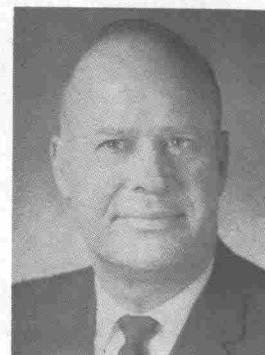


History Of Adirondack Community College

Sponsored by Warren and Washington Counties

By
DR. CHARLES R. EISENHART
President



The Glens Falls-Hudson Falls area has been "college minded" for many years. In the past, there have been numerous movements and suggestions for the locating of a college in this area. A stable, but growing community of progressive, alert people, the two Counties of Warren and Washington, have long sought to have an institution of higher learning located here where there are so many cultural and recreational advantages.

Adirondack Community College then came into being as a result of the dedication and work of a number of citizens. The basis on which the College was founded is the Community College Law of the State of New York, which was passed in 1948. Based on a formula for operational funds coming one-third from the sponsor, one-third from the State (through the State University of the State of New York), and one-third from tuition, and with capital funds coming half from local funds, and half from State funds, the New York State Community College Law has been an extraordinary success in arousing local pride and concern, together with insuring that the students who come have also a commitment, which means that they hesitate to commit themselves and their money, unless they are serious about furthering their education.

One of the outstanding provisions of the law was the "charge-back" provision, by which the College is able to charge back to his home County, the County's share of the operational costs of the College. In the last year, this has been amplified by adding a charge-back for capital expenses as well.

The original move for Adirondack Community College came from a group of concerned citizens in Warren County, who received in 1958, the encouragement of the Supervisors, to explore the question of the need and the problems which might ensue. A public meeting was held, at which Dr. Jarvie, at that time, the Dean for Community Colleges of the State University of New York, and one of the authors of the State law for Community Colleges, laid out the details of what could and could not be expected in founding a Community College. It was obvious that Warren County, alone, had neither the population, nor the tax base, to make sponsoring a Community College an attractive project; so both Washington County and Saratoga County were invited to join in the planning of a jointly-sponsored college. The law had been passed as I said, in 1948, but the first colleges were not started until 1951, and up to this time (1958), all had been sponsored by either a single county, a city, or a school district—even though the law made specific provision for joint sponsorship.

ABOUT DR. EISENHART . . .

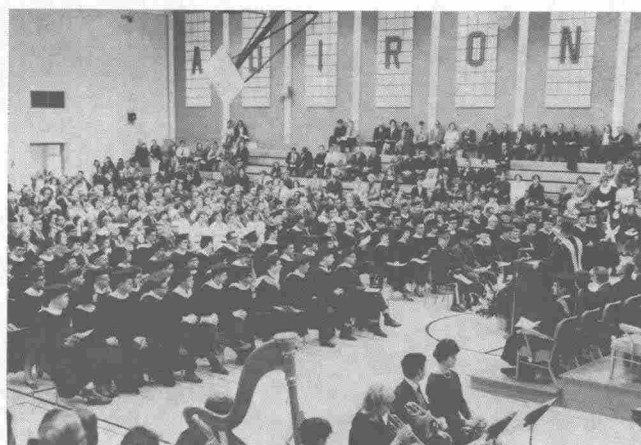
Charles R. Eisenhart was born in Binghamton, New York, and received his education at Windsor, N. Y. High School and at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, from which he received his Ph.B. degree; his Master's degree was earned at Albany State Teachers College, and Columbia was the source of his Doctorate.

Dr. Eisenhart's teaching history is varied, having had the "grassroots" experience of teaching one year in a one-room rural school; then two years in a central rural high school. While teaching in Johnson City High School, he assisted in coaching and dramatics. After time out for service as an Air Force Weather Officer from 1943 to 1946, he returned to the field of education as Dean of Men and Associate Professor of Mathematics at Hartwick College, where he remained 8 years; after 2 years as Dean of Jacksonville, Florida Junior College, he became Dean at The Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio, where he remained 5 years.

The Board of Trustees of Adirondack Community College elected Dr. Eisenhart as first President of the College, a duty which he started in February, 1961. The College opened in September of that year.

