



### **Focus on the Future**

## **Guest Predictions: Dr. Bruce H. Leslie**

*Guest Predictions is a regular feature in which we ask leaders in a number of professions a set of questions that affect us all.*

### **Dr. Bruce H. Leslie, Chancellor of Alamo Colleges**

*Dr. Bruce H. Leslie is Chancellor of the Alamo Colleges in San Antonio, Texas. He is the Chief Executive Officer overseeing five colleges, a \$280 million budget and a student enrollment of over 65,000 credit and another 30,000 continuing education students each semester. Previously, Leslie served as Chancellor of the Houston Community College System, Chancellor of the Connecticut Community-Technical Colleges, and as President of Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, New York.*

*Leslie earned his bachelor's degree from Baldwin-Wallace College in Ohio and master's degree from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. He earned a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin.*

*In addition to the many boards in San Antonio, Leslie serves on the National Board of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) and RC-2020. To see Dr. Leslie full bio click on the link. <http://www.alamo.edu/district/admin/chancellor/biography.htm>*

**Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?**

**A:** These are highly exciting times. Behind the surface political and financial issues, an emerging group of global entrepreneurs are looking for a "new normal," with improved models of collaboration being accepted by widening groups. As a result, we are seeing new alignment within our academic culture, leading to improved working systems... by example, student success from registration to completion... as we become ever more data-driven.

**Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?**

**A:** Movement away from a culture of helping the least able that emerged after WWII, seems to be taking us toward more limited support for those who cannot afford or are less prepared to pursue new opportunities as they emerge. The social network is being strained to a breaking point, with jobs going unfilled because those who do not have the technical skills also have less supporting resources to acquire those skills. As a result, the "training gap" is real.

**Q: How will globalization affect your professional area in the near term?**

**A:** This is already occurring with visits from global groups to our community, which in turn is rolling into global groups working within and seeking education within our and the surrounding

communities. The resulting opportunities this has created for us to touch distant cultures are now increasing in frequency and nature.

**Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?**

**A:** Implementing academic changes to help students complete their goals, as we emerge from difficult times, is a critical, but tough, path. In an environment of restricted resources, the balancing of outcomes among our colleges is difficult. This is particularly true because of the nature of the restrictions on resources over the past several years.

**Q: What are the greatest challenges confronting young professionals in Western culture today?**

**A:** Competing with others from distant places that have been trained elsewhere to compete here, is a challenge for our system to overcome. Being globally aware is important for our local young people. Response to this particular challenge has moved slowly, and we are intent on helping pick up the pace.