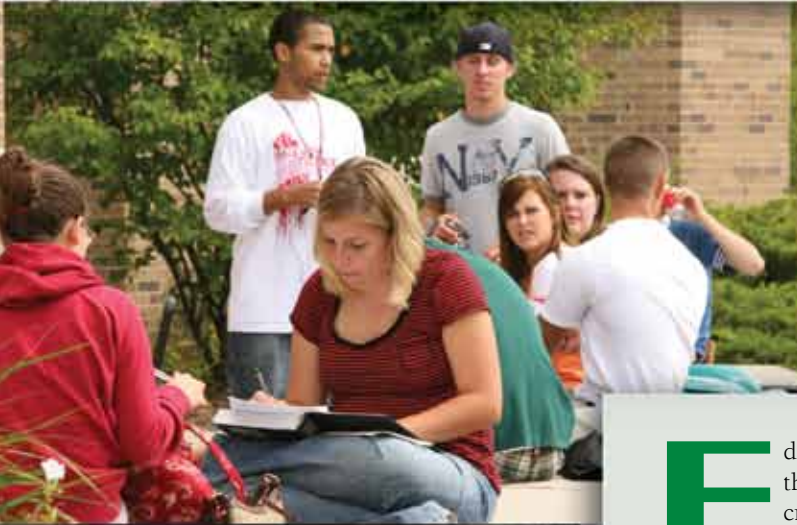


## Breaking Down Walls

### Columbus, Richmond Show the Way

By Tom Schuman



Education reform discussions are normally focused at the K-12 level. While “change agents” are sometimes criticized for their policy initiatives, few would seemingly find it possible to argue with the “do what’s best for the students” mantra.

Fast forward to the next step in the lifelong learning process. A student has successfully navigated the initial levels. If he or she grew up in Richmond, for example, and was considering college opportunities, this baffling hometown choice would have been one option.

“We used to have an associate degree in nursing,” states Nasser Paydar, chancellor of Indiana University East (IU East) in Richmond. “Ivy Tech has an associate degree in nursing. What this did was confuse the students in the first place. Why would two state institutions within walking distance have the same degree program, accredited by the same agency?”

That is just one example of competition instead of collaboration between four-year regional campuses and two-year programs at Ivy Tech Community College. It’s not in the best interests of anyone – students, parents, taxpayers, educators, communities.

Stan Jones, former longtime Indiana commissioner of higher education, paints an overall picture that has fortunately been eliminated in several places.

“You might have thought there was barbed wire between the two campuses. Nothing transitioned from one to the other. They competed for students. You might have thought there was reverse polarity – the closer they were put together (in physical location), the more they pushed back.”

Jones was referring (to the past) at Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus (IUPUC) and Ivy Tech, but could have been talking about other locations around the state (still today) where proximity has not translated into partnerships or increased productivity.

## Altering the way it's always been

The state's Commission for Higher Education (CHE) has put forth clear recommendations to improve the efficiency of the public higher education system. They include:

- Ivy Tech and Vincennes University serving as the only institutions to offer associate degree programs
- Elimination of all remedial courses at public, four-year colleges and universities by 2011
- Universities being creative and cost effective in adding new space ("co-locating new facilities on or adjacent to the campuses of baccalaureate degree-granting institutions and/or community organizations") whenever possible

Those are major adjustments in the Indiana higher education landscape. At the time many years ago when most states were developing community college systems, Indiana and Purdue university regional campuses were created to fill that role. It's only been in the last decade that Ivy Tech has been transformed from its vocational roots to full-fledged community college status.

The 40-plus years of tradition have outweighed the 10 or so years of the new order. Some education officials have not fully embraced (through words and/or actions) the CHE's associate degree and remedial course recommendations. There are exceptions: the two examples focused on here (Columbus and Richmond) and at different levels in Indianapolis and Bloomington, but not in all locations where regional and community college campuses occupy the same city but not the same cooperative approach.

James Steck, chancellor of the Ivy Tech-Richmond campus for the past 25 years, says many of the challenges have been systemic, "rooted in the way Indiana set up its higher education system."

