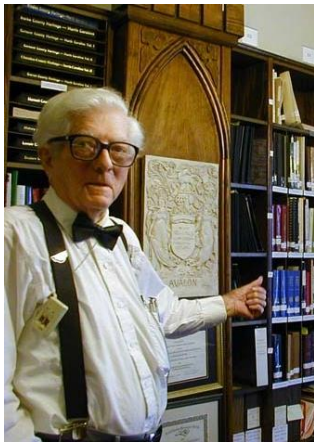


From a 1966 Speech to the NC Legislature from Dallas Herring, Founding Father of NC Community Colleges



"William Dallas Herring began his career in education politics on the school board in Duplin County, North Carolina, and eventually became chairman of the North Carolina State Board of Education. In Duplin County and statewide, Herring sought to consolidate school districts and give as much control as possible to local decision-makers. His devotion to comprehensive education (as opposed to choosing to support either vocational or liberal arts education) sometimes put him at odds with other board members and state leaders."

Biography from *Oral Histories of the American South*

"The only valid philosophy for North Carolina is the philosophy of total education; a belief in the incomparable worth of all human beings, whose claims upon the state are equal before the law and equal before the bar of public opinion; whose talents (however great or however limited or however different from the traditional) the state needs and must develop to the fullest possible degree. **That is why the doors to the institutions in North Carolina's system of community colleges must never be closed to anyone of suitable age who can learn what they teach.**

We must take the people where they are and carry them as far as they can go within the assigned function of the system. If they cannot read, then we will simply teach them to read and make them proud of their achievement. If they did not finish high school but have a mind to do it, then we will offer them a high school education at a time and in a place convenient to them and at a price within their reach.

If their talent is technical or vocational, then we will simply offer them instruction, whatever the field, however complex or however simple, that will provide them with the knowledge and the skill they can sell in the marketplaces of our state, and thereby contribute to its scientific and industrial growth.

If their needs are in the great tradition of liberal education, then we will simply provide them instruction, extending through two years of standard college work, which will enable them to go on to the university or to senior college and on into life in numbers unheard of in North Carolina.

If their needs are for cultural achievement, intellectual growth or civic understanding, then we will simply make available to them the wisdom of the ages and the enlightenment of our times and help them to maturity."

Clearly Dallas Herring was the visionary who articulated just what this new component of the public education was about and what it could do. These are roots to which we can return for strength today as we continue to follow the path he blazed for us.