Editorial: Quality Cost Savings
By Nicole Adrian

Most people are always looking for ways to cut spending—regardless of the current economic situation—whether it's in their personal lives or at work. But currently, in higher education—with increased budgets, decreased funding and an uptick in enrollment—it's more important than ever to find ways to cut costs, save money and become more efficient.

For many years, universities and community colleges have used quality tools and methods to improve efficiency and effectiveness, thus saving money and resources. Today, those quality tools, projects and programs are being used exponentially to save wherever and however possible.

In this issue of *ASQ Higher Education Brief*, Bonnie Slykhuis from Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) details how lean projects have improved student service areas, business services and operations, and the significant savings achieved from these projects.

As a result of the lean projects, the student admission web application process was streamlined, a system was created to allow students and parents to submit financial aid forms electronically, and $26,600 per year has been saved by not printing employee pay stubs.

In another article, Scott Martens—who is the director of the Office of Service and Continuous Improvement at the University of Minnesota and the chair of the ASQ Education Division—provides a detailed list of 10 questions for higher education administrators to ask themselves when searching for cost-savings opportunities. Reviewing the list should give any administrator or higher education faculty member many ideas as to where spending can be reduced and how processes can be streamlined.

The questions Martens outlines include, "Where are we spending the money?" and "Are we benchmarking and employing best-in-class purchasing and sourcing practices?" He provides formative insight on each question, showing how to make the most of these opportunities.

Thinking about the big picture of cost savings can be overwhelming. Thankfully, this issue of *Higher Education Brief*—with the outlines, lists, project backgrounds and feedback—is just the place to start.