Asked what it will take to overcome those obstacles, he declares, "If you would have asked me a year ago, I would have said a clear demonstration that there could be a successful model for both institutions. But over the past year to year and a half, we can say to the rest of the state that this is working (in Richmond). It's a win-win for both institutions and our citizens. We've demonstrated the case."

Another longstanding tradition has been state funding amounts that are based on the number of students enrolled. Efforts at moving a portion of the dollar decisions toward outcomes instead of total enrollees have only slightly progressed thus far (although others view Indiana as a potential national model in this area).

Scott Jenkins, education policy director for Gov. Mitch Daniels after serving in similar roles outside Indiana, says the state, however, can play a role (in conjunction with crucial local leadership) in enhancing educational cooperation.

"We have (some) performance funding contained within the biennial budget (state dollars allocated based on measures in addition to simply enrollment growth)," he notes. "In looking at student access, success and productivity, we can try to give more responsibility and authority to the Commission for Higher Education – allow them to have more of that role instead of each (campus or university) trying to squeeze as much (money) out of the General Assembly as they can."

Change has taken place in both Columbus and Richmond. While there are a variety of contributing factors, the primary force is different in each. Many lessons can be learned, with benefits for the higher education community and – most importantly – the students.

## 'Athens of the Prairie'

Columbus, Indiana is a unique place. Its history includes visionary leaders, companies that take philanthropy to a whole new level and a community that embraces being a better place for all. Its architecture is known worldwide; many of its top businesses boast a strong international presence; and the story of Columbus Regional Hospital and the broader recovery from a devastating June 2008 flood is beyond inspirational.

JT Forbes, director of state government relations for Cummins who worked in a similar role for Indiana University for many years, says Columbus stands out due to the "level of strategic focus and collaboration across various sections of the community. Education, government, business, the philanthropic sector ... all really work together on a shared agenda.



The Columbus Learning Center connects (physically and beyond) the Ivy Tech Community College and Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus campuses.

**"I'd like to think that regional and community college chancellors would be competing for how well they can work with each other instead of how do I build my enterprise faster than my neighbor."**

*– JT Forbes*

They are rowing in a similar direction. It gives the community an advantage over many others.”

Columbus was one of the Indiana cities to firmly embrace (and benefit from) the Japanese investment that came to the Hoosier state in the 1980s. Manufacturing is a critical part of the economy (where isn't it in the Hoosier state), but the employment mix is different. While engineers comprise 2.5% of employees in the average metropolitan statistical area (MSA) nationwide, that figure is 7.5% for the Bartholomew County MSA.

On the education front, IUPUI Columbus (an extension of the Indiana University-Purdue University campus in Indianapolis) opened its doors in 1970. The Purdue Statewide Technology program was established on site in 1984. Ten years later, IUPUI Columbus became IUPUC.

John Burnett, CEO of the Community Education Coalition (CEC), worked for Cummins for 13 years and returned to Columbus a handful of times after different assignments for the company and owning his own business in New York state. He became directly involved with the CEC in 1999 and was among those who convened IUPUC and Ivy Tech leaders for a road show to county employers.

At the time, IUPUC only offered three bachelor degree programs (general studies, organizational leadership/supervision and computer technology). “There was a lot of similar coursework (between IUPUC and Ivy Tech),” Burnett shares. “If people were pursuing a four-year degree, they would go somewhere else.”

Business representatives spoke and changes took place. Degrees in business (including a master's), education and nursing were among those added, with engineering and technology offerings coming later. Those were some of the results. Forbes and Burnett describe the impetus.

“The community has been advocating for educational opportunities for decades,” according to Forbes, “then really began to focus in on what postsecondary options were needed. It was not a vision of ‘how do we build another research campus,’ but how do you create a very efficient and aligned education system.”

Burnett adds, “It was the willingness of the business community, education community and community at large to improve the human condition. There is a quote attributed to Mr. (J. Irwin) Miller (longtime Cummins and philanthropic leader) that a company is only as successful as the community which it is a part of.”

