

**Well Workplace Award  
Executive Summary**

**Nebraska  
Methodist College  
Platinum Award**

Information in this publication is carefully reviewed for accuracy. Questions, comments, or ideas are welcome. Please direct to Dr. David Hunnicutt, Executive Editor, at the address below.

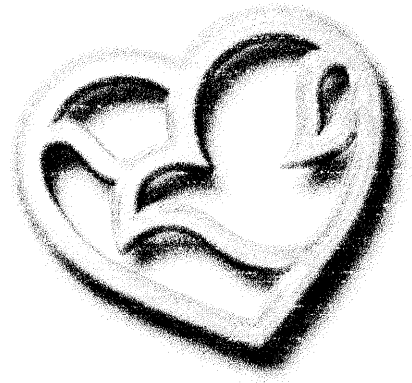
Information may not be reproduced, copied, cited, or circulated in any printed or electronic form without written permission from the publisher. ©2002 Wellness Councils of America, 9802 Nicholas Street, Suite 315, Omaha, NE 68114; phone (402) 827-3590; fax (402)827-3594; visit our website at [www.welcoa.org](http://www.welcoa.org).

All rights reserved. Information contained in this document was accurate at the time the award was designated. Due to changing business environments information is subject to change without notification.



WELLNESS COUNCILS OF AMERICA

© 2002



## NEBRASKA METHODIST COLLEGE

### Mission

*As a health professions institution, we provide educational experiences for the development of individuals in order that they may positively influence the health and well-being of the community.*

### Vision 2010

*Through the strength of our culture at MMC, we will optimize our reciprocal teaching-learning environment to better identify and inspire personal gifts, to more fully engage and empower individuals, and to deepen our commitment to the well-being of the community.*

### Core Values

*Caring    Excellence    Holism    Learning    Respect*

### Critical Success Factors

*Financial Stability  
Excellence in Teaching and Learning  
Cooperative Relationships  
Commitment to Constituents  
Highly Qualified and Committed People  
Holistic Health Education  
Visibility and Image*

*"Nebraska Methodist College is well deserving of the highest awards available in the wellness world. In particular I see great value in the college reaching out to others by supporting wellness initiatives throughout Omaha and the country. In reaching out you have reinforced your own learning and extended the supportive environment out into all the communities you serve."*

*Dr. Judd Allen*

*President Human Resources Institute*

## **I. Historical context and Organizational background**

### **A. History and evolution of the organization:**

The history of Nebraska Methodist College (NMC) began 109 years ago as a school of nursing with a handful of students preparing to become “deaconesses” who would minister to the health of the community. For over a century, the care of graduate nurses from Methodist has been exemplary. However, with changing times and diverse health care needs of the community, came changes for the school. During the early 1980’s, the school submitted a charter to the state of Nebraska to be recognized as a multi-degree granting college. This allowed the school to become an institution of higher education initially offering bachelor and associate degrees and eventually moving into graduate education. During the College’s consistent and systematic growth, NMC was committed to adding only educational programs congruent with the College mission of positively influencing the health and wellbeing of the community.

Additionally, administrators made a clear commitment to build the organization by creating a culture emphasizing lifelong learning and the development of human potential. The College President and Vice Presidents agreed that in order to provide excellence in education, NMC would also need to be a healthy workplace and in essence “practice what we preach”. Because of these administrative beliefs, and through the development of a health and wellness program and the efforts of a full-time wellness coordinator, wellness became the philosophy integrated into all aspects of our business. It is our way of life.

### **B. The Organization Today**

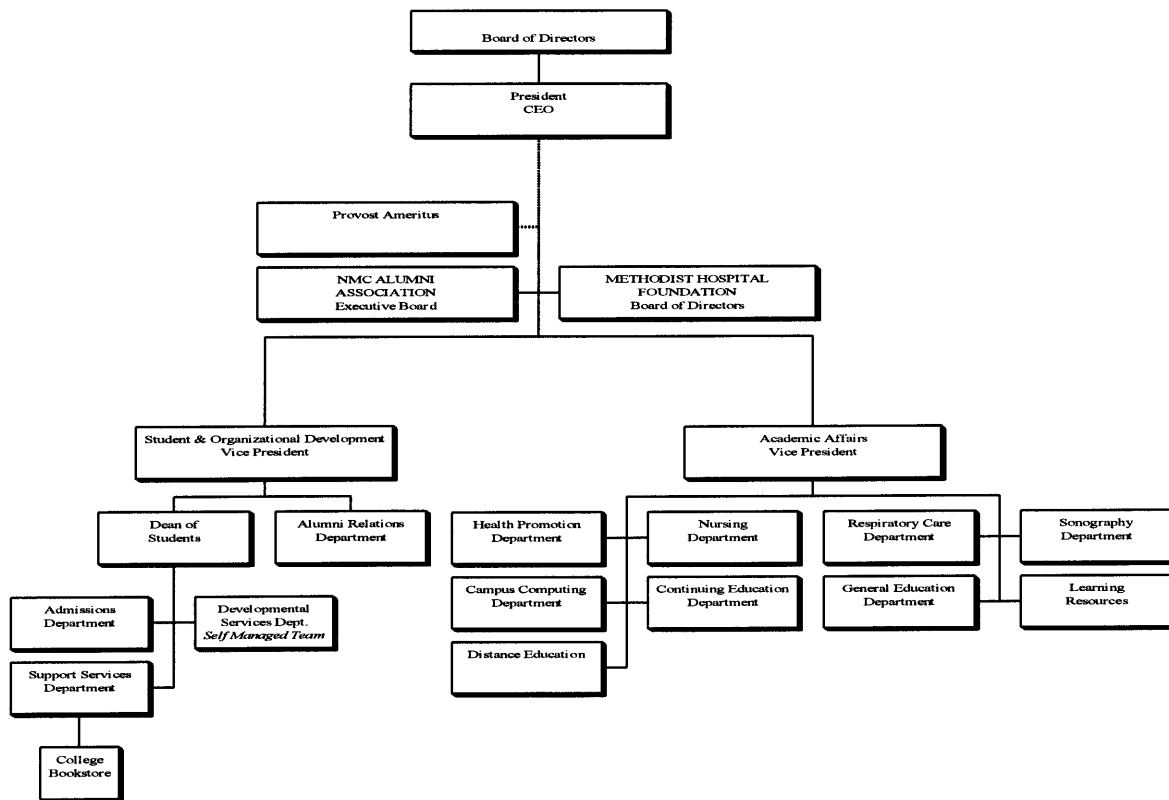
#### **i. Corporate Vision/Mission Statements**

