



INTRODUCTION

Carl Sandburg College (CSC) is a community college dedicated to providing educational opportunities to its entire district. The Carl Sandburg College district is one of the largest geographic districts in the state, covering all or part of ten counties and 2,834 square miles. Facilities are located



throughout the district with The Main Campus located in Galesburg, The Branch Campus in Carthage, and The Extension Center in Bushnell. Additionally The Annex, which houses the Dental Hygiene, Therapeutic Massage, and Cosmetology programs, is in downtown Galesburg. The Education Technology Center is located at the Galesburg Sandburg Mall, and The Education Commons is in Carthage. Carl Sandburg College offers 59 degrees and certificates in occupational fields along with eight transfer/university degrees: Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Fine Arts-Art, Associate in Fine Arts-Music Performance, Associate in Fine Arts-Music Education, Associate in Arts-Teaching-Special Education, Associate in Arts-Teaching-Secondary Math, Associate in Engineering Science, and an Associate in General Education, which is for personal growth and development but not intended for transfer. There are also educational opportunities for personal and professional development through community and continuing education coursework.

History

Carl Sandburg College is named for poet and Lincoln biographer Carl Sandburg, who was born and reared in Galesburg. The son of Swedish immigrant parents, Sandburg was born on January 6, 1878, in a small cottage near the rail yards where his father worked. The cottage, on Galesburg's south side, is preserved today as an Illinois historical site.

Sandburg published numerous volumes, including *Chicago Poems*; *Cornhuskers*; *Rootabaga Stories*; *The People, Yes*; *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and The War Years*, and *Always the Young Strangers*. He received two Pulitzer Prizes — in history for Abraham Lincoln: The War Years (1939) and in poetry for his Collected Poems (1951). The central theme throughout Sandburg's works is his belief in the essential goodness and drive of the

common man and woman. His writing is full of optimism for the future of the human race.



Carl Sandburg and his mentor, Professor Philip Green Wright of Lombard College, also located in Galesburg, envisioned the establishment of "a People's Industrial College, where people of all ages would be taught, in addition to literature, philosophy, sociology, science, music, and art, something about industry and farming, such as agriculture, horticulture, bee culture, cabinet-making, metalworking, pottery, architecture, printing and publishing, and bookbinding."¹ The two men felt the "People's College" should be located by a river or on a lake.

Though Sandburg died in 1967, the College's ties with its namesake remain strong. In 1978, Sandburg's youngest daughter, Helga Sandburg, and her husband Dr. George Crile, established the Lillian Steichen Sandburg Memorial Scholarship in honor of Helga's mother. It is awarded each year to a second-year student who shows exceptional talent. In 1979, Helga Sandburg was awarded the College's first honorary associate degree. She returned to the campus in 1988, 1994, and in 2006 as the commencement speaker at graduation exercises. Additionally, Helga has been a guest of honor at the annual community celebration, Sandburg Days Festival, each spring.

Carl Sandburg College was established by authority of the Illinois Community College Act of 1965 and was approved by Knox and Warren county voters in a September 1966 referendum. The first classes were held on September 24, 1967, in a variety of facilities in downtown Galesburg. Enrollment was approximately 350 students. Since then the College has expanded considerably both in the scope of course offerings and in territory in an effort to meet the educational needs of the residents of West Central Illinois.

In 1969, CSC occupied the site on South Lake Storey Road in Galesburg on which The Main Campus would be constructed. The permanent facilities were opened in 1976. In the meantime, the College district annexed 16 additional

¹ From Margaret Sandburg's unpublished manuscript "Biography of Carl Sandburg"

high school districts in 1974, which eventually resulted in the establishment of additional facilities to insure the delivery of services for all residents of what is officially Illinois Community College District 518.

What is now The Branch Campus in Carthage, Ill., offered its first classes in the winter of 1974. The Extension Center in Bushnell, Ill., offered its first classes in 1996. In the spring of 1995, Carl Sandburg College returned to its roots in downtown Galesburg with the opening of the Educational Technology Center in cooperation with Knox College and Community Unit School District 205. The Main Campus has also undergone recent major renovations to keep Carl Sandburg College on the cutting edge of the technological revolution by adding an Allied Health building, expanding the Fitness Center, and completing the Dr. Donald G. Crist Student Center (which includes a computer and student center).



In the spring of 2006, Carl Sandburg College celebrated its 40th Anniversary. The College was honored to have Helga Sandburg give the commencement address. It was at this time the first CSC historian, Fred Visel (retiree and long time faculty member), was named. In honor of this 40th anniversary milestone, a time capsule was commemorated and put on display in the College Library. The second president of CSC, Dr. William Anderson, was commissioned to begin writing the College's history. During this time the CSC Foundation established the Founder's Circle, inducting six honorees: Dr. Carl Eisemann, Jr.; Eltis Henson; John Lewis; Russell Lind; A. Lewis Long; and Bob Peck. Since then Dr. Wilbur Pillsbury, Dr. Benjamin Shawver, Tom West, Everett Belote, Ruth Torrence, Robert Greene, and David Moffet have been inducted. Currently there are 13 members of the Founder's Circle.

