Transform the Student Experience:

Classes began at Otero Junior College on Monday, August 17. All new students went through a Jump Start program on the weekend prior to classes beginning. This gave new students all of the information they needed about the campus, classes, expectations, support services and community. Our technology staff worked with students to set up their internet and D2L access on the weekend so as to ensure they were prepared for the first day of class.

Administration and faculty greeted new students as they arrived and assisted in the move in process to the residence halls. Area businesses attended the move-in activities and gave out coupons and information to all of the students. After all students got settled in all were treated to lunch, music and games so as to help students and parents become more comfortable with the college campus community.

I attended the annual Kane Scholarship Foundation Dinner/Awards ceremony at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. This event recognizes and awards students from all of the colleges in southern Colorado with Kane Scholarships which pays for tuition, fees, and books for four years of college, two years at community colleges and two years at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. This year’s awardees from Otero Junior College were Devin Camacho and Kyrah Guerin. Both are honor graduates from Swink High School.

Otero Junior College students, faculty and staff attended a workshop on campus presented by business leaders in the Aerospace Industry. These industry leaders described their respective company’s involvement in the Aerospace Industry and the college programs that students should pursue in order to become part of their industry. The presenters represented Aerospace as well as Manufacturing and Higher Education. Also, attending were local economic developers and business CEOs in that a portion of the presentation was devoted to how local business could become suppliers for the major Aerospace companies.
Transform our own Workforce Experience:

Upon returning our entire faculty took part in an extensive professional development workshop. Areas covered in the workshop included: student assessment techniques, what to be prepared for during national accreditation visits, new and better approaches to teaching and the importance of integrating teaching and support services on campus. During the month of October the faculty will again take part in a campus-wide professional development activity that will build upon those things discussed at the most recent event.

Otero Junior College will involve more faculty members this year in the delivery of college courses to our service area school districts through the use of Telepresence. All school districts and the Fort Lyon Homeless Facility are equipped with two-way interactive Telepresence equipment so as to ensure quality instruction and interaction with the students.

Redefine our Value Proposition through Accessibility, Affordability, Quality, Accountability, Resource Development and Operational Excellence:

We have completed our pilot project with auxiliary and physical plant custodial staff and will now move to implement the integration of both staffs on campus so as to better and more efficiently meet the needs of the students, faculty and staff. Many of the new approaches to delivery of custodial services on campus came from the custodial staff.

Otero Junior College is now endeavoring to look at different approaches to offering student support services in a more cohesive and integrated manner. We are combining our TRIO staff with STEM and Student Success Center Staff so that we can get better utilization of resources and more extensive student support programming. This will be totally implemented during the course of the fall semester.

Other:

Through a combination of technology funds provided by the Colorado General Assembly and STEM grant funding, Otero Junior College is in the process of upgrading its servers and replacing half of its computers, i pads and laptops on campus. In the past two years Otero Junior College implemented a Virtual Approach to technology and will in some cases only replace monitors while doing away with the computer towers.

The Otero Junior College TRIO program welcomed back to campus TRIO qualified students prior to the beginning of classes. This first time event gave students a chance to get to know one another as well as have their questions answered, concerning how to use D2L technology, what was expected of them in each of the classes they were taking and introduction to all Support Services staff on campus. This kick-off was instituted so as to ensure that students were prepared prior to classes beginning.