NMC's mission is the statement of focus which defines the identity and purposes of the organization. The current mission of the organization was established during a two-year strategic planning process that began in 1989. All college constituents participated in the process of developing the mission. The mission statement was reevaluated again in 1999 by College employees and the Board of Directors and was reaffirmed as an appropriate representation of the commitment of College constituents at this time. The mission of NMC is: *As a health professions institution, we provide educational experiences for the development of individuals in order that they may positively influence the health and wellbeing of the community.* Community has always been defined in both internal and external contexts.

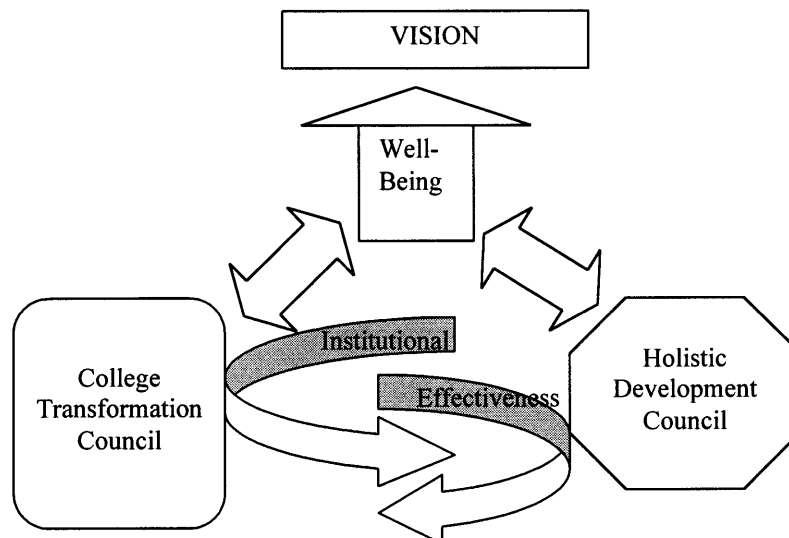
The current vision of NMC was created and adopted by all College constituents and ratified by the Board of Directors in the Fall of 1999. The vision clearly articulates our beliefs about the integration of whole-person wellness into the very fiber of our work: *Through the strength of our culture at NMC, we will optimize our reciprocal teaching-learning environment to better identify and inspire personal gifts, to more fully engage and empower individuals, and to deepen our commitment to the wellbeing of the community.*

## ii. The Organizational Chart

The organizational chart depicted below is the traditional organizational chart demonstrating the reporting structure of the College.



The second chart depicts the daily operations of NMC. The operations chart demonstrates NMC's commitment to achieving our vision through the well being of constituents and the strength of our culture. The operations clarification was the result of strategic planning efforts in 1999 and was approved by College administration and the Board of Directors in that same year. The congruence of the NMC's philosophies and operations have been noted repeatedly by various educational accreditation bodies.



### **iii. Distinctive Services/ Traits of the Organization**

NMC is an educational institution with programs in the health professions. NMC is a locally, regionally, and nationally recognized leader in community-focused holistic health education. We offer an undergraduate certificate and a Master of Science in Health Promotion degree. In Nursing, we offer associate, bachelors and masters degrees. In Respiratory Care and Diagnostic Medical Sonography, we offer associate and bachelors degrees. Also available is a bachelors degree in health studies and certificates in medical assisting, surgical technology, emergency medical technology, and paramedic sciences.

