

Carter Has 'Capitol' Ideas

Dick Carter, president, The Carter Group, Topeka, has more than a dozen years of experience in public affairs, grassroots coalition

building, association management and lobbying in Kansas.

Carter was selected to serve as the college lobbyist beginning Dec. 1, 2007, by the board of trustees after a review of applicants by Dr. Terry A. Calaway, president; Mitch Borchers, director, purchasing; Dorothy Friedrich, vice president, Policy and Strategic Initiatives; and Joe Sopcich, director, Institutional Advancement. In July, the board voted to retain the Carter Group as college lobbyist for the 2008-2009 academic year.

"My role is to be a liaison to the college from the legislature and a conduit of information from the college to the legislature," Carter said.



Dick Carter attended the State of the College Event in February.

A fifth-generation Kansan, Carter received a bachelor's degree in general studies from the University of Kansas and began his career as area director of the American Heart Association in Topeka. He has also served as public information officer with the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, director of government relations for the association management firm of Barbee & Associates and most recently as director for external relations for the Kansas Board of Regents.

In 2003, Carter established The Carter Group, specializing in public affairs, government relations and association management. In addition to JCCC, his clients are the Travel Industry Association of Kansas, Kansas Tourism Initiative, City of Manhattan, Kansas Dietetic Association and Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce.

Carter was a consultant for Kansas: A New Horizon in 2004, a comprehensive study prepared for the Kansas Board of Regents that looked at funding for higher education in Kansas. He says the most pressing issue in the Kansas legislature affecting JCCC is the state's funding of community colleges.

"What portion the state will pay for support of community colleges will be an ongoing issue," Carter said.

His most intense work as lobbyist is the 90 days the legislature is in session January through May. During the summer, he works with legislative and policy committees that direct the next session of the legislature.

Asked about specific gains he has made for the college, Carter says he has elevated JCCC's presence and increased its visibility.

"I think it is important for JCCC to maintain a consistent and regular presence in the Capitol," Carter said. "I am providing that familiar face."

Carter visits JCCC approximately twice a month, once for board meetings and once for community events.

Does he enjoy his service to JCCC?

"Absolutely. It is great to be connected to an institution that is moving forward and growing." 🌱