Corning Community College
Site Interview Observations
December 11-12, 2003

Introduction

Erastus Corning, an American capitalist born on the 14th of December, 1794, in Norwich, Connecticut, is the namesake for Corning, New York; Corning, Inc.; and Corning Community College. In 1807 he became a clerk in a hardware store in Troy, New York, but in 1814 moved to Albany where he lived to become the owner of extensive ironworks, obtained a controlling interest in various banking institutions, and accumulated a large fortune. He was intimately connected with the early history of railway development in New York, becoming president of the Utica & Schenectady Line, and was president of the New York Central system from 1853 to 1865. He served as mayor of Albany, state senator, and a representative to Congress reelected for a third term in 1862. He was a delegate to the New York Constitutional Convention of 1867 and was for many years vice chancellor of the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. His spirit of entrepreneurship and service to his state and community are reflected today in the spirit of the city of Corning, Corning Inc., and Corning Community College.

The Corning Region

The City of Corning was created in 1890 when the Village of Corning joined with the City of Knoxville to create a new entity. Today Corning is the heart of an interesting region that seems to struggle for identity. The region is known by various names: Heart of the Finger Lakes Region; the Chemung River Valley; the Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben Counties Region; and the Central Southern Tier, a geographical region of Southern New York that borders Pennsylvania's Northern Tier.

Before the Civil War, because of its key location and access to canals and railroads, the Corning region played a major role in the shipping of farm products, lumber, and coal. It became a prosperous and busy commercial center delivering commodities to New York City and cities across the growing nation. After 1868, the region became a manufacturing center including railroad manufacturing, glass making, rock drilling manufacturing, and many other industries. These basic industries influenced every aspect of the region's development, which soon became a bustling model of the Industrial Revolution.

In 1866, E. B. Hungerford of the Village of Corning patented a glass window blind that served as an inside shutter. He approached several glass companies about manufacturing the blind, and eventually in 1868 the Brooklyn Flint Glass Works, owned by the Houghton family, moved to Corning and founded a new glass plant to manufacture Hungerford's invention. The new Corning Glass Works would attract many other glass companies to the area along with a variety of support industries that would change the future of the region of Corning forever.

Today the Corning region has a population of approximately 13,000 people and is the home of two Fortune 500 companies: Corning Inc. and the Dresser-Rand company. Corning has preserved much of its historical past, and the five blocks of Market Street, the community's

downtown, has set a national standard for historic preservation and commercial vitality. Today the Southern Tier has a very diversified economy and is home to major manufacturing companies from around the world. In addition, the Southern Tier boasts an extraordinary amount of intellectual property and well-educated personnel. For example there are 6,400 scientists and engineers among the 342,000 members of the labor force in the Southern Tier. There are numerous museums, cultural and art programs, educational institutions, research laboratories, and a wide array of sport and recreational facilities.

As ideal as this region is for growth and development, however, in recent years there has been a downturn in population and employment. Of the three counties that make up the region, between 1990 and 2000, Chemung County lost 4.3% of its population, Schuyler County gained 3%, and Steuben County lost .4%. The average unemployment rate in 2000 was 5.6% for the three-county region, but in 2003 the average had increased to 8%. The economy of the Southern Tier was severely impacted when Corning Inc. had to lay off a significant number of workers worldwide in 2000. Adding further economic duress to the region, the Shepard Niles Company closed; World Kitchen moved out of the state; and a number of leading companies downsized their workforce.

In this changing economic swirl, Corning Community College plays an increasingly important role as a catalyst for economic development. When companies reduce their workforce, the College has been at the forefront of retraining and counseling. It has also started new training programs for new businesses attracted to the potential of the region. Corning Community College is emerging as a key player in the economic and workforce development of the region.

Corning Inc.

A factory whistle sounds in the City of Corning three times a day—morning, noon, and evening—not to signal shift changes in the factories, but to remind area citizens of the historic relationship between the City of Corning and the company of Corning Inc. Previously known as the Corning Glassworks, in June of 2001 Corning Inc. celebrated its 150th anniversary. Corning is proud to be a "company town" for Corning Inc.

Since 1868, Corning Inc. has cast a long shadow over the Southern Tier and the City of Corning. In 1890, Corning Inc. manufactured the first light bulbs for Thomas Edison's company. In 1914, the Company invented Pyrex and in 1934 built the massive glass disc for Mt. Palomar's observatory. In 1950, the research laboratories of the Company created television bulbs that made it possible for every household in America to have a television. In 1959, the Company created CorelleWare which became a household name across the country. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Company continued its international leadership in the creation of new products and produced fiber optic cable, which would send data in the form of light. The new creation got off to a slow start, but as computers and the Internet expanded, fiber optic cable became "the asphalt of the information super highway." Today, Corning Inc. makes over 60,000 products in approximately 50 different locations around the world.