NMC is a college whose leaders believe that the total health of each of our constituents is integrally linked to our success. Long recognizing that health encompasses all aspects of life, that students are more than a GPA, patients more than lab results, and employees more than a pair of hands, the College formalized its holistic approach to lifelong learning and developed the Life Skills Development Model\* (see Attachment 1) in 1978. This model provided a foundation and focus for NMC in the facilitation of holistic self development for students and employees. The Life Skills Development Model (LSDM) has been continuously updated, and provides the thread that has tied the school's solid past with its promising future. Interestingly the model provided the theoretical and behavioral foundation that influenced College personnel in the development of a mission, core values, and vision. Students, faculty and staff use this model to self assess, set goals, and reflect. Constituents of NMC say they feel a difference here. That is the goal, a difference that is positive, growth producing, and provides value to the community at multiple levels. Similar feedback is consistently heard from new recruits to our 50-year graduates, who return to the College each summer and are able to articulate the difference that the "value-added" component of their NMC education added to their lives and careers.

### **iv. Competitive Position of the Organization**

We have long acknowledged that our strength is in our people. We had the opportunity to revitalize our organization from the ground up when we committed to building an institution of higher education in the 1980's. We took advantage of this opportunity and systematically built the organization by building our people. We believe that our excellence is a result of seeing our organization as a reflection of its constituent contributions, not an organization that exists in spite of its constituents.

The social and economic contexts of health and health care are changing. Preparing practitioners to address the whole person approach to human wellbeing is not only excellent - it is essential for the wellbeing of those whose lives our graduates and staff will influence.

The graduates of all of our programs consistently score higher than the national averages on licensure, registry, and certification exams. NMC graduates are sought after competitively, not only in the local area, but across the country. We consistently hear from graduates in outlying areas that their supervisors and colleagues intentionally recruit NMC graduates. Responses to the 1998 alumni survey overwhelmingly indicated that our graduates believe they are making a difference in their personal and professional communities. Recent exit interview data from graduating seniors indicates that 98% note improved mental and physical wellness while at NMC.

The purpose of institutional accreditation is to validate that colleges and universities are doing exactly what they say to the public they are doing. Our accreditation history at NMC has been exemplary. In all instances our accreditors have validated and affirmed the efforts of this institution. NMC is held in very high regard in the educational community.

**v. Core Values of the Organization**

The Core Values of NMC clarify for our constituents the "Nebraska Methodist College way" of conducting business. These core values were originally identified and defined during the 1989-1991 strategic planning process with the participation of all College employees. The Core Values are as follows:

***Excellence** - We expect the best from everyone and hold ourselves to the highest ideals of personal, professional and organizational performance.*

***Caring** - We are concerned for the well-being of all people and demonstrate this concern through kindness, compassion, and service.*

***Holism** - We recognize and honor the interrelatedness of all things and people and are committed to the development of the whole person.*

***Respect** - We recognize and uphold the dignity and self-worth of every human being, and promote honest and forthright interpersonal communications and behaviors.*

***Learning** - We embrace the experiential process by which knowledge, insight, understanding and ultimately wisdom are created for ourselves and those we serve.*

**C. Corporate Wellness Philosophy**

Our corporate wellness philosophy is the strategic priority of the College. First, the College has established a mission which was intended to provide value to the global community. The College realized early on that establishing such a mission required the College to create the desired outcomes within its own community. Thus, significant efforts were directed toward our internal growth. The core values further clarified our intention and served as behavioral commitments. Through well directed efforts of multiple college leaders during the College's maturation and a commitment to the holistic well-being of constituents, daily operations and the wellness philosophy became fully integrated to the degree that they are currently inseparable. In fact, the College's most recently established vision (as described previously) is dependent upon organizational WELLBEING as its foundation for achievement. This required a significant change in the College's formal operational structure to solidify the framework that constituents were creating as they set about accomplishing the goals of the organization. The reader is referred to the operational organizational chart that was described in Section I.B.ii. It is evident that our corporate wellness philosophy is systemically integrated into our mission and our vision.

## **II. The Organization's Present Approach to Corporate Wellness**

### **A. History of Wellness Within the Organization**

#### **i. Why the program started**

It is difficult to separate the history of the organization from the history of wellness within the organization. The school of nursing was started with the goal of ministering to the sick. NMC today has the mission of positively influencing the health and well being of the community. However, for purposes of this document we will begin in 1990. At that time the College recognized the need in the Omaha community to offer entry-level programs to educate existing personnel in area companies in the implementation of worksite health promotion. In order to position NMC to respond to this need with integrity and experience, and because it fit so well with our emerging culture in our new "college", NMC launched intensive internal efforts to develop an exemplary worksite health promotion program for employees and students. We wanted and needed to "walk our talk".

#### **ii. How long the program has been in place**

The Health Promotion program started as a subcommittee in 1990 under the auspices of the College Climate Committee. Records show that the College president-appointed "College Climate Committee" had the following goals. They were to:

1. Improve communication,
2. Foster leadership,
3. Build team cooperation,
4. Support programs and strategies aimed at retention, and;
5. Promote an institutional culture conducive to health and wellness.

It was felt that the promotion of a healthy College culture could best be achieved by involving all of the people within the culture. For this reason, students were encouraged to join faculty and staff in College wellness activities. The College Climate Committee, which reported directly to the College president, was strategically positioned to carry out those functions. However, because of the growth of the specifically focused wellness efforts, the Climate Committee received approval for a separate task force charged with wellness programming. In 1992, the Health Promotion Task Force (HPTF) was formed and became a standing committee on its own. The position of Coordinator of Health Promotion was established; an action which demonstrated increasing executive support for wellness efforts and outcomes.

