The long patch of road stretched on forever,

Oh, if the road could speak

Telling the tales of its travelers

Seeking renewal

The rain cleansed the weather beaten paths and ushered in a new day for passage

Just barely over the horizon, a glimpse of forever

Long road traveled collapsing invisibly as time passed

Forgetting not those who traveled, struggling for new beginnings and

Renewal in times of uncertainty

I wrote this last year for the release of my book, Eclectic Insights Part 1: A Composition of Poetry and Essays On Varying Thoughts and Differing Opinions and who would have thought, that just a short time later, that I would have the opportunity to share it with you here at River Valley Community College, as I begin my tenure as your new President.

I selected this poem, entitled “Renewal” because it fits - at least in my opinion; it fits perfectly with what I would describe as the state of the college.

I believe and I hope that you believe that River Valley Community College is in a phase of renewal, where we have come over a long patch of road; that appeared to stretch on forever to a place of re-examination and envisioning of a new path, a new road, and a new beginning.

There is much work to do and together, we will do it. We will dream and plan together. We will examine our programs, our services, our systems and policies
and we will make the necessary changes to position this institution for even greater success.

We will do this on behalf of the students we serve, who need the gift of hope and transformation that River Valley Community College provides for them and their families.

Over the next several years, it is my vision that River Valley Community College will lead the way in innovation, instructional pedagogy, Student Services and in the establishment of solid corporate and business partnerships that will enable us to provide greater access to students throughout the region and beyond.

As the rain cleansed the weather beaten paths of our yesterdays, it has also ushered in a new day for passage for each of us and for each of the students that we serve.

Today, I invite you to envision the future. Envision the possibilities that are before us. Now envision what it will take for us to achieve that vision, just as I have done.

I recognize the time, energy and resources that will be needed to accomplish this vision. The need to have the right people in the right seats all focused in the same direction, moving forward together.

We cannot and will not move forward if only some of us look forward, while others are looking back and holding on to the challenges of the past.

Together, we must, identify barriers and develop keen and appropriate strategies as a community of thinkers to overcome them and we must continue to look and move forward.

As we envision the new future for River Valley Community College, I encourage your excitement, passion, optimism, creativity and determination to do whatever
we must to achieve positive outcomes for our students, who deserve nothing less than our very best.

Our future, after-all, will be what we make it. It will be what we envision. It will be our future – by design.

Long road traveled collapsing invisibly as time passed

Forgetting not those who traveled, struggling for new beginnings

This is a time of new beginnings as we envision the possibilities and strategically design a plan to carry us forward.

I ask for your trust in this process as I must also trust you on this new journey. Our quest of renewal, that will require that we believe, plan, work and support each other as we design a new future for River Valley Community College.

As I often share, I have been blessed to love the work I do and to do the work I love, this remains true. As our journey together begins today, I ask for us to initiate a new level of commitment to River Valley Community College, to our students and to each other, as we will succeed or fail together.

We will work together to close leadership gaps, training gaps, resource gaps, planning gaps and where they exist, even vision gaps.

I will continue to listen, continue to explore and continue to encourage each of you to raise the standard every day as we move closer our goals.

We will plan as a college, discuss the difficult issues and respond in a manner that will always move us forward in fulfillment of our targets and benchmarks.

All of my decisions will be guided by what is in the best interest of our students. I ask that each of your decisions be guided similarly. We must ask with honesty,
“How does every decision, policy and action improve or expand learning and how do we know?”

This simple change will allow us to measure and focus our efforts appropriately on student success outcomes, retention and college completion.

We will begin work soon on our Strategic Plan, which will include a detailed Enrollment Management Component to support our recruitment and retention efforts.

We will examine our program mix and course offerings to determine their relevancy and currency.

We will implement a plan to develop learning outcomes across the institution for both credit and non-credit offerings.

We will examine the effectiveness of our current infrastructure and make changes where necessary and begin immediately to fill the gaps that may exist which may prevent our success.

We will submit a quality five year monitoring report and together we will regain our National Nursing Accreditation!

Today, we will begin the design process and you will have the opportunity to provide me your insight both individually and collectively.

I ask for your leadership as we move forward, as I believe that leadership is not only determined by the positions we hold. We are all leaders and have a valuable sphere of influence.

We are all ambassadors for the college whether at work or not, we are seen as a representation of River Valley Community College.
River Valley Community College  
Student Assembly  
Envisioning The Future – Our Future By Design  

State of The College Address  
Vision and Expectations  
Alicia B. Harvey-Smith, Ph.D. President  

So, join me, together, we will embark upon this worthy and noble work of transformation or as Terry O’Banion, might say, “Disturbing the Universe” as we, “envision and transform the future by design.

Long road traveled collapsing invisibly as time passed

Forgetting not those who traveled,

Struggling for new beginnings and renewal!

Our Renewal, Our Future – By Design

Thank You!