brings businesses and education together to work toward a common goal—meeting the needs of the employed adult learner. The Consortium includes representatives from the public sector, private industry, and higher education. An original core of 10 members grew to over 40 within the Consortium's first year of service. WACUC is now recognized as a model for a national collaborative of corporate universities' practitioners and related professionals.

Goals

- To bring business and education together in an open arena to prompt discussion on major corporate university issues.
- To encourage regional networking among business, industry, and education in the Washington D.C. area.

- To foster a spirit of shared control and shared success in meeting the needs of the continuous learning population.

Opportunities

WACUC provides five formal opportunities per year for its members and other interested participants to meet and network. Held on the first Tuesday of January, March, May, September, and November, the sessions include keynote lectures, group discussions, and technology expositions. These sessions help members explore:

- Corporate university data
- Benchmarking resources
- Networking opportunities
- "Nuts and bolts" issues
- Cutting-edge advances in promoting and managing a corporate university.

WACUC members also have access to an online discussion forum allowing them to continue the dialogue from the formal sessions as well as pose and respond to questions.

as an organization. "We have changed our outlook, and we're reaching outside the organization in all directions," Anderson said. Through WACUC, DAU is forming strategic alliances with other Corporate Universities, and "We are studying and trying to emulate the best practices of other universities through benchmarking.

"It is important to share—to show people out there in government agencies and civilian agencies what we're doing," said Anderson. "But to share, you have to have something good to offer. What we are doing makes sense—there are people outside our organization who are now benchmarking what we are doing at DAU," he noted.

DAU started the transformation process by putting together a strategic plan, engaging a number of members from the Acquisition Community.

"We went to a number of reviews with the senior leadership to make sure that

we're on track in terms of their vision on acquisition training," Anderson said.

The DAU reengineering process focuses on answering two questions:

- What are the DAU customers' needs?
- How can DAU best meet customer needs?

Out of that came the DAU Corporate Strategic Plan—*Smart Business 20/20*. "The fundamental reason that we do acquisition training is that half of the DoD community shapes Smart Business deals. We're in business because the Department believes that by providing acquisition training we prepare the Acquisition Community to be successful in their workplace; because of that, DoD is willing to invest in training," Anderson stated.

In building a "Best in Class" corporate university, DAU focuses on five goals that are closely aligned with the five

goals set by Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), E. C. "Pete" Aldridge Jr. DAU's goals, which complement Aldridge's five goals, focus on five actions:

- Provide our stakeholders and customers what they need when they need it.
- Operate a Premier Learning Enterprise.
- Advance Excellence in Acquisition Business Practices.
- Employ Knowledge Management to enhance Learning and Productivity.
- Provide Stakeholders and Customers with a Premier Faculty and Staff.

DAU is methodically and successfully moving forward with transformation. The results have been positive, "... but we still have significant major milestones to achieve," Anderson said.

To become one of the leading corporate universities, DAU is changing from a Classroom-centric to a Network-centric Learning Environment. The new learning construct also involves Performance Learning Models, Case-based Training, Communities of Practice (CoP), Customer-centric Organizations, and Strategic Partnerships.

"Success is when people from outside the organization start to believe that we are on the right track—that builds our reputation. And that is happening. It's important to build our reputations, particularly to build relationships with those on the leading edge. The more people know about us and the more people we reach, the better it is for our institution," Anderson emphasized.

According to Anderson, DAU's top priorities in the commitment to transformation are:

- Successfully Execute *Smart Business 20/20* and *Fast-Track Initiatives-I*.
- Reengineer Program Management Learning Construct.
- Start Organization Reengineering.
- Define and Implement *Fast-Track Initiatives-II*.
- Reengineer Contracting Learning Construct.

- Complete Organization Re-engineering.
- Team Building.

In closing, Anderson stated that considering the way education was taught in the past—where someone set the days, someone set the place, and someone set the time—DAU has created a powerful learning environment.

“We’re in the lead now—we’re involved in many more areas than before; we are on track, and doing it right,” Anderson said. “We are asking our staff and faculty to do different jobs and new jobs, to take the challenge to change from being part of a *good* organization to being part of a *great* organization.”

“We know the environment is changing,” he acknowledged, “and the way we learn is changing, and we are doing what it takes to move from training in the 20th century to learning in the 21st century.”

WACUC As a Community of Practice
John Hickok, DAU Knowledge Management Officer, provided an overview of the DoD Acquisition Knowledge Management System road map and its emphasis on developing Web-based CoP to support the AT&L workforce. The just-released Program Management Communities of Practice (PM CoP) was presented to set the stage for a potential WACUC CoP development.