#### **iii. Original mission and vision**

In 1992 the overall purpose of the HPTF was to improve the health and wellbeing of the College students, faculty and staff in alignment with the College mission of embracing a holistic developmental philosophy.

#### **iv. Types of programs delivered**

The Task Force assessed the unique needs of the NMC population and developed strategies to address the primary goals of decreasing risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease and cancer at levels aimed at attitude and behavior change.

Based on annual needs assessments, initial programs were offered to include awareness campaigns and incentives for participation in healthy activities. From the beginning, the Administration of the College was actively, visibly involved in supporting and participating in these efforts. Additional programs were developed in response to needs, and included healthy nutrition, exercise and stress management with a special focus on the early detection and intervention of risk factors. Ongoing programs included Weight Watchers, smoking cessation, relaxation and meditation, STD and alcohol awareness campaigns, and back screening. The College joined forces with the Methodist Health System to provide nutritional breakdowns of cafeteria food and to offer "Affair of the Heart" food choices every day in the cafeteria. A fitness center was created and equipped. An annual health fair was established for College and community members and continues today. The Carter Center Health Risk Appraisal and Testwell Health Inventory were utilized as a part of the beginning curriculum for all freshmen students.

**v. Outcomes produced**

The data from the HRA differentiated the risk factors of incoming freshmen and younger students from progress on risk factors earlier identified in our existing and longer term population. Because of this tracking we were able to identify that programming was having a steady effect on decreasing smoking, increasing exercise, improving diet and increasing the use of stress management practices. For example, over the past decade, we have moved from 26% to 7% of our total population that smoke. We have gone from 40% to 82% of our population that consistently wear their seatbelts. Now, over half of our population claims to exercise regularly and use stress management techniques regularly (as opposed to 31% and 25%, respectively) and 73% are now intentionally lowering the fats in their diet.

In 1994 we added a corporate culture audit to our annual needs assessments and outcome measures and discovered additional opportunities for programming to continue to build a culture conducive to health and wellness for our constituents. Specifically, those opportunities were:

- ♦ to help people find ways to balance work, rest, and play
- ♦ to practice some form of stress management technique
- ♦ to find time to kick back and relax
- ♦ to practice self care

The repeated corporate culture audit of 1999 also indicated significant positive outcomes for our culture on numerous items related to choice making which supported overall physical well being, a pervasive atmosphere of concern for one another, autonomy related to choosing how to do one's job the best, and participation in decision making for the overall College.

**vi. Gold award and recertification**

NMC first entered the Well Workplace process in 1992 when we chose to apply for (and were awarded) Silver Well Workplace. The original Gold Well Workplace designation for Nebraska Methodist College was awarded in 1995 and the re-certification of Gold was received in 1997 and awarded in 1998.

### **vii. Evolution since Gold designation**

During the evolution of the College's wellness efforts, the Health Promotion Task Force became very focussed on programming to risks, needs, and interests and evaluating impact based on risk status. However, due in part to the Gold Well Workplace documentation process, the College began to systematically measure the cultural dimensions of wellness inherent to its population and environment. Simultaneously, the constituents of the College were becoming more responsible for their own health behaviors as well as the health norms of our population and were beginning to take more active roles in the wellness of our internal community.

During the 1997-1998 academic year, the Health Promotion Task Force began to note a widespread dissemination of Health Promotion efforts at the College. Because wellness had become a way of doing business, there was an expectation that all departments would overtly contribute to the wellbeing of our constituents. In response, we were observing individuals and departments coming up with ideas to link their specific areas of influence and expertise with the health and wellbeing of our people. Specifically, the Respiratory Care program voluntarily took over offering smoking cessation, respiratory health awareness and programming. Several student organizations offered programs and campaigns related to alcohol/drug awareness, peer education, and behavior change health promotion strategies. The student groups also spearheaded programs directed at STD awareness and prevention and became very involved with campus-wide efforts aimed at stress management. Students and staff became increasingly involved with our annual community Health Fair – from a programming perspective instead of just as participants. Our Nursing Department offered to become the manpower behind specific targeted interventions to include flu shots and specific disease detection/ prevention programs. Our Information Technology Division took over the marketing and provision of health assessment instruments and maintenance of data bases. Various interest groups sprang up to include self-defense, tai chi, aerobics, strength training, and prayer. Curriculum committees from the various majors at NMC asked for guidance in integrating holistic health and wellness concepts into their coursework. We added more highly qualified and committed people to our ranks, and specific faculty/staff members took over wellness offerings related to their expertise such as nutrition and exercise programs.

The Health Promotion Task Force found itself in a new position: making sure that the needs of the population were being addressed by coordinating rather than offering health promotion programs. For the next few years, our role as a Task Force changed from offering programs to that of mentoring and coordinating program development and delivery, monitoring risks, needs, and outcomes, and purposefully influencing our culture to be more holistically health promoting. The norms, values, and behaviors of the organization had changed to reflect a systemic integration of the concept of holistic wellness – for the individual and for the culture.