Corning Inc. became the economic powerhouse of the region and attracted many other companies to the valley. By the 1960s Corning Inc. had become a diverse multi-national

company, among the first in the United State to embrace globalization. At the same time, Corning Inc. took great pride in celebrating its continuing roots in the small rural community of Corning, New York.

Today Corning Inc. is known as the largest company (#252 in the Fortune 500 companies) located in the smallest town in America. The company is still led by members of the Houghton family. Between 1964 and 1986 Amo Houghton served as the Company's fifth CEO and was succeeded by his brother James when Amo began to represent the Corning region in the U.S. Congress.

Corning Community College

In the early 1950s the communities that make up the Southern Tier were experiencing a great deal of growth, and there were a number of studies on the need for expanded educational systems in the area. In 1951, a study commissioned by the Painted Post School Board recommended a number of alternatives including joining with the Corning City School District for an enlarged consolidated district. Community leaders initiated another study by researchers from Harvard University that was published in 1954 entitled, "A Valley and A Decision." That study specifically recommended that a community college be established in Corning that could be attached to one of the area high schools to share facilities and instructors. The State University of New York Board of Trustees officially granted approval for the new college in December of 1956, and on September 18, 1958, 118 students registered and began classes.

Interestingly enough, William Lee Perry, Corning Community College's first president, had been a member of the research team of Harvard University that had made one of its recommendations the establishment of a college in Corning. As the founding president it would be Perry's job to carry out the charge of the Board of Trustees: "We want the Corning Community College to become a top flight institution; build for a hundred years." Perry was apparently a "traditionalist," and it may have been his philosophy or his connections with Harvard that earned Corning the early designation as "Little Harvard on the Hill."

The College prospered and grew utilizing temporary facilities offered by community leaders and sponsoring school districts. In 1960, the Corning Glassworks Foundation offered a gift of land and an additional grant of money to create a new campus. As a result, Corning Community College would become one of the few debt-free campuses ever built. The site of the College was 500 acres situated on a hill overlooking the valley, which may have further contributed to the idea of "Little Harvard on the Hill." The Houghton family of Corning Glassworks played an important role in the establishment of the new College campus. Arthur Houghton offered his home (Houghton House) as an intermediate facility for the College, the land on which the campus was built, and a residence adjacent to the campus, which has been used by College presidents as a home. The Arthur Houghton Library on the campus honors his early contributions.

Over the decades the College has grown into an excellent institution and shares with most community colleges around the country the tensions that come from trying to create an institution that can be respected for both its commitment to liberal arts values and its

commitment to the more practical arts of responding to community workforce and economic development needs. This dynamic tension between competing educational philosophies has characterized the community college movement for at least five decades. Corning Community College is a microcosm of these dynamic tensions, which still play out today in College decisions, financing, and in the general climate in the institution.

In 2004, Corning Community College is a dynamic player in the City of Corning and the surrounding region it serves. It is a well-respected institution of higher education in the State of New York and one of the leading institutions of higher education in the area. It has been successful in maintaining its commitment to core values of a liberal education while at the same time expanding its workforce and economic development programs throughout the three-county region. In the recent economic downturn, the College has made an elegant response to community needs and has perhaps prepared the way for a continuing expansion of its workforce and economic development mission.

The Central Southern Tier Tech Prep Consortium

Corning Community College has established a number of programs in response to area economic and workforce needs. The College has created a small business development center in the heart of Corning that addresses corporate needs for training through its Corporate, Community Education, and Services Division. In the academic year 2002-2003, the Division provided training for 21 area companies, a 24% increase over the previous year. In the same time period, training was provided for 929 participants, a 94% increase over the previous year. In addition, the College sponsors and houses the Central Southern Tier Tech Prep Consortium, one of the leading consortia of its kind.

The CCTI project at Corning Community College has been successful, in great part because it is embedded in the structure and the culture of the tech prep program, which has achieved an astounding record of success.

With Carl D. Perkins funds, the tech prep consortium was established in 1992 and today includes twelve secondary school districts, two BOCES centers, and two community colleges. Alfred State College is a postsecondary partner in the Building Trades career sequence. The Consortium's mission statement reads, "*The purpose of Tech Prep is to prepare students, grades 9-14, for lifelong learning and workforce readiness through the development and implementation of applied academics, seamless curricula, and collaborative partnerships with business, education, and parents.*" The service delivery area for the consortium is the same as that for Corning Community College: the counties of Steuben, Chemung, and Schuyler.