Cummins made that point clear when it established a competition for the location of a new manufacturing operation. The decision would be based, in large part, on the commitment of the community and state to expanding education opportunities. Forbes says that understanding of education and workforce needs is prevalent in the region, with its abundance of global companies.

John Hogan, chancellor of the Ivy Tech campus since 2003, doesn't downplay the business role, but does cite a team effort.

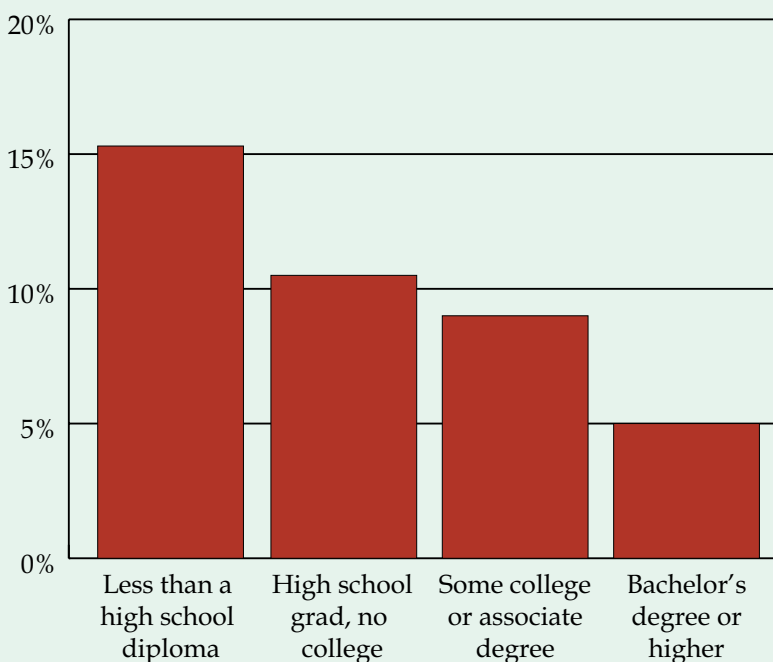
“Cummins was a major influence in the development of the community college system. It clearly communicated that what was needed was

**Students focus during an Ivy Tech class at the Columbus Learning Center.**



### Unemployment Rate and Level of Education \*

December 2009



\*Age 25 and over

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



**“The dream of all those involved – and it’s playing out that way – was for the building to literally serve as a bridge for the postsecondary system. ... What we had hoped would happen is happening.”**  
*– John Burnett*

a capable, highly technical, well-trained workforce,” he comments. “What we have had is the whole dynamic of the business community, education partners and citizens saying, ‘The more education I have, the more money I have and the more successful I can be.’”

### **Bridging the gap**

So the need is there. The pieces are in place to make it happen. Yet, articulation is (or was) practically a foreign word (not just in Columbus, but many places around the state). Burnett recalls, from his human resources days at Cummins, hearing of many people who received credits for courses taken at Ivy Tech who were going to have to “start all over again” in seeking a degree.

Jenkins remarks that “articulation from the community college to universities has been a little dicey” in the past but that strong progress has been made and further improvements will undoubtedly take place.

Jones says that when a discussion began about the need for additional education space in Columbus, “It did not make sense to have two new buildings, but neither institution was interested in that. This was a rare joint effort to build a building, and it was the business community that really provided the leadership. The more that building became a reality, the more the colleges recognized they really needed to work together.”

What emerged, opening its doors in 2005, is the Columbus Learning Center. It’s a \$25 million, 130,000-square-foot facility, but the numbers are irrelevant when compared to the impact.

“The dream of all those involved – and it’s playing out that way – was for the building to literally serve as a bridge for the postsecondary system,” Burnett contends. “The challenge was how to create a shared space for the institutions, as well as for the community to use. What we had hoped would happen is happening.”