During this time, our College was actively pursuing new models of leadership and organizational development – and adapting concepts from Senge's "The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of a Learning Organization", Buckingham and Coffman's "First, Break All the Rules", and Ornish's "Love and Survival" to name a few.

Organizational changes included revisions in the contribution review process to involve an exchange of information between management and employees highlighting

employee reflection, goal setting, and recognition of employee attributes. The purpose of this change was to reflect the norms, attitudes and behaviors inherent in personal contribution to the overall health of the culture and to encourage personal and professional growth/goal setting. Through this process, management was made aware of barriers to a culture that inspired full potential and was able to address barriers overtly.

Additional changes included consistent implementation of strategies fostering active involvement of people at all levels in the leadership and decision making of the organization. These strategies resulted in changes in the operational norms and procedures to the degree that many people were responsible for leading growth and change efforts, not just participating in efforts that administrators led. People were actively working with anyone who could help with an agenda, regardless of department or title. Personal agendas were replaced by group commitment to common goals. This continues to result in increasing excellence for the organization, but of equal importance, it is resulting in pervasive feelings of importance, value, connection, and purpose. Concepts from such texts as the Drucker Foundation's "The Leader of the Future" and "The Organization of the Future", Nanus and Dobb's "Leaders Who Make a Difference", and Rosen's "Leading People", were useful in validating our beliefs and efforts and providing deeper directions to the work of building an organizational culture that supported our institutional mission and vision in multi-faceted ways.

#### **viii. Impetus for new changes and advancement beyond Gold**

In 1999, the Health Promotion Task Force reviewed the evolution of Health Promotion at NMC and felt that they needed to honor this process and declare a more global position that reflected an acknowledgement and commitment to the larger community. At the same time, the most recent strategic planning process was underway. Due to the inclusiveness of many people involved in the decision making, these two efforts merged and resulted in a restructuring of the College's evaluation, growth and movement.

College constituents redesigned the operations structure of NMC to reflect their deeply-held beliefs about the future of the College. A belief that surfaced was that traditional academic curricula were necessary but not sufficient to prepare students for a global society. It was felt that this preparation requires emphasis on communication, critical thinking, cultural competence, research, holistic life skills, servant leadership, humanities, and spirituality. It was believed that the integration of these facets into the traditional curricula could best be accomplished by collaborative efforts from across the College- all divisions, all departments, all levels to form the Holistic Development Council (HDC). Of course, this new structure would require deeper and more integrated learning on the part of all NMC employees because we accept that we cannot take students further than we have gone personally.

At the same time, the College Transformation Council (CTC) was established with a united belief that the ongoing growth (transformation) which supports already identified values and philosophies must be well orchestrated. It is believed that orchestration can best be accomplished by representation from all divisions/all departments/all levels.

The HPTF changed its name and purpose to more clearly reflect the college-wide influence that it represented. The group, now called WELLBEING, was comprised of twenty volunteers representing all areas of the College community. The group defined its purpose by exploring a variety of health promotion models, wellness models, and organizational development models. The special aspects of our population were considered and in the forefront of the discussions was the recognition that we wanted to create our own model based on valuing individuals' unique talents and gifts. And we had grown as an institution to realize that relationships were at the core of our culture and our success. The purpose statement for WELLBEING is as follows:

*Our responsibility and commitment is to nurture connectedness and support accomplishment.*

During the redesign phase that resulted in the formation of the HDC and CTC, WELLBEING was recognized by College constituents as the pathway to the vision, and charged with the responsibility to pave the road for the work of the HDC's and CTC's educational and developmental work – to set the stage for how the College constituents would go about doing their work together to achieve our vision as individuals and as a community. Our belief is that the continuous interrelated efforts of these groups will see us through in reaching our vision.

## **B. The Organization's New Approach to Wellness**

### **i. Introduction and explanation of the current model**

When you think about what enables people to do their best work, then you need to look at the environment in which people are able to do their best work. Because of our growth and commitment as an institution, because of our visionary leadership who considered it a matter of integrity to have the best possible environment for our people, because of our involvement with the wellness movement through WELCOA, WELCOM, National Wellness Association, and other professional organizations, because of the influence of our academic understanding of state-of-the-art wellness practice and the renowned faculty who provide us with input and suggestions, because of the modeling of wellness by our people and the dissemination of the wellness work we have been doing, we found ourselves acknowledging a deeper responsibility for the wellness of an ever-widening community. Our “constituents” were clearly defined as our internal and external communities and our mission remained clear: to positively influence the health and wellbeing of the community.

Our new wellness model is uniquely our own, but based on the work of many theorists. We recognize that the core of our success as an institution is relationship-driven.

## **ii. Goal of the new model**

The ultimate goal of our model is based on the belief that the wellbeing of all individuals associated with the College is one of the fundamental reasons that the College exists and that this belief is so completely integrated into the consistent evaluation, planning and growth of the institution that it will forever be a foundation upon which the institution will rest. The goal of the new model is to capitalize on the belief that the wellbeing of constituents with each other is not simply “value-added” - that it is essential to the life of an organization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Organizations can no longer afford to use people up for the good of a few. Rather, they must own their responsibilities in the political, economic, social, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual systems of the communities in which they exist. People are a part of an interrelated system as Senge describes in “The Fifth Discipline”. The organizations in which people work are clearly a part of the larger system – community and global.