What is CoP? A CoP, Hickok explained, is a group of people who form around a topic/domain to share ideas, information, and lessons learned; learn together and evolve the knowledge of the domain; and create and manage tools, techniques, as well as the process of the domain.

What can be gained?

- Productivity
- Creativity
- Teaming
- Collaboration
- Faster Decisions
- Better Decisions
- Quality of Life



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**—Frank Anderson Jr.
DAU President**

- Practical Use of Lessons Learned
- Corporate Knowledge.

The most successful CoPs share knowledge across organizational divisions in order to include many different perspectives and concerns on the topic. Instead of, or in addition to communities formed around a particular problem area, CoPs could also be formed for functional areas across the systems.

According to Hickok, formation of CoPs is important to:

- Facilitate the sharing of domain information and knowledge.
- Evolve the discipline of the domain.
- Achieve a greater sense of communication with peers.

- Improve innovation.
- Save time looking for information.

Fulfilling its goal—supporting the Acquisition Community—the Knowledge Management team focuses on the following objectives:

- Establishing and supporting communities of practice in a sharing environment by enticing, exciting, and engaging community members (novices and practitioners, all Services, government, and industry) in the sharing of knowledge.
- Improving community performance by providing access to existing knowledge resources and creating new knowledge framed in the context of daily work processes as determined by the community.
- Capturing the corporate knowledge of the retiring workforce and transferring it to the new workforce.
- Establishing a PM CoP “Portal” on the World Wide Web that incorporates the functions determined necessary by the community.

e-Learning

Chris St. John, DAU Distributed Learning Specialist, provided an outline on how DAU is incorporating the Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) Initiative into its strategic planning. He also discussed the strategies that make transforming the corporate university into an “academic force multiplier” successful.

DAU is in the midst of major technology evolutions and “... our mission is to support certification training and a culture of continuous learning,” he said. E-Learning provides for convenient, cost-effective access to education, training, performance support, and expert advice to all members of the DoD Acquisition Community.

DAU’s vision, *Just the Right Stuff*, is:

- Just the right content
- Just the right person
- Just the right time
- Just the right device
- Just the right context
- Just the right way.

To achieve the University's goals, St. John said that DAU built a technical road map highlighting strategies, indicators of success, and ways of measuring progress at regular intervals. For fiscal 2002, he said that these strategies will focus on learner-centered services, development of digital knowledge repositories, and the technical infrastructure to support students, faculty, and other stakeholders.

In keeping with the DAU *Smart Business 20/20* plan and strategic vision, the current key requirements are to:

- Enhance workforce readiness.
- Train to the standard.
- Exploit technology.
- Accelerate courseware redesign.
- Demonstrate a Return on Investment.
- Change cultural paradigms.
- Design training to support DAU transformations.
- Support DoD ADL Acquisition Knowledge Management System initiatives.

Outlining DAU keys to success, St. John emphasized that DAU's major goal is to field a total package of e-learning and knowledge management tools that will include all three components of the DoD ADL initiatives—infrastructure, learner interface, and content.

These components are the keys to DAU's long-term vision. They include implementation of a fully functioning e-learning system that supports a wide range of learning needs while reducing costs and increasing workforce effectiveness, based on prioritization and funding availability.

With the emergence of powerful ADL tools, a new mission and goals have been established to provide "lifetime" support to the workforce—any time, anywhere. Concluding his remarks, St. John said, "In order to meet this challenge, it is clear that DAU must utilize this new technology as an academic force multiplier."

Breakout Sessions

The Symposium offered the participants the following 10 workshops:

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—John Wells
President

Corporate University Enterprise, Inc.

- The e-Learning Manager: Core Knowledge and Skills—Dr. Eugene Rubin, University of Maryland
- Linking Skills Training and Documentation with HR
- Workforce Development—Scott Brainard, Johns Hopkins University
- Partnerships: Levels, Benefits and Commitments—Dr. Toni Ungaretti, Johns Hopkins University
- Building An Enterprise-Wide Infrastructure—Elizabeth Volk, P.E., Executive Vice President, Meridian Knowledge Solutions, Inc.
- Knowledge Management and Communities of Practice—John Hickok, Defense Acquisition University
- Running Your Corporate University Like a Business—Sue Esselman, Corporate University Enterprise
- Distance Learning at Northern Virginia Community College: A Commitment to Excellence—Dr. Monica Flynn Sasscer, Northern Virginia Community College
- Action Learning—Dr. Mary-Jo Hall, Defense Acquisition University
- Making a Business Case for e-Learning—Jack Mann, Booz Allen & Hamilton.