Dr. Eisenhart is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force Reserve, and presently serves as training officer for the local reserve unit. The Eisenharts have three children; the eldest son, married, holds a graduate degree, and is a high school teacher; a daughter is enrolled at Muhlenberg College, and another son attends Glens Falls public school.

A tennis enthusiast and "Mr. Fix-it", Dr. Eisenhart considers tennis and tinkering his favorite hobbies. His biographical listing include: *Who's Who* (1968-69), *Who's Who in American Education*, *Who's Who in the East*, *Dictionary of International Biography*, *Presidents and Deans of American Colleges and Universities*.



Formal Dedication Ceremony of
Adirondack Community College

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Saratoga County (with so much of its population concentrated in its southern part) felt it was not appropriate for them to join, but Washington County did, and the Action Committee was enlarged to include representatives from Washington County. This was to be the first time in history that a Community College (or *any* College, for that matter) was sponsored by two separate political entities. (N.B. There is now another two-county Community College operating in this State, and several others are contemplated in the near future. I guess this proves that the idea is a good one!!).

The Action Committee surveyed, not only the students of the area, but their parents as well, and obtained opinions from local employers as to *their* interests and needs. By April, then of 1960, the Action Committee presented their recommendation to both Boards of Supervisors, and asked that they jointly become the sponsors of the new College. In response, both Boards of Supervisors passed the enabling resolution, and the formation of the College was approved by the Trustees of the State University of New York, in June.

The law provides that each Community College shall have nine members of its Board of Trustees, of which four are appointed by the Governor, and five by the sponsor. While the populations of the two counties are not greatly different, the large number of resorts in Warren County, and the fact that Glens Falls is the only City in either County, result in Warren County having nearly twice the true valuation of Washington County. Therefore, it was decided that since Warren County would be paying nearly two-thirds of the capital costs to local taxes, there would be three trustees appointed by Warren County, and two by Washington County, with the Governor appointing two trustees from each County.

The Board was appointed and held its first meeting on October 11, 1960. The business of organizing the College proceeded apace, and by the time I was selected in February, 1961, to be the first President, the Board had prepared a brochure giving the general facts about what was to be offered in the new College and giving information on costs, the calendar, etc.

There were several possible temporary buildings considered, and finally, one was selected in Hudson Falls for the first years of operation. At the same time, the YMCA expressed its willingness to make its facilities available for the fledgling institution for physical education classes, and both Hudson Falls and Glens Falls helped out with permitting outdoor physical education classes to be held in its parks.

The College opened, thus, in leased quarters on September 12, 1961, with a full-time enrollment of 215. In the six years intervening, the enrollment has grown to more than 800 full-time students, with more than 900 expected in the next year or two. At the same time, the part-time enrollment, which was 120 the first year, has grown to more than 300. As we grew in size, it became immediately obvious that more space was imperative, so during the years,

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a three-story brick building, a two-room elementary school, an abandoned neighborhood store, and two houses, were added to the facilities. Parking lots were, of course, a definite "must", and Washington County made special efforts to help in this regard by providing an extra lot behind the main campus. Indeed, it can be said that both Counties vied with each other in helping the College "to become all it is capable of being" (to paraphrase the motto of the State University).

From the earliest days, it was planned to start in temporary quarters, and then—while the college was operating—to build a new and permanent campus. As soon as the College actually got underway, plans began to be drawn up for the permanent home. A great deal of time and effort was put into the selection of the site. Calculations of some considerable sophistication were made of the travel distances for the students, for it was felt that it was an obligation of the College to insure that a college education should be within the reach of everyone who could profit from it—and travel costs for long-distance commuting can be devastating. The location of the population centers of the two Counties are such that it became very obvious from the first, that some area near to both Glens Falls and Hudson Falls should be selected. Options were secured on more than a dozen possible sites, but finally the gift to the people of the two Counties, of 141 acres of excellent land, settled the question beyond cavil. The Glens Falls Insurance Company gave to the people, this fine site, situated just north of Glens Falls and only about a mile and a half from the Washington County line.