The physical location fills the approximate 700 yards between the Ivy Tech and IUPUC campuses. More than 20 classrooms, seminar labs, a lecture hall and more serve students from both schools and community residents. The University Library of Columbus is managed by Indiana University. All affiliations are checked at the door, with everyone having access to the resources of the Big Ten university libraries.

The Department of Workforce Development’s WorkOne office is in a prominent first-floor location. When at its previous downtown site, clients would be referred to the education system for needed training but often would never make it. Now, they can go down the hall to begin to receive the help they need.

In addition, the College & Career Exploration Center is prepared to help all visitors start down the correct education path. It is staffed by representatives from IU, Purdue and Ivy Tech. Classroom space, security, equipment, parking and other amenities are also shared between IUPUC and Ivy Tech.

“There are no wrong doors here,” Burnett emphasizes. “If someone comes ... to any of the institutions, they help them. As a state, we need to do a better job of how we help more people get it right the first time.”

### **Stitching the seams**

Starting on the right foot and enjoying a seamless education experience is available to many. At Ivy Tech, enrollment has tripled since 2003, degree offerings have doubled and Hogan says the number of certifications has “exploded.”

“In our collaboration with IUPUC, the most important element is the relationships; it’s the banding together with the attitude to help students succeed that is so important. The shared services,” he points out, “are the after effects of wanting what works best for our students.”

Marwan Wafa became the IUPUC vice chancellor and dean on September 1, 2009. His background includes collaboration with Ivy Tech in Evansville in the mid-1980s when he was working at the University of Southern Indiana.

His initial impressions of Columbus focused on the “positive energy that I felt from people that I met with. People talk about a can-do attitude and that’s reflected here. Having a community that values their university is strategically important.”



**The University Library of Columbus serves all students regardless of their college affiliation.**

IUPUC has not experienced the same explosion in size as Ivy Tech, but student numbers (more than 1,800 full time) and credit hours have increased and the demographics have moved “toward the traditional college age group.”

The importance of the seamless path to a degree that Hogan mentions is affirmed by Wafa. “That’s what we work on. It’s a major task, evaluating course by course and by degree program. But student success is the focus and having the ability to know which students should complete their programs at IUPUC.”

Burnett counts 10 chancellors and deans at the three higher education institutions over the past decade. He credits those leaders with the “willingness to break the mold and make the success to date happen” and also cites the support of top leadership at IU, Purdue, IUPUI and Ivy Tech.

Forbes relates how the universities have adapted to the course that has been set by the businesses and the community as a whole.

“It’s the kind of campus leadership that IU has appointed – first Nasser (Paydar), now Marwan (Wafa). It’s important to

have a person there who really understands that the future of that campus is tied to the economic future of the community, and that to achieve whatever vision there may be for the campus, you’ve got to have that vision woven into the fabric of the region.

“The faculty there get it,” Forbes continues. “They have built good programs, but they understand those programs are what employers and the community can support. You’ve really got to have a mix of leadership across these different institutions to make it happen. If any one is not willing to play well with others, the whole system will collapse.

“Postsecondary education and business have a combined agenda. Businesses try not to create barriers to get products and services to market. That’s increasingly where education institutions have to go.”

Paydar (see much more below) was appointed IUPUC vice chancellor and dean in January 2004. Burnett remembers visiting him before his arrival in Columbus. “He asked me what the top priorities were and I said transfer of credit. Nasser knocked a lot of walls down.”

## Executing the ‘Lead’ in Leadership

**P**aydar joined IUPUI in 1985 and worked his way up through the ranks of the School of Engineering. In a comfortable position with full tenure, he had little apparent motivation to take on the initial challenge in Columbus. But he did because of the lack of motivation in Indiana for young kids to obtain a college education.

“Manufacturing pays very well and most manufacturing companies were able to employ people for life,” Paydar explains with passion as he sits in his Richmond office a few days prior to students returning for the spring semester. “This

state had not embraced going on to higher education. When you don’t have education, you make the wrong decisions, you have issues with health, you have issues attracting industries. And when manufacturing goes away, you don’t have much to replace it with.”