THINQ Session

The plenary session delivered by Dr. John Setaro, THINQ Learning Solutions, Inc., provided the latest research with hard data documenting the impact of training on:

- Increasing productivity
- Reducing turnover
- Reducing occupational injuries
- Increasing retention
- Reducing "list opportunities."

WACUC—A Strategic Learning Climate

Summing up the day's events, John Wells, President, Corporate University Enterprise, Inc., said, "We [WACUC] certainly want to thank DAU for being a corporate university leader in sponsoring this event."

DAU is a primary sponsor, Wells continued, and "...you don't get too many programs—all day-programs—with this caliber of speakers. We, who are responsible for strategic employee development within our respective organizations, are now challenged. Our programs must demonstrate quality," Wells said, "in the alignment of development programs with our organizations' vision and goals; and we must accept the accountability of assuring that the employee development initiative has a positive return on investment."

He emphasized that "... corporate universities are up and rolling, but there is just a lot of work to be done." He also said, "The primary source of revenue for us is not money—it's knowledge. It's what's going on in the corporate university movement. And that's all of you."

Wells encouraged all the participants to take advantage of being a part of WACUC. "If you are in the corporate university mode, if you are in the corporate university business, if you are up there trying to say, 'I want a strategic learning climate for my company,' the [Washington Area] Corporate University Consortium can help you."

WACUC and the Future

The success of WACUC to date is its creation of a network among government, corporations, and higher education to share their needs, approaches, and capabilities in addressing the education needs of their workforces. Because WACUC is the only such organization, not only in the Baltimore-Washington

region but also in the nation, the Consortium has received numerous requests to create a national organization with a similar focus.

The impact WACUC will have over the next five to 10 years is difficult to imagine. In its short 2½-year tenure, it has brought together organizations that normally do not interact. It has served as a catalyst to connect corporations and government to private and higher education institutions, to develop educational experiences for employees that are tailored to their specific needs, and to address the vision of each organization. The WACUC will continue to provide a source of support and advice to its members for years to come.

The most important thing that WACUC accomplishes, however, is bringing together all the stockholders of an effective workforce. It connects expertise across organizational boundaries. The challenges for the future include the need to continue to assess the needs of its members and use this information to design and deliver timely and targeted professional development and networking opportunities.

In the future, WACUC will establish a research agenda and will formulate questions, collect data, analyze experiences, and disseminate findings on issues related to corporate universities, their operations, and indicators of their success. In addition, the WACUC will create a

database and begin to collect and disseminate information related to organizations engaged in workforce learning activities. It will serve as a source of support and information for its member organizations and the broader corporate university community.

WACUC benefits the local community by providing a source of information and support for organizations interested in providing appropriate and effective educational experiences for their employees. It also assists them to identify and contact private organizations and institutions of higher education that can assist them in this process.

On a national level, WACUC's members have delivered presentations at national and international conferences on corporate universities and partnerships in the business, government, and higher education arenas. One of WACUC's future visions is the development of an online WACUC community where members can make contributions of knowledge "objects" and enter into collaborative activities that will help job performance and continuous learning.

WACUC Members

At present, the consortium consists of 60 members, representing 30 organizations. In addition to DAU, other member organizations include Booz, Alan & Hamilton; the Erickson Foundation; The George Washington University; Corpo-

rate University Enterprise; National Institute of Standards and Technology; Regent University; United States Postal Service; the Pentagon Federal Credit Union; the Patent and Trademark University; Anne Arundel Community College; United States Bureau of Census; University of Maryland; the Washington Post; the Humane Society of the United States; Northern Virginia Community College; and Johns Hopkins University.

WACUC and DAU

WACUC's role in the education of the Acquisition Workforce has been to assist DAU, a member and a major WACUC corporate sponsor, in making connections with institutions of higher education to address educational needs. At present, DAU is working closely with Northern Virginia Community College and Johns Hopkins University.

The WACUC organization and conference activity itself is the first step toward sharing of knowledge in a shared practice of education and training. DAU experiences and achievements in the development of online CoPs and e-Learning programs will help other consortium members in their similar journeys.

Editor's Note: To read more about the WACUC and its activities or how to become a member, visit the WACUC Web site at <http://www.wacuc.com>.

COSSI PROJECT CALL

The Commercial Operations and Support Savings Initiative (COSSI) has issued its project call. Proposals may be submitted by any DoD organization and are due May 31, 2002. Proposals submitted by non-DoD organizations will not be accepted. A non-DoD organization wishing to take part in the COSSI Program should work with an appropriate DoD organization and have that organization submit a proposal.

More information about this project call, including all necessary forms, is included at: <http://www.acq.osd.mil/es/dut/cossi/FY03/ProjectCall.html>