The current career clusters in the Tech Prep Consortium include business management and finance, mechanical/industrial/manufacturing technology, computer technology, and wholesale/retail sales and service. Each Tech Prep student is provided a personal Tech Prep Portfolio that includes the selected career cluster/sequence and appropriate course proficiency profiles. Every course in the Tech Prep sequence is based on competencies, and it is the competencies, not the courses, that are articulated between the high schools and the community college. Usually, a student can earn up to 10 semester credits in the high school that can be

transferred into Corning Community College. In the academic year 2002-2003, Tech Prep enrollments totaled 953 registered students, exceeding the goal of 450 by an astounding 212%. Four years ago very few students, less than 10, transferred from area high schools into Corning Community College through the Tech Prep program. Today, in one high school of 370, 105 are enrolled in tech prep, 17 are Information Technology (IT) students.

All secondary academic curricula are aligned with the New York State Learning Standards. Following extensive development review by business advisory teams, the secondary technical and vocational programs have received the New York State's Department of Education Career and Technical Education (CTE) endorsement. All CTE endorsed programs incorporate state or national assessments and feature established articulations with postsecondary institutions.

Under the leadership of its dynamic coordinator, Linda Miller, the Central Southern Tier Tech Prep Consortium has become a model program with exemplary materials and programs. In addition, the organization and governance of the consortium is exemplary. The Superintendent/President Team meets annually to review the Administrative Agreement and make necessary revisions. The Tech Prep Management Team is the regional advisory committee that guides and directs the implementation of consortium objectives. A Site Manager is appointed at each educational site to promote and disseminate tech prep information to all constituencies. A Cluster Advisor is also appointed at each educational site to provide support and resources for each registered tech prep student. Corning Community College serves as the fiscal agent for the Tech Prep Consortium, and the full-time coordinator reports to the Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Corning.

The information technology courses that are included in this CCTI project are formally based in the Business Administration Division and the Math/Physics/Technology Division. Information technology courses are spread across these two divisions, but they achieve their focus and organization within the framework of the Tech Prep Program. Professional programs in IT include computer-aided drafting, computer information science, computer repair technology, computer science, computer systems technology, microcomputers for business, and network technology.

The Tech Prep Consortium includes many partners among schools, business, and industry in the region. One of the key partners of the consortium that is involved in this CCTI project is the Career Development Council (CDC). In 1974, local employers, school superintendents, and union leaders wanted to include career development opportunities for youth and adults in the Corning region. A community partnership with business, industry, and education, the CDC serves Chemung, Schuyler, and Steuben Counties as a resource to link educators and students with local business and industry. Staff members are assigned to contracting school districts and visit schools on a regular basis to provide a variety of services. In the 2002-2003 program year, CDC provided services for over 17,000 students and faculty including classroom speakers, mock interviews, shadowing, career panels, field trips and business site explorations, career explorations, Tech Prep student career experiences, and special training programs for faculty. A school contracts with CDC for a basic career education package and may add additional programs including mentoring, student internships, community service learning, and a summer leadership institute. CDC also provides a student data tracking service for Tech Prep and this

CCTI project. This arrangement is particularly advantageous since CDC already tracks all the high school data pertinent to this project.

Several high schools (Campbell-Savona High School and Watkins Glen High School) and the Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES also participate as partners in this CCTI project. Corning Inc. is a key business partner in the CCTI project, and special staff members work with area schools to provide a variety of programs to encourage career development for area students including shadow programs and paid internships for students in IT.

The CCTI Partnership at Corning Community College

The partnership for this project is anchored in the existing Central Southern Tier Tech Prep Consortium that has been in existence since 1992. The Consortium includes twelve secondary school districts, two BOCES centers, and two community colleges. Alfred State College is a postsecondary partner in the Building Trades sequence.

The Tech Prep Consortium also involves a number of business partners including Dresser-Rand, Inc., CSS Workforce New York, Empire State Carpenter's Union, and Corning Inc. among many others that have worked with the College over the years. The Career Development Council is also an active partner in the Consortium; the CDC was created prior to the Consortium to help coordinate educational activities between area businesses and educational institutions.

For this CCTI project three secondary partners were selected as pilot sites from the existing Tech Prep Consortium. The secondary partners include Campbell-Savona High School and Watkins Glen High School along with the Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES.