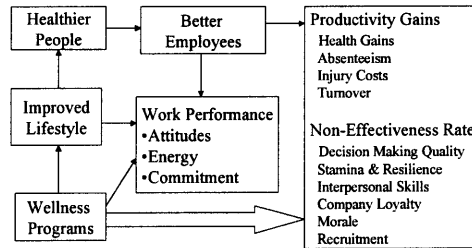
Thus, the new model must capitalize on the available strength of many people and their systems as they unite for common goals. **And people unite because of relationships.** The new model focuses on relationships and the ability to see each decision, each person, each organization as a part of the larger community/global system. Ultimately, this belief system defines our institutional mission and goal of the new model as one and the same: to positively influence whole-person health and wellbeing for our constituents as individuals and as a community. Our vision provides direction: THROUGH THE STRENGTH OF OUR CULTURE, we will optimize our reciprocal teaching-learning environment to better identify and inspire personal gifts, to more fully engage and empower individuals, and to deepen our commitment to the wellbeing of the community.

## **iii. Personnel responsible**

Individuals responsible for the implementation and integration of this work are the:  
President,  
Vice-President of Student and Organizational Development who chairs the College Transformation Council and the Holistic Development Council,  
Vice-President of Academic Affairs,  
Chairperson of Health Promotions/Chair of WELLBEING,  
Coordinators of Health Promotions,  
Chairs/Directors of all other academic, student services, and continuing education departments,  
Faculty  
Professional Staff who advise students and implement strategies for leadership and service learning, and  
Student Organizations and Students.

iv. Discussion related to impact on health and well being and corporate advantage

Productivity Framework  
by Dee Edington, Ph.D., U of Michigan



Basically, we have noted a steady improvement in the wellness of our people and the wellness of our culture over the past 10 years. We have widespread participation in our wellness efforts AND we have widespread interest in offering wellness initiatives. We reach our employees and they reach each other. Wellness is the norm at NMC. NMC has experienced very few medical claims related to injuries, even though we have a high percentage of nurses who deliver direct patient care or supervise students in direct patient care. Although we do not have access to separate medical claim information for our constituents, we do have self-report information that is gathered on an annual basis. Our population perceives its health to be very good to excellent and is actively engaged in a healthy lifestyle. Organizational indicators include a turnover rate of almost nil, high company loyalty, and very positive attitudes. Our employees are very productive and effective and NMC is well known as a desirable place to work.

We believe that we can only take students as far as we have personally gone. The ultimate “bottom line” or measures of our work at NMC are the growth and success experienced by our students/graduates. As mentioned, our students consistently score higher than national norms on licensure, registry, and certification exams. Specifically, we have defined growth as whole person development (LSDM). Each graduate has a story about the time they spent at NMC and the growth/development they have experienced— that is an important reason that our Alumni Association is so active. Individual growth leads to the development of an internal culture. ***In the NMC scenario, this internal culture has evolved to embrace and influence the larger community where our graduates are able to implement the norms that were modeled for them and create environments conducive to health and wellbeing where they work and live.*** Our most recent North Central Accreditation visiting team offered testimony to this effect in their summary comments about our culture. They noted our integrity and our dedication to a shared vision and mission. They congratulated us on our outcomes and they declared us a model educational organization.

It is very clear to NMC constituents that we have an important place to fill in our community. We hold ourselves up to the highest of standards. The convergence of opinions about who we are and what we do reinforces our resolve. We are a small private health professions college in Omaha, Nebraska and we have built a national reputation by doing what we do extremely well. We consider this reputation a valuable recruiting advantage. Wellness has evolved from a program at NMC to a way of life!

### **III. Lessons Learned and Important Recommendations for the Field**

#### **A. Lessons learned**

1. Shared Vision: Co-Creating a shared vision gave us a stake in our future together. It gave us a very clear understanding of where we are going and how the wellness of our constituents fit into the achievement of our mission and vision. Thinking and talking a great deal about what we want instead of what we don't want or like gives the organization a positive outlook and a goal to aim for.
2. Purposeful strategic planning merged the agenda of health promotion (full potential: spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, and emotional health of our constituents) with the mission and vision of the organization. We all understand what we need to do to get to our goals. There are clear expectations at NMC about valuing ourselves and others. Our leaders model these behaviors.
3. People need to be heard. We assessed, we evaluated, we listened, and we responded.
4. Regarding Health Promotion at NMC, the uniqueness of our worksite was the most important factor to pay attention to. This meant that we had to make great efforts to tailor our programming to the unique needs of our individuals and our culture. Often, this meant that we had to do things very differently. One example was our medical self care programming. Because our people are very diverse and because a large percentage of our people have a great deal of medical education, we were challenged to come up with a medical self care program that would be well received and useful. In order to do this, we took painstaking efforts to make sure that the text we selected was the most suitable. We plugged into available resources that would be perceived as the most credible, and we introduced the process with a series of very humorous vignettes at our College Forum. Our program was a huge success, but we know that it could have been a huge failure if we had not paid attention to the unique aspects of our group.
5. The "psychology of wellness"--- Our Health Promotion efforts were always framed in an attitude of "we care about you" instead of "thou shalt not", or "you must do". Employees felt valued and appreciated which helped immensely to build the culture we were seeking.
6. The "healthier" our culture became, the more we observed a desire to reach out and touch others in positive, health promoting ways. Servant Leadership and Service became stronger and stronger norms of our culture.

