

Franzen honored for community college work

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Dr. LaVern Franzen of Hastings received the 2013 Nebraska Community College Association Friends of Community Colleges Award on Nov. 4 at the NCCA annual conference at Mid-Plains Community College in North Platte.

Franzen, who retired as Central Community College's president in 2008, devoted a 41-year career at the college to advancing the cause of CCC and Nebraska's community colleges.

He began his career at CCC-Hastings in 1967 as an accounting instructor and was promoted to chairman of business-related programs in 1969.

In 1977, the Gothenburg native was selected to establish the Lexington Center to serve citizens in the western part of CCC's 25-county service area. During his 10 years as an associate dean at the Lexington Center, he worked to build people's awareness of CCC and to improve the college's services in the area.

His success was recognized when he received the Rookie of the Year Award from the Adult and Continuing Education Association of Nebraska (ACEAN). The organization recognized him again in 1995 with the Outstanding Adult Educator Award.

In 1987, Franzen became dean of instruction at CCC-Grand Island. In addition to guiding faculty and curriculum development during this period, he completed a doctorate in education in community and human resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

In 1996, Franzen returned to CCC-Hastings, this time as campus president. His efforts and ability were recognized with two prestigious awards in 2001: the President's Award from the NCCA and the Shirley B. Gordon Award from Phi Theta Kappa, an international honor society for two-year colleges.

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The NCCA award recognized his energetic leadership style, positive attitude, rapport with students and staff members, and support of many professional organizations and community groups. The Phi Theta Kappa award honored his support for the honor society and its goals.

The CCC Board of Governors appointed him as college president in 2002. A major accomplishment during his tenure as president was providing leadership as the college transitioned to the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) accreditation process.