To reduce the need for remediation, the project will (a) gather baseline data and define benchmarks for success, (b) use available academic assessment to alert faculty and students to academic deficiencies, (c) explore collaborative strategies that expand capacity for delivery, (d) use computer-based and Internet-based technology to enhance learning, and (e) begin remediation for identified students as early as possible. Students entering Corning Community College who need remedial classes as a result of their ACCUPLACER scores will be identified. Discussions with area superintendents regarding the use of ACCUPLACER and ADVANCER for identifying skill deficiencies in the high schools have been enthusiastic. Early assessment for tenth and eleventh grade tech prep students will provide diagnostic information for intervention strategies. Academic Intervention Services, mandated by the New York State Education Department, are provided by each high school for all students identified as deficient. The goal to involve IT faculty in collaborative strategies and design of prescriptive programs of improvement is laudable, but "attendance results for scheduled events" is a weak measure to assess these outcomes—as recognized by project staff. The expected outcomes and action steps to reduce the need for remediation need to be reviewed and perhaps reduced in number.

To increase enrollment and persistence, this project will (a) create career awareness options, (b) use collaborative strategies to expand capacity, (c) align curriculum at all levels of education, and (d) create secondary/postsecondary articulation agreements. There are excellent resources, especially through the Career Development Council, for creating career awareness options for

tech prep students. The Tech Prep handbook for high school students is an exceptional resource. The College aims to improve its record for retaining tech prep students and plans to design a number of "extra curricular" activities to interest tech prep students in careers. A First Year Experience course at the high school for college credit is planned in the future and is an excellent idea. Enthusiasm and agreement on the part of staff, however, is not an adequate measure of the outcome for such a course. The partnership is exploring more longitudinal and more valid measures of what may prove to be a significant experience that increases enrollment and persistence. Project staff have created a good plan to use CCSSE and HSSSE data to improve programs based upon a pre and post testing of these instruments.

The College is applying the "company" concept of classroom management to help align curriculum across secondary and postsecondary levels. This project is experimenting with the "company" concept as an outstanding example of collaborative efforts between secondary and postsecondary faculty and programs.

New York State's graduation requirements in which all students must successfully complete the five Regents exams has created a situation in which many high school students may require a fifth year for high school completion. The CCTI project will experiment with dual enrollment for these students to increase their persistence from the high school fifth year into the community college. Articulation agreements have already been created in the IT area from the secondary to postsecondary levels. This project is also exploring the articulation of IT courses between the community college and other state higher education institutions.

To improve academic and skill achievement, this project proposes to (a) implement learning-centered instructional strategies and (b) implement collaborative strategies that expand capacity. As with a number of other partnerships in CCTI, this project lists a variety of learning-centered strategies without indicating which ones will be featured. In addition none of the outcomes or action steps reflect these improvement strategies. Staff are aware of these challenges and will rework this section of their implementation plan. Project staff should also review the second improvement strategy regarding collaborative strategies to expand capacity for delivery of educational programs. The expected outcomes of action steps and measures to effect outcomes all relate to establishing consistent and accurate data rather than referring to collaborative strategies. In this section of improving academic and skill achievement there needs to be some realignment of the action steps and measures related to the planned improvement strategy.

To increase the number of degrees and certificates, this project proposes to (a) increase the number of students entering IT-related programs at Corning Community College, (b) increase the persistence of Corning Community College IT students, and (c) design and implement a statewide secondary and postsecondary articulation agreement. Articulation agreements are offered as the primary means of increasing the number of degrees and certificates, and this is certainly valid. However, the implementation and expansion of articulation agreements, many of which are already in place in this excellent Tech Prep Consortium, is only one way to achieve this objective. The College has joined Mentor-Net, a national program that provides online mentoring for students. If Mentor-Net proves successful in increasing the number of degrees and certificates, the College will continue to purchase annual membership, which runs about $1,000.

To improve entry to employment or further education, this project will (a) align all career and technical programs with national standards and certifications recognized by business and industry, (b) coordinate efforts to improve academic and career counseling, (c) provide for accurate and comparative data, and (d) create comprehensive information and services for students. The new Career and Technical Education (CTE) endorsement process, established by the New York State Education Department, mandates curriculum alignment with business and industry standards and articulation agreements with postsecondary institutions. Locally, the CTE programs mirror the tech prep programs, and as a result, approximately 90% of area BOCES' programs have received CTE approval. The natural integration of tech prep and CTE provides a seamless pathway for students. The new endorsement process is in early stages of development, but the Tech Prep Consortium is one of the leaders in the state in experimenting and applying these new requirements.

There are many resources to support the objectives of this project, including those provided by the Career Development Council for increasing awareness and providing career related counseling and other support services for students. As one example, the Tech Prep Consortium contracts with the Career Development Council to ensure that all tech prep seniors will participate in a work-based learning experience. In addition to expanding career counseling and support services for students, this project aims to improve on the collection of follow-up data so that more accurate information can be shared with the high schools, business and community partners, and students. The emphasis on gathering and providing key data for use by various constituencies is a hallmark of this particular CCTI project.