Drs. Kay McClenney and Byron McClenney Receive 2011 AACC National Leadership Award

This year, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) awarded the 2011 Leadership Award to Drs. Kay McClenney and Byron McClenney for their respective and collaborative work in community colleges and in higher education more broadly over five decades. The awards were given at the opening ceremonies of the AACC Annual Convention, held April 9-12, 2011, in New Orleans, La.

"Byron and Kay McClenney have an unwavering commitment to building up the community college movement and generously give their time to help others improve how colleges educate students," said Dr. Walter G. Bumphus, president and CEO of AACC. "Perhaps their greatest impact has been in helping colleges consider how to apply data and think strategically about student outcomes and college excellence."

Dr. Kay McClenney is Director of the Center for Community College Student Engagement and Sid W. Richardson Endowed Fellow in the Community College Leadership Program (CCLP) at The University of Texas at Austin. The Center conducts the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*) and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*) and has now surveyed over 1.4 million community college students at over 800 colleges in 49 states. Kay also directs the Center's Initiative on Student Success, supported by the MetLife Foundation and Houston Endowment, Inc.

Also within the CCLP, she is senior consultant to the UT/CCLP work on the national Achieving the Dream initiative and served as co-director of CLASS ─ the California Leadership Alliance for Student Success. Dr. McClenney has served as a consultant to education institutions, state higher education systems, state government, and professional associations in 47 states and internationally. In addition, she served for a number of years as a community college educator, during which she was a faculty member, program director, system administrator, and interim CEO.

At the 2011 AACC Convention, she was named co-chair of the AACC's 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges. Previously, she has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Executive Board of the American Association of Women in Community Colleges (AAWCC). She received the 2002 PBS O'Banion Prize for contributions to teaching and learning in America, the 2009 Mildred Bulpitt Woman of the Year Award from the American Association of Women in Community Colleges, and the 2009 International Leadership Award from NISOD.

During her 10-year tenure as Vice President and chief operating officer at the Education Commission of the States, Kay was instrumental in helping elected leaders understand the vital role of community colleges, active in major K-12 reform initiatives, and involved in higher education policy work on assessment, accountability, and minority student attainment.

A frequent keynote speaker, Kay also has authored numerous publications on education issues, including strategic planning, accountability, student success and leadership. She earned her Ph.D. in educational administration from the Community College Leadership Program at The University of

Texas at Austin. Her previous degrees are a B.A. from Trinity University and an M.A. in Psychology from Texas Christian University.

Dr. Byron McClenney's 49 years in education include serving for 32 years as a community college chief executive ─ with an executive career that spans five colleges in four states. He continues to be one of the most respected and sought after national leaders for strategic planning by community colleges. He is an endowed fellow and senior lecturer in the Community College Leadership Program at The University of Texas at Austin. Within the CCLP, he serves as Project Director for Achieving the Dream, one of the largest and most ambitious community college student success programs in the United States. McClenney's institutional leadership, publications, and consulting work pioneered the use of data and planning as central tenets of community college leadership before these concepts were common practice.

Another significant legacy of Dr. Byron McClenney is his unwavering dedication to making developmental education a top priority at every institution where he served as CEO, believing and demonstrating that dramatically improved educational results were possible for every student, particularly for low-income students and students of color.

Byron also served as Co-Director for the California Leadership Alliance for Student Success (CLASS). Along with Kay, he co-directed the Ford Foundation's national Community College Bridges to Opportunity Initiative from 2003 to 2008. He served on President Clinton's Steering Committee for America Reads/America Counts and on several commissions of the American Council on Education. He has held numerous leadership roles within AACC.

Upon receiving their award in New Orleans, Drs. Kay and Byron McClenney commented on the challenges still present in the community college and urged "continued data gathering, careful analysis, and implementation to scale" of those promising practices, programs, and policies which will promote successful completion of certificates and degrees. As always, their shared focus remains firmly fixed on "ensuring the success of the students we serve."