

Howard Shanken

MACRAO Past President and Honorary Member

Howard may forever be the only MACRAO member to have ridden a moped across our great country! He was his own logistics planner, marketing director, trip coordinator, publicity manager, event coordinator and meal scheduler, plus he did the driving! Howard did it all!

In many ways, this opening paragraph tells much about Howard. He is a respected leader. He gets things done and he makes things happen, in MACRAO as well as during his work at Grand Rapids Community College.



Howard began his career in higher education in 1978 as a professor and chair of the Psychology department at Jordan College and later taught six years at Ionia State Prison (1986 to 1992) through Montcalm Community College's former "COPE" program. He joined Grand Rapids Community College in 1991 and even before he was appointed Registrar, developed a long range vision for enrollment management. In 1996, he became Registrar and shortly after that his ability to bring a thoughtful, reasoned and knowledgeable perspective to the issue at hand was recognized. Howard retired from GRCC in July of 2010.

Some highlights -- Howard was:

- A member of the GRCC NCA self study team

- Selected for the Registrar's Institute in Aspen

- Received the GRCC Raider Spirit award

- Implemented the PeopleSoft administrative software

- Taught part time as adjunct faculty

- Attended the PeopleSoft Leadership Summit

- Helped his staff win the MACRAO outstanding Support Staff award

- Was appointed to the National Student Clearinghouse Advisory Committee

- Published several articles

- Nominated for and accepted the four-year responsibility of MACRAO Presidential leadership

- Served on the AACRAO "What is Credit" national focus group

- Represented MACRAO to state and professional associations, including the MCCA and helped bring MACRAO to the table for participation during a difficult and exciting time for change

in the higher education landscape in Michigan.

Howard's MACRAO involvement included the Registrar's Practices Committee, the Data and Technology Committee (Chair), several Local Arrangements Committees and the four-year progression of Vice President, President Elect, President and Past President.

Howard was installed as President during the 2007 annual meeting in Grand Rapids and presided over the unveiling of the Michigan Transfer Network to the public at that meeting. His Presidency concluded a year later in Dearborn where the annual meeting was jointly held with Michigan, Ohio and Indiana.

In addition to his years of active participation in MACRAO, Howard was also active in the Community College Registrar's group and is well respected for his collaborative style, his willingness to mentor, his helpful knowledge as a FERPA guru, and willingness to share his informed, well considered advice on difficult and sometimes thorny issues.

There is a quote attributed to Aristotle that goes somewhat like this: "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is therefore not an act but a habit." This quotation from centuries ago could also describe our friend Howard.

MACRAO is honored to award our own "MACRAO Moped Cowboy" Honorary Membership.

November 11, 2010

Submitted by Paul Schmidt