

President's Colloquium Remarks  
Fall 2007

Welcome to our new 2007-2008 academic year. This is always a special time for us, so full of hope and promise!

Ladies and gentlemen, I am pleased to report that the state of the college is excellent and by every significant measure, has never been better! As you get re-acclimated and move about the campus, feel the excitement of opening day and anticipate the vibrant energy that comes with a new semester, I hope you will take notice of the vast array of positive change that surrounds us. I am filled with an enormous surge of positive energy about where we are and where we are going and I want to share this with you and engage all of you within the shining circle of our collective achievement.

Over fifty years ago, Mortimer Adler wrote, "Not to engage in the pursuit of ideas is to live like ants instead of like men." Never has that insight been more significant for our nation, for the world of American higher education, or for our college.

A convergence of emerging currents runs through our achievements and progress, and that theme is this: The community college gains both its strength and uniqueness from its ability to respond quickly and on many levels to our rapidly changing society.

This is a theme that continues to serve as an inspiration and a vision for this exceptional institution and for the work we do together. And, it identifies and defines the emergence of a "new community college," one which seeks continuously to broaden its intellectual mission, to improve and strengthen academic quality; one that carves out new

territories and impacts our fundamental *raison d'être* as we face our responsibility for addressing the educational needs of our nation.

In an essay entitled "America's Best Community Colleges," published in the Washington Monthly, July, 2007, Kevin Carey wrote:

"Twenty years ago, community colleges were places for less academically inclined students to gain the credentials for a decent job, or for workers driven out of manufacturing positions to retrain for sectors like IT. Today, many of those sectors are experiencing brutal competition from abroad. For these workers to get ahead, and to be useful to American companies, merely training them in new skills is no longer enough. They need to be able to learn continuously, to think critically and to adapt to a changing economy. In other words, we now need community colleges to impart the same kinds of sophisticated learning and thinking skills that have traditionally been the province of the four-year colleges."

Let me take just a moment to elaborate on these ideas and what they mean for the future of Ocean County College. First, an American Council on Education essay by Jane V. Wellman titled, "Apples and Oranges in the Flat World," America's educational status among nations of the world (June, 2007), offers some relevant perspective. Specifically:

- "With respect to the proportion of adults who have completed any type of tertiary education, the United States ranks first among adults age 45-64 and tenth among adults age 24-34. The difference in relative performance between older adults and young adults is largely attributable to growing educational

attainment among young adults in other countries while U.S. performance has remained flat...

- The number of bachelors degrees awarded in science and technology fields in the United States is rising, reaching an all-time high in 2002, but not keeping pace with gains in other countries... However, growth has been greatest in the social and behavioral sciences, rather than in the disciplines most correlated with research and development in science and technology.
- Slightly less than one-third of all U.S. bachelors' degrees are awarded to students in science and engineering disciplines – while the corresponding figures for many other countries are considerably higher, led by Japan (64 percent), China (57 percent), and South Korea (47 percent)... This means the relative share of science and engineering degree production in the U.S. has declined.
- The United States still leads the world in total spending for R&D at nearly \$285 billion in 2003, well ahead of the entire European Union (\$211 billion), Japan (\$114 billion), and China (\$85 billion). Nonetheless, the United States has slipped in R&D expenditures as a proportion of the gross domestic product – a ratio known as a national measure of “research intensity.” U.S. research intensity is now at 2.6 percent – now below the R&D intensity in Sweden, Finland, Japan, and Iceland.

- The United States leads all other countries at 22 percent of international student enrollment, but the relative U.S. share has declined since 2000.”

What is significant about these numbers is the trend. It is not a pretty picture. But what’s worse, this rather frightening trend is largely unknown to the American public and, to the degree that it is understood, it has been largely ignored within the system of American public and private education at all levels.

A 2007 publication titled, “Tough Choices OR Tough Times,” issued by the Commission on Skills of the American Workforce utilizing research from the National Center on Education and the Economy, offers these further warnings:

“The first Commission [which issued its original report in 1990] never dreamed that we would end up competing with countries that could offer large numbers of highly educated workers willing to work for low wages. But China and India are doing exactly that. Indeed, it turns out that China and India are only the tip of the iceberg. Whereas, for most of the 20th century the United States could take pride in having the best-educated workforce in the world, that is no longer true. Over the past thirty years, one country after another has surpassed us ... and many more are on the verge of doing so. Thirty years ago, the United States could lay claim to having 30 percent of the world’s population of college students. Today, that proportion has fallen to 14 percent and is continuing to fall.

“While our international counterparts are increasingly getting more education, their young people are getting a better education as well. American students and young adults place anywhere from the middle to the bottom of the pack in all three continuing comparative studies of achievement in mathematics, science and general literacy in the advanced industrial nations.