He acknowledges that manufacturing will always be part of the Indiana landscape, but that the education needs for those jobs – and many others – have changed.

“Increasing the percentage of people with higher education – that is priority number one for the state of Indiana,” he claims,



**“It was very obvious to me at IU East that there was no point in us competing against Ivy Tech next door. What we needed to do was think of a way we could increase the size of the pie.”**

*– Nasser Paydar*

“and we need to do it like our future depends on it.”

After making an immediate and lasting impact in Columbus, Paydar was named interim chancellor at IU East in 2007. He was greeted with a substantial budget deficit, continuous enrollment drops and a need for drastic change.

While the regional campuses were created years ago to serve as community colleges, their role, in Paydar’s judgment, had not evolved. With challenges that were significant, the response was swift – and clear – says the man who pulled the trigger.

“It was very obvious to me at IU East that there was no point in us competing against Ivy Tech next door. What we needed to do was think of a way we could increase the size of the pie,” Paydar relates.

“What we needed to do was differentiate from the Ivy Tech mission. We are the first and only state university to eliminate all of its associate degrees. We don’t offer remedial classes. We think those are the responsibilities of the community college. Students are better served by us partnering with Ivy Tech.

“If they’re offering remedial classes, what’s the point of us doing the same thing,” he continues. “We shifted all of our emphasis to baccalaureate degrees. We added a number of degrees and a couple of graduate degrees, which we couldn’t have done if we were spending our resources at the associate level.

“Students know if they go to Ivy Tech to get a degree, then they can come here to get a baccalaureate degree. And they pay less for their four-year degree program.”

### Working partnership

Students migrating to IU East also benefit as Paydar created an automatic scholarship for Ivy Tech alumni. Depending on academic performance, students receive between \$500 and \$2,000 annually (on top of other aid). “There are no applications, no forms,” he says. “If you perform well, we give you more money.”

IU East saw greater than 100% growth in Ivy Tech transfers in the first year. The numbers: 68 transfers (41 from Ivy Tech-Richmond) in the 2007-2008 academic year to 147 (90 from the local campus) in 2008-2009. Final figures are not available for the current year.

A library, security and other services are shared – similar to what has evolved in Columbus. Paydar has frequent business and social contacts with Steck, his Ivy Tech counterpart. Top administrations from both schools meet on a quarterly basis to address specific issues and opportunities.

“I’m pushing for our chancellors’ cabinets to meet; we’ve done that before,” Paydar shares. “There’s no reason not to be open, to share our future plans. We’re developing our plan together for the future.”

While the next door geographic connection in Richmond is obvious, IU East works differently with other Ivy Tech campuses throughout its portion of the state. It rents space from Ivy Tech at its Lawrenceburg location, offering degree programs in business, education and nursing. Ivy Tech is able to promote its two-year offerings and the IU East bachelor degrees now available

in an area of Indiana without an immediate four-year alternative.

“I made sure there was no sign of IU on the door,” Paydar emphasizes. “The degree programs are in their facilities (with IU East faculty). The only sign of IU we want them to remember is the sign of IU on their diploma.”

In Muncie and New Castle (where IU East offers classes), the two schools are working on developing a joint program in business in which students would submit just one application. With Columbus, IUPUC is available to meet most student needs, but IU East fills gaps by offering online courses in English and communications. In addition, students from California to New York are taking IU East courses online (third- and fourth-year degree completion only, not in competition with others) with discussions underway with community colleges in other states.

### Bigger view

Steck says that when he first arrived in Richmond in the mid-1980s the missions of the two institutions were “somewhat duplicative.” As Ivy Tech evolved from its vocational roots to the full fledged community college role, the “duplication and overlap became significant.”

The stage had been set in the past for this new level of working together, but the major progress has come in the last few years.

“The transformation did not happen overnight,” Steck affirms. “When I first arrived, there were virtually no courses that articulated. Those walls began crumbling 10 to 15 years ago. If that had not happened, much of this would not have taken place. There was very little incentive for someone seeking a baccalaureate degree to come to Ivy Tech for the first two years.