Membership and Recognition

Carl Sandburg College is a member of the following organizations: Alliance Library System; American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; American Association of Community and Junior Colleges; American Library Association; American Technical Education Association; Arrowhead Athletic Conference; Association of College and Research Libraries; Association of Community College Trustees; Central Illinois Association for Developmental

allows students who are on the outer boundary of the district and who are geographically closer to the Iowa community colleges to attend either of these SCC campuses while still a CSC student. In addition to this agreement, the College has structured cooperative agreements with other community colleges in the state to ensure students can attend the community college that is geographically closest to them. These cooperative agreements have succeeded in allowing the College to better serve its residents and make College programs more readily available for students who live on the fringes of the Carl Sandburg College district.



Economically, the College district is largely manufacturing, service, and agricultural. Thus, in the 1980s this area was hit particularly hard with the farm crisis, and many long-time farmers in this area lost their family farms. Since 1982, Knox County has lost approximately 30 percent of its farmers. In addition to the farm crisis, manufacturing in the 1980s also took a downward turn when Outboard Marine Company (OMC), a major employer in Galesburg, left and moved south to take advantage of a cheaper labor market. The total labor force in Knox County declined for 12 years, from 1980-1992. In January 1985, Galesburg, Illinois had a 22 percent unemployment rate.

Since the 1980s Galesburg has seen the emergence of the service sector. Unfortunately, that emergence has brought an area-wide reduction in wages to a level significantly below national and state averages. Many residents still today remain underemployed. According to the most recent community census data estimates available for Galesburg, median household income in [2008 was \\$37,981 per year compared to a state median household income of \\$56,235.](#)

The ramifications of the turbulent 1980s are still being felt by the College in the reduction of assessed valuations of property. The College receives approximately 31 percent of its funding from real estate taxes. Because of the significant economic downturn of the 1980s, property values plummeted. Carl Sandburg College was number one in the state for losses in assessed valuations.

Assessed Property Values

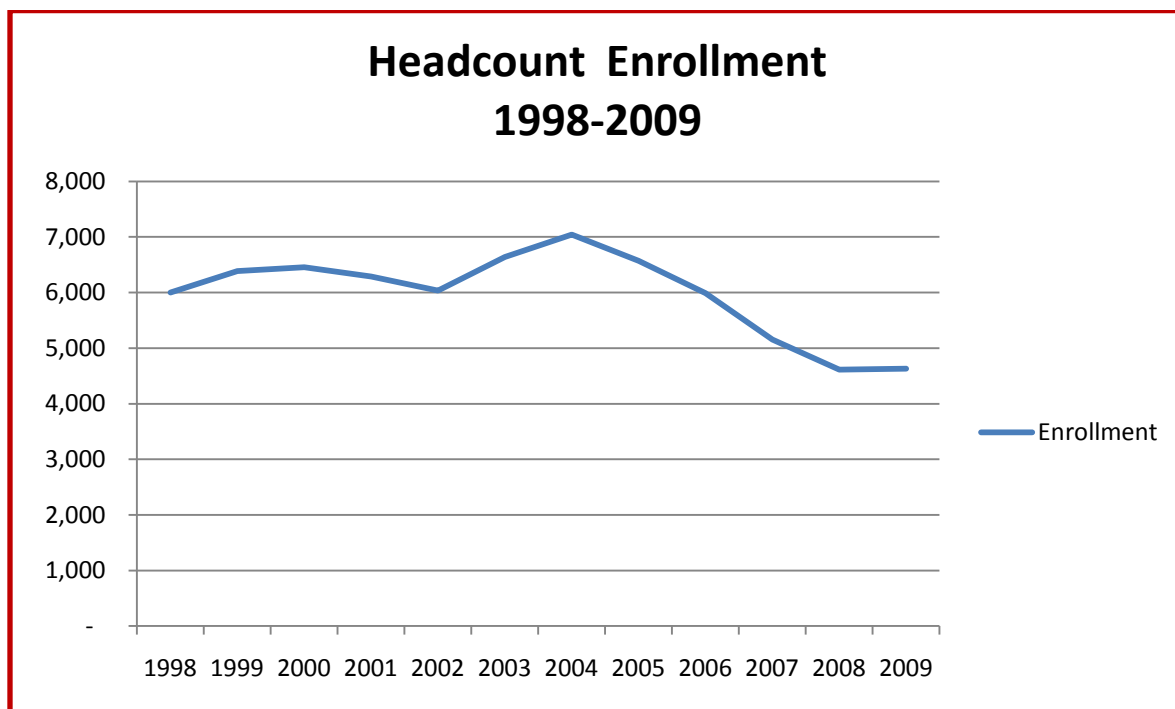
Year	Farm	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Railroad	Assessed Valuation
2007	366,114,462	685,531,667	217,675,204	15,337,689	33,242,770	1,317,901,792
2006	353,713,202	627,785,603	206,387,886	14,700,023	31,039,414	1,233,626,128
2005	370,911,761	587,047,230	199,895,676	16,308,829	29,315,785	1,203,479,281
2004	385,139,723	585,377,052	200,479,506	19,448,129	30,515,095	1,220,959,504
2003	409,399,553	623,111,270	204,699,777	20,598,720	29,610,660	1,287,419,979
2002	411,201,967	626,728,154	197,819,165	19,344,460	26,354,805	1,281,448,552
2001	433,148,371	589,283,248	190,131,988	18,887,284	27,701,349	1,259,152,240
2000	453,111,279	549,635,662	180,752,668	17,829,345	28,281,030	1,229,609,983
1999	493,332,658	482,688,669	166,787,421	16,609,837	30,215,426	1,189,634,012
1998	410,556,653	460,724,610	168,848,823	19,677,621	23,805,723	1,083,613,429
1997	407,166,329	405,145,590	146,969,165	17,151,720	20,719,024	997,151,829
1996	390,118,868	388,206,520	141,513,707	16,254,953	20,079,648	956,173,695