With the site in hand, progress on the development of plans, proceeded at an accelerated pace. Several architectural firms appeared before the Board of Trustees, and after weighing carefully the pros and cons, the largest local firm, M. L. Crandall Associates of Glens Falls, was selected along with the architectural firm of Lacey, Atherton and Davis of Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. Crandall had had considerable experience with Norwich University and Green Mountain College, while Lacey, Atherton and Davis had done extensive work for Wilkes College,

Misericordia College, Kings College and Penn State University. This gave us the advantage of having a local firm immediately available, plus having the facilities and personnel of a much larger firm also engaged in the development of the plans.

At every step, the College has made an effort to keep the Supervisors of both Counties carefully informed about the progress and the problems of the new institution. They were asked to approve the architects, and to approve the soliciting of bids, as well, of course, approving the letting of contracts for the construction.

At the same time, the Facilities Office of the State University of New York aided in the development, for since they were putting up half the money, their approval was also necessary. Based on the current projections of the State University, the plant was designed for 900 full-time students, but what we have now is adequate, we feel, for as many as 1200 students. The State figures show us projected, to increase considerably beyond that figure in the next ten years or so, but there is ample room on the site for additional buildings, if and when they become necessary. Construction was started in the fall of 1965, at which time the Supervisors, (and, of course, the Trustees, and all of us) were delighted to learn that we had been awarded almost \$1.3 million of Federal funds under the Higher Education Act of 1963. The result has been that the new plant which has an overall budget of four and one-half million dollars (including the valuation of the site at \$141,000) is provided for, with about one-third each from the sponsors—(Warren and Washington Counties), the State of New York, and the Federal government. We were fortunate to move into the new facilities in August of 1967 after the close of the summer sessions, which were held in the temporary facilities which we have used for the past six years.

The plant consists of seven buildings; an administration building, a student center, a gymnasium, a classroom building, the library, a lecture hall (480 seats) and music rooms, and a science building. Parking is provided in two large lots, plus angle parking along a campus road behind the row of buildings. In front of the building (all except the

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Adirondack Community College
Library Scene



Scene from Engineering Class

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gymnasium) is a wide mall with walks and grass, which lends a most pleasing aspect, with mountains visible on three sides. The library, the lecture hall and the administration building are all air-conditioned, and a considerable amount of carpeting is provided. One feature of the plant is the heating system which is all electric. After considering the relative costs by engineer studies, it became apparent that electric heating would cost no more immediately, and in the years to come, the much lower maintenance costs of electric heat, as well as the greatly reduced costs of cleaning and repair, made it clearly to the advantage of the College to go into electric heat. For instance, it is estimated that we saved at least \$90,000 in the original construction costs by eliminating the boiler room or building, and the usual miles of pipe and radiators. It also gives almost limitless flexibility in handling the temperature in the various areas, since each has its own thermostat. In one campus which we visited where they have had electric heat for several years, they estimate that the maintenance of the heating system amounts to ten to twelve man-hours *per year*.

In an effort to carry out the "Adirondack" motif, the outside panels above and below the windows are exposed aggregate of waste rock from the Garnet Mines in North Creek. Some of the sidewalks around the administration building, have alternating blocks of the same exposed aggregate. The main entrance to the mall has weathered rock facings on the walls of the approaches. Inside, the wall surfaces are chiefly a plastic-coated plaster-board, but in many areas, such as lobbies and lounge, vertical, random-width beech paneling is installed. The large student lounge has a central fireplace of considerable size, surrounded by slate flooring. The same slate flooring is used in most of the vestibules and lobbies.

In the library, the stack area is on two decks, capable of holding about 60,000 volumes. This is

located in the middle of the building with reading areas around it seating 250 students. A conference room, a reserved book room, a typing room, a micro-film room and two small listening cubicles are provided. In these as well as in the student center, many interior windows are provided to permit better control.

The exterior appearance of the buildings is red vari-colored brick with vertical concrete columns, and poured-in-place concrete roofs, with about 4' of overhang. While the many windows offer a chance to appreciate the magnificent view of the mountains, we have not gone "hog-wild" on glass. All exterior windows are dual-paned to reduce heat loss and a great deal of polyethylene insulation has been installed in the exterior walls. The toilets are tiled with ceramics.

In total, we feel we have an excellent plant which will serve the people for many years, with a minimum cost for maintenance and a maximum of utility. It is surely a most practical, as well as a very beautiful facility, which will enable the College to provide high quality education in most attractive surroundings.

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