7. Personal gifts were honored and group ownership of health promotion occurred when departments were supported and encouraged for offering healthy programs and activities for the entire college. This development gave the Health Promotion department the flexibility to coordinate, facilitate, and work more purposefully on the culture. Health Promotion “by the people, for the people” is very well accepted at NMC!
8. Resource commitment is an overt behavior and it speaks to the constituents. WELLBEING is visibly supported. For instance: NMC has three “all-College” meetings per year. Health Promotion/WELLBEING is always allotted a significant amount of time and emphasis at each Forum because “wellness is the way we do business at NMC” (quote from President Roger Koehler from a television interview).
9. Relationships are at the core of our success.

## **B. Recommendations for the Field**

Program to the unique needs of the population, but do not see that as an end in and of itself. Movement from a singular focus on individual health to include the levels of health and wellbeing that can be achieved through the relationships in a community is critical. "The goal is being the best we can be in all dimensions so we can contribute to making the world a better place. Wellness is the way we accomplish that."

Recognize that constituents will be at numerous levels in their own understanding of wellbeing and their abilities to care for themselves. Program to needs and at multiple levels of intervention from a variety of perspectives. Successful work inspires movement from all levels of understanding.

Programming with a focus on increasing organizational performance is necessary, but not sufficient. We need to focus on the larger systems of which the organization is a part. Indicators of progress include, but are greater than, individual health status indicators. They are also system-wide, community-wide, and contribution-focussed.

Leadership models that call for building shared vision, participation, and collaborative decision making from all employees build strength and empowerment throughout the organization. This results in greater feelings of control, self-efficacy, value for the self and others, and enhanced organizational outcomes. Ultimately, this approach aligns the strategic plan of the organization with the positive health and wellbeing of the constituents and the community/society of which it is a part.

# **NEBRASKA METHODIST COLLEGE LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT MODEL**

Life skills are considered to be the abilities necessary for human beings to achieve life long self-development, to function optimally in today's complex society, to be a positive influence in the community, and a viable contributor to the future of our global society.

We believe that professionals will be able to achieve life-long skill development if they have the opportunity to understand, build, and maintain breadth and strength in holistic life skills during their collegiate experience. We consider this to be holistic development and we believe this holistic development is not only desirable, but essential to attain the highest levels of personal empowerment. Enabling students to develop these multi-faceted skills impacts not only the quality of their lives, but also the future of health care and the ultimate well-being of the local and global communities.

## **INSTITUTIONAL GOALS FOR STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

Nebraska Methodist College pursues comprehensive life skill development in order to assist students in developing the knowledge, insight, skills and self-direction necessary to:

- Achieve success in college and other post college environments
- Develop a foundation purposeful for life-long learning
- Build and sustain healthy relationships
- Become capable care providers and citizens who will "do no harm"
- Maximize their quality of personal life, professional contributions, success and achievements
- Establish themselves as viable contributors to local and global communities

## **INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATION**

The Nebraska Methodist College mission and core values provide the direction for college-wide action and decision making; and, more specifically to life skills development, they provide the philosophic foundation for the model which serves as the framework for comprehensive student development. The mission and core values statements are as follows:

## **MISSION**

As a health profession institution, we provide educational experiences for the development of individuals in order that they may positively influence the health and well being of the community.

## **CORE VALUES**

Through formal degree offerings, certificate programs, continuing education and community outreach efforts, the College demonstrates integrity by its commitment to the following core values:

**CARING:** We are concerned for the well being of all people and demonstrate this concern through kindness, compassion and service.

**EXCELLENCE:** We expect the best from everyone and hold ourselves to the highest ideals of personal, professional and organizational performance.

**HOLISM:** We recognize and honor the inter-relatedness of all things and all people and are committed to the development of the whole person.

**LEARNING:** We embrace the experiential process by which knowledge, insight, understanding and ultimately wisdom are created for ourselves and those we serve.

**RESPECT:** We recognize and uphold the dignity and self-worth of every human being, and promote honest and forthright interpersonal communications and behaviors.

## **COMPONENTS OF LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Based upon the fundamental beliefs expressed within the College's mission and core values, as well as the conceptual framework for life skill development, the College's life skills development agendas are formulated around the following components:

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| I. Inner Self             | IV. Relationship of Mutuality |
| II. Cognitive Skills      | V. Life Management Skills     |
| III. Communication Skills | VI. Community Spirit          |

## I. LIFE SKILLS

- |                             |                                 |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A. Inner Self               | F. Emotional well-being         |
| B. Ongoing self-assessment  | G. Spiritual practice & insight |
| C. Identification of values | H. Inner-knowing                |
| D. Self-understanding       | I. Self-direction               |
| E. Self-esteem              |                                 |

The skills identified in this component are believed to guide the individual to a more comprehensive experience of the inner self resulting in enhanced self-knowledge, awareness, insight, wisdom, and ultimately, inner healing. It is believed that these are necessary for personal growth, direction setting, and self-fulfillment.