**The Ivy Tech campus is becoming a pipeline for students crossing the parking lot to continue their studies at IU East in Richmond.**



### IU East Growth

	Fall 2008	Spring 2009	Fall 2009	Spring 2010
Total students	2,447	2,382	2,924	2,769
Growth*	+8%	+9.67%	+19.5%	+16.2%
Credit hour growth*	+8.6%	+13.1%	+18.3%	+16.5%

\*Compared to same period previous year

Source: IU East

"I don't want to speak for them, but there was a perception that if they differentiated their mission at IU East that they would be harmed by that," he elaborates. "Chancellor Paydar recognized it could be a win-win – that we could become a strong feeder for their institution. You have to recognize Nasser Paydar and give him a fair amount of credit here."

Paydar admits that eliminating associate degrees did cut into his income stream at an already very difficult financial period for IU East, but that the long-term vision of being the higher education leader in East Central Indiana was the driving force.

"Businesses realize this competition between Ivy Tech and other universities is not healthy. It doesn't make sense. It doesn't happen that way in business," he offers. "Instead of trying to fight over a few students, we were losing sight of the thousands of people we gain access to, the thousands of graduates of Ivy Tech next door and throughout the state. By doing this, we will help our bottom line a few years from now."

Both schools are experiencing tremendous growth. At IU East (numbers reflected in Page 17 chart), six semesters of consecutive enrollment increases have followed the previous declines. The last four semesters have included the highest growth rate of any IU campus. For Ivy Tech, there has been an approximate doubling of size in Richmond in the last 4½ years. While student numbers at many of the community college campuses have exploded, Steck saw a 30% increase in the fall and a projected 45% for the spring semester.

"We've made life for the students much simpler," reports Steck, adding that an IU East advisor on the Ivy Tech campus helps with career counseling. As for the close proximity but lower levels of working together in the past, "I felt like it was a lost opportunity for awhile, that other modules could be put in place that would work and make it better for both of us and the citizens of our state."

As for Paydar, the need for change was urgent. Reductions in administration, internal consolidations and a new marketing/recruiting plan were among the moves that accompanied the new working relationship with his Ivy Tech neighbor.

"We had a brand in Indiana University; we had to come up with a product that matched that brand." In the differentiation of the mission from Ivy Tech, "Some people thought it was a gimmick, that maybe we were playing games. But we had to do it a bit faster (than others) for two reasons: My strong belief in this and to make sure people understood the new IU East.

"I wanted to do it with a bang (a March 2008 memorandum of understanding signing ceremony at the Statehouse). Our

condition required a shakeup," he continues. "As an engineer, we're taught to solve problems, and I hate to solve the same problem twice. I don't know why people thought this wouldn't be done. I know for every problem there is a solution – and 'cannot be done' is not the right answer."

## Forward progress

Forbes, formerly of IU and currently with Cummins, sees tremendous progress in Columbus and Richmond but hopes for more.

"What they have done is say, 'Let's get off of focusing on turf' and really start to deal with how do we work together to serve as many students as possible," he observes. "But there's still a lot of work to be done. Mentioning shared faculty and further coordination of programs, he adds, "That will really be a missed opportunity if we don't figure that out."

When the subject turns to why there is more visible evidence of cooperation in the two communities profiled, Forbes and others do list various examples throughout the state. They cite the Passport program that has established a strong pipeline between IUPUI and Ivy Tech in Indianapolis, the other IU-Purdue joint campuses (Indianapolis and Fort Wayne) and the medical education and statewide technology systems.

If the subject narrows specifically to regional campuses and Ivy Tech locations, Forbes does surmise that "there are cases around the state where you have great chancellors, but don't have communities that are really focused and have rallied around 'what is our future going to be.'" On the other side of the equation, he states, "I'd like to think that regional and community college chancellors would be competing for how well they can work with each other instead of how do I build my enterprise faster than my neighbor."

Forbes concludes that Paydar "represents, to me, the

next generation of campus leader for institutions to thrive. There has to be an incredible sense of how to build a quality program and attract really good faculty. You have to be an eloquent listener and you have to be an aggressive collaborator."

