



June 6, 2011

Barton Community College, a Longstanding Economic Engine for Community

When the idea was introduced by the Great Bend Jaycees to bring a college to Barton County more than 50 years ago, business leaders quickly got behind that idea. In fact, the Great Bend Jaycees were comprised of young business leaders. The two steering committees that followed in order to study the college concept in the 1960s were mostly comprised of area business leaders.

As community members, they were deeply committed to bringing affordable education to the area, but their solidarity as businessmen occurred because they recognized the potential for perpetual economic growth to our area. It quite simply made good business sense for a community college to exist here. Forty-two years after Barton Community College opened, we can now measure the economic growth that has come because of the foresight of those astute business leaders of yesteryear.

A recent third-party evaluation, conducted by Economic Modeling Specialties Inc., shows that the average annual added net income to Barton's seven-county service area is \$89.3 million. According to the EMSI report, that large amount accounts for 3.6 percent of the total Barton service area economy. That's a significant part the College plays in our area's overall economy. Even the most discerning business leaders five decades ago couldn't have predicted or even imagined the massive economic engine that Barton has become today for our community. When I have spoken to those honorable men and women who were integral in bringing the College forward, they simply marvel at the size and scope of what it has become and the impact it has made to our community.

Much of that annual growth, \$76.8 million, comes from the student productivity effect as Barton students join or rejoin the regional workforce after receiving education or training. Though still significant, a smaller portion of net income, \$12.5 million, is created within the service area through faculty and staff earnings, as well as from operating and capital expenditures. Methods for measuring the direct and indirect effects to arrive

at those staggering figures are explained in great detail within the report in Chapter 3: "Economic Growth Analysis," beginning on page 31.

Barton's Board of Trustees encourages everyone to examine the information in order to understand the full impact of what Barton means to our business economy. What the study and figures ultimately tell us, and a conclusion made in the report, is that regional income in the Barton service area would be substantially lower without the educational activities of Barton Community College.

You can read the report, or any of the breakout reports that have been published. Access those online at the web address, economicstudy.bartonccc.edu. If you have questions, or wish to receive any portion of the reports in the mail, call the President's Office at 620-792-9302.

The Board of Trustees looks forward to sharing the EMSI information with groups in our service area. Contact the President's Office if you would like a Board member speak to your group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Maneth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P".

Paul E. Maneth, Ph.D.
Chairman
Board of Trustees