

## IN OUR OPINION

# Harrison's tenure

Retiring LMC president has  
been more than a caretaker

**T**he description of Robert Harrison's tenure as the president of Lake Michigan College can be summed up succinctly: Right person, right time.

It was Harrison who was there to pick up the pieces after LMC's Board of Trustees forced out former president Randall Miller early in 2009. Harrison at the time was dean of the Bertrand Crossing campus, as well as LMC's dean of Workforce Services.

Harrison was immediately named LMC's interim president upon Miller's departure, which was controversial because the board agreed to pay Miller's hefty salary, benefits and pension package for the 2 1/2 years remaining on his contract.

The interim tag from Harrison's title was removed six months later, in July 2009, when the board gave him glowing marks for guiding the college leadership team through that difficult period.

But Harrison has been far more than a caretaker president. In a short time he has made a lasting mark at LMC, with the college making several big moves. Among them, LMC has:

- Sold the M-TEC facility in Edgewater to Whirlpool, deciding instead to consolidate technology resources on campus.

- Initiated the construction of on-campus housing, the first of its kind at LMC.

- Built a new activity center at the Napier Avenue main campus.

- Launched a bachelor's degree program in energy production, along with an associate's degree program in enology and viticulture (wine making/study of grapes).

All along the board has praised Harrison's decision-making and leadership style. "Under his calm and steady leadership, the college has experienced outstanding growth in communities serviced, services offered, and programs developed," said board President Mary Jo Tomasini.

Harrison said last week that he'll retire Dec. 31 of this year. That gives the board nearly a year to find Harrison's replacement.

Ideally, board members will hire somebody along the lines of Robert Harrison.