## II. COGNITIVE SKILLS

- |                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| A. Problem-solving  | D. Critical thinking |
| B. Priority setting | E. Creativity        |
| C. Time management  | F. Reflection        |

The skills identified in this component are intended to assist the individual in developing the personal and professional decision-making, problem-solving, and thinking abilities necessary for optimal functioning in today's complex world.

## III. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- |                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A. Listening                 | E. Assertive communications |
| B. Writing                   | F. Group dynamics           |
| C. Speaking                  | G. Conflict resolution      |
| D. Non-verbal Communications |                             |

The skills identified in this component are those necessary for congruent expression of oneself in a variety of settings.

## IV. RELATIONSHIPS OF MUTUALITY

- |               |                            |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| A. Respect    | D. Awareness of boundaries |
| B. Trust      | E. Cultural competence     |
| C. Investment |                            |

The skills identified in this component are those necessary for establishing appropriate levels of successful interpersonal contact within various ranges of professionalism, sociability, and intimacy.

## V. LIFE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. Health optimization      | D. Personal accountability |
| B. Stress management        | E. Consumerism             |
| C. Multiple role management | F. Career development      |

The skills identified in this component are those believed to assist an individual in the creation and sustenance of a health promotive life style.

## VI. DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNITY SPIRIT

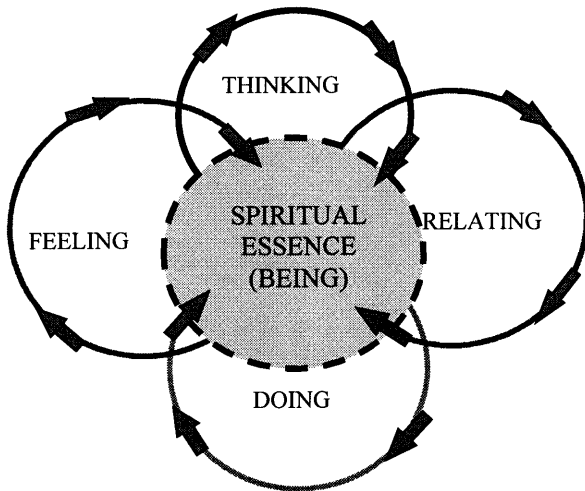
- |                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A. Sense of belonging | D. Utilization of cultural giftedness |
| B. Social conscience  | E. Utilization of resources           |
| C. Leadership skills  | F. Global awareness                   |

The skills identified in this component are those believed necessary to enable an individual to gain a sense of self within professional, local and global communities, and to bring into a personal awareness the realization of what it means to "make a difference".

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

The individual is considered a spiritual being with dimensions of thinking relating, feeling and doing. The following diagram is intended to reflect this conceptualization.

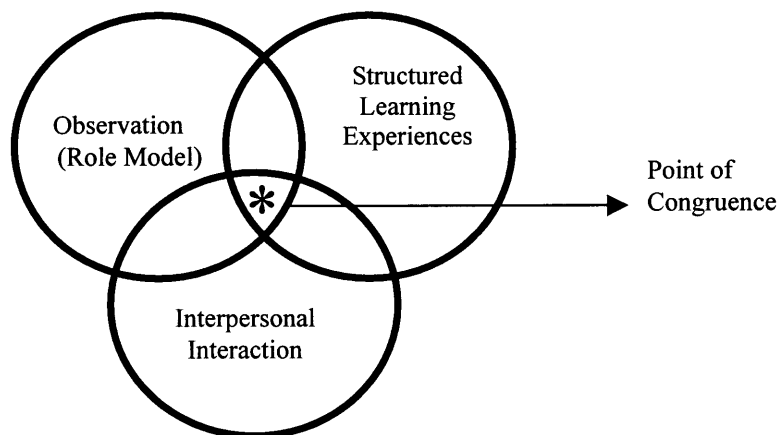
### Conceptual Framework for Life Skill Development



The dimensions of human function flow continuously from the spiritual essence (core) and may influence other dimensions of self or may eventually flow back to the core and create accommodations for further conscious realization of ones essence. We believe that personal awareness, growth and development can occur at any point in time within this dynamic state.

### Learning Opportunity Model

The development process will be facilitated through the creative use of support services, personal interaction, and reflection with didactic and group learning experiences, and role modeling. It is believed that interpersonal interaction, observation of role models, and structured learning experiences are each effective as individual learning opportunities. Further, it is believed that the most influential situations for learning occur when the opportunities intersect and we perceive congruence between what is taught, the demonstrated behaviors of the teacher, and the experience of interacting with others. These opportunities for learning are conceptualized in the following diagram.



By interacting with each other in an accepting, directed, and congruent manner, we can establish an environment that facilitates personal growth. In this environment, we will have the opportunity to enhance personal awareness and to engage in personal assessment and direction setting within the spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, and emotional domains. This will provide the base for personal empowerment