The College has suffered losses of over 28 percent in its assessed valuations. In tax year 1998, the College finally recovered only to tax year 1982 levels. The assessed valuation of the district for the tax year of 1998 was \$1,083,613,429. This is an increase of only \$70,406,561 from the previous high in tax year 1982 of \$1,013,206,868. The most recent assessed valuation reported in 2007 was at \$1,317,901,792. This figure represents only a 30 percent increase for the last 26 years! When most districts were seeing single and double digit increases per year, CSC has had just over a one percent increase per year.

Enrollment at Carl Sandburg College in the 1990s was on the rise. The credit hours in 1993 were 47,355 and in 1999 were 54,333 for an increase of 15 percent. Much of this growth occurred in higher enrollments of transfer/university studies students and through the cooperative agreements, but there were also increases in some of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs as well. Specifically, the Computer Information System (CIS) programs had significant increases, as well as a large expansion of the Allied Health Department to include Sonography, EMT, and Mortuary Science, which is a statewide program. Within the last decade there was a significant amount of fluctuation in enrollment. In 2009 enrollment was at [45,735 credit hours](#), which represents a decrease of 16 percent.



The new millennium has brought its share of challenges. In 2002 Maytag Galesburg Refrigeration Products, the largest employer in the CSC district, announced its intended closure for 2004. Approximately 2,400 people were slated to lose their jobs. This came on the heels of an announcement by Briggs Manufacturing in Abingdon that it would close with the loss of a few hundred jobs. Shortly after the Maytag announcement, Butler Manufacturing announced its closure, with a loss of approximately 400 jobs. The first five years of the new millennium were certainly historic for the Galesburg community and for Carl Sandburg College due to record numbers of layoffs.



Consequently, in 2005 enrollment at CSC was at a new high water mark, with a total of [73,314 reimbursable credit hours](#); however, once the Maytag, Butler, and Briggs employees transitioned through the College, CSC suffered just as drastic an enrollment decline as it had experienced a previous enrollment surge. It was speculated the College would see even more of a decline due to community residents relocating. CSC was not the only educational institution that suffered enrollment decreases. This district-wide exodus impacted area school districts to the point mergers and consolidations were happening each year during the last ten years. Many people were forced to look elsewhere for jobs, and as manufacturing moved out of the region, population has declined. While some were willing to commute to the Quad Cities or Peoria, others have opted to move.

Since the enrollment peak of 2005, student population continued to decline; enrollment is now approximately at the 1995 level, and it is not certain if the College will suffer additional enrollment losses. Not only is the College battling the declining population in the district due to the poor economy, but also is now faced with a new competitive approach that many institutions of higher education are taking toward student recruitment and retention. In an effort to be proactive in this new competitive market, during 2008-2009 the institution hired the enrollment management firm of Noel-Levitz, Inc. to help get the institution refocused in the current marketplace.

When President Schmidt assumed the office of the presidency in 2002, he forecast the coming years would be a time of reshaping the institution, and he was certainly correct. The new millennium has proven to be a time of increased uncertainty and instability for the residents of the CSC district as well as for the College. The College has had to become more efficient with its resources and more focused on what the priorities are at the institution. This will only become more important as this institution moves forward.