## Changing course

Ivy Tech-Columbus's Hogan believes others are making progress but that more can – and will – be done.

"Let's not assume that collaboration is not at great levels in other parts of the state – as more people are imagining helping students be successful and it's less about what's in it



**A March 2008 memorandum of understanding signing ceremony at the Statehouse included (from left): James Steck, chancellor, Ivy Tech-Richmond; Thomas Snyder, president, Ivy Tech Community College; Michael McRobbie, president, Indiana University; and Nasser Paydar, chancellor, Indiana University East. Standing (from left) are legislators: Rep. Phil Pflum, Sen. Allen Paul and Rep. Tom Saunders.**

## Campus Connections

(Major locations)



Bloomington	Bloomington	
Columbus	Columbus*	Columbus*
Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne*	Fort Wayne*
Gary	Gary	Hammond
Indianapolis	Indianapolis*	Indianapolis*
Kokomo	Kokomo	
Richmond	Richmond	
Sellersburg	New Albany	
South Bend	South Bend	Westville
Evansville		
Lafayette		West Lafayette
Madison		
Muncie		
Terre Haute		

\* Shared campus

for me. Once that attitude takes over and we become more mature in our time as a community college ...

"I have a lot of optimism that there is a great deal of dialogue and interest in partnerships that benefit students," he relates. "Maybe Columbus is unique in that we have the facility; that might make it more intimate."

Wafa agrees that being closer in physical locations makes it easier for students, but that "distance should not be a barrier for a commitment to make it happen." The smaller size and the additional flexibility that comes with that would also have been partially responsible, he notes, for Columbus moving faster than other areas.

"I think it (greater cooperation) will happen, not just with the Indiana University system but beyond," he insists. He backs up Steck's systemic argument. Having spent many years in Wisconsin and Michigan before returning to Indiana last year, he offers that the setup here is "quite unusual."

Paydar reiterates that there is no doubt that IU East will continue to increase its Ivy Tech relationships within its region.

"I know my colleagues are also doing the same – thinking, working, planning, talking – moving in the same direction. Because of our financial situation, maybe we had to do this sooner than others. We had no choice. I know Indiana University is strongly encouraging campuses to consider partnerships. The willingness, I see it on the part of my colleagues across the state."

Indiana University President Michael McRobbie, in an e-mail response, writes that the differentiation of missions and further cooperation with Ivy Tech "is a very high priority, especially in these times of considerable economic uncertainty. ... Doing so allows us to use our resources more effectively and efficiently as we seek to expand educational opportunity for Hoosiers all across the state. It also allows us to tailor our academic programming to the specific economic and workforce needs of the communities we jointly serve."

In addition to serving students, money is a factor.

McRobbie's response notes, "Changes in Indiana's fiscal situation, as well as reduced state funding for higher education, are forcing IU and Ivy Tech to work together to deliver a more integrated and seamless model of higher education. We must also continue to develop new community education initiatives by soliciting input from local businesses, health care providers, legislators and other community leaders to help us shape a stronger learning environment."

Jenkins mentions the possibility of enhanced efficiencies within IU – statewide systems for HR, payroll, enrollment management and more "instead of institution by institution. What about coordinating course offerings not only institution-wide, but among institutions?" he asks.

### Dollars and structures

Two concepts noted above – money and location – have been critical elements in this process, according to Jones.

Financially, IUPUC needed more senior faculty to upgrade its programs and the business community was active in helping obtain a legislative appropriation. Regarding Richmond, Jones recalls a visit from Paydar seeking to not lose state funds (on top of tuition declines) that would result from the cutting of associate degrees.

"We agreed not to take that money away," Jones comments, "but unfortunately (the lack of earlier progress in many places) did become about money – not students, not the best interests of the community. It has taken time, but there are better relationships. The four-year colleges looked at the community college as a competitor; now they look at it as more of a pipeline for students to transfer to them."

*Continued on page 32*