“While our relative position in the world ... has continued its slow decline, the structure of the global economy has continued to evolve. Every day, more and more of the work that people do ends up in digitized form. From X-rays to songs, movies, architectural drawings, technical papers, and novels, work that is saved on a hard disk can be transmitted instantly over the Internet to someone near or far who makes use of it in an endless variety of ways. Because this is so, employers everywhere have access to a worldwide workforce composed of people who do not have to move to participate in work teams that are truly global. And, a swiftly rising number of American workers at every skill level are in direct competition with workers in every corner of the globe. So it matters very much that, increasingly, it is easier and easier for employers everywhere to get workers who are better skilled at lower cost than American workers.

“Another important trend in the global economy bears on this point. A century ago, the United States led the world in the process of vertical integration, where corporations performed every function from the mining of the raw materials to the sale of those products through retail outlets to the final customer.

Today, the United States is the world leader in the deconstruction of the vertically integrated firm. Corporate analysts identify each step in the production process and ask who in the world can do that work at the needed level of quality at the lowest possible cost. The firm then contracts with the best providers of each of those services and keeps only those functions that it can do best. This is outsourcing. Firms that do not do this will inevitably be put out of business by firms that do.

“In many cases the work will not be done by people in other countries, but rather by machines. With the rapid advance of new technologies, it is becoming progressively less expensive to automate functions that used to be performed by people. Initially, almost all the jobs subject to automation were low skill jobs. That is no longer true. Now the jobs that are most vulnerable are the jobs involving routine work. If someone can figure out the algorithm for a job, chances are that it is economical to automate it. Many good, well-paying, middle-class jobs involve routine work of this kind and are rapidly being automated...

“Those countries that produce the most important new products and services can capture a premium in a world market that will enable them to pay high wages to their citizens. In many industries, producing the most important new products and services depends on maintaining the worldwide technological lead, but that kind of leadership does not depend on technology alone. It depends on a deep vein of creativity that is constantly renewing itself, and on a myriad of people who can imagine how

others can use things that have never been available before, create ingenious solutions that will capture people's imagination and become indispensable to millions.

"This is a world in which a very high level of preparation in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, science, literature, history, and the arts will be an indispensable foundation for everything that comes after for most members of the workforce, who will have to be ... good at both analysis and synthesis, creative and innovative, self-disciplined and well-organized, able to learn very quickly and work well as a member of a team and have the flexibility to adapt quickly to frequent changes in the labor market. It is a world in which comfort with ideas and abstractions is the passport to a good job, in which creativity and innovation are the key to the good life, in which high levels of education – a very different kind of education than most have had – are going to be the only security there is....

It is within the context of this reality we face as a nation, as a state, and as a local collegiate institution that I come to you to gaze into the kaleidoscope of our achievements and our challenges here at Ocean County College. Touching on much that is new and on some things that have progressed and matured, I am hopeful that you will see in these achievements testimony to the continuing emergence at Ocean County College as a vital and responsive collegiate institution that is gaining momentum and strength by listening to the many voices of its community, its nation and the global forces that buffet us all today and, above all, acting responsively and with urgency.

First, our commitment to become a true citizen of the academic world has taken another step forward through our latest international initiative. In July of this year, we embarked a delegation to Japan for the purpose of exploring active interrelationships among and between Ocean County College, Kean University, Sojo University and Kumamoto University located in Kumamoto prefecture on Kyushu Island in southernmost Japan.

The delegation included Dr. Frank Wetta, Dr. Jim McGinty, and Dr. Martin Novelli, as well as Dr. Dawood Farahi, President of Kean University and Dr. Robert Cirasa, liaison to the Kean @ Ocean Alliance here on our campus. We were ably guided in our travels by Mr. Ken Takenaga, representative of Kumamoto Prefecture and the Japanese National Government. Telling of the wonders and beauties of that ancient land and culture housed within a modern, efficient, and immaculate infrastructure will have to wait for another occasion, but our journey most significantly allowed us to add at least one new Japanese collaboration to our growing and impressive list of partnerships within a global learning network which include active initiatives with Universities and cultural institutions in Israel, China, England, Italy and others.

As a result of this trip, Dr. Wetta will be developing an English Language Institute. Its purpose will be to provide learning opportunities for both Japanese and American exchange students. In addition, our Japanese partnerships will offer cultural familiarization trips through our study abroad program, as well as faculty exchange opportunities that focus on English language instruction. You will be hearing much more about this in ensuing months. At present, there

appears to be a wonderful follow-up trip to Japan opportunity next spring by Deans and faculty members. One of the characteristics of Ocean County College that makes it unique among its peers is our firm belief that it is ever more important in our increasingly flat world that we honor these four major institutional objectives for liberal education and global citizenship, developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, to:

- generate knowledge about global studies
- spur civic engagement and social responsibility
- promote deeper knowledge of and debate about democracy, and
- cultivate cross-cultural awareness and intercultural competencies

It is through such intellectual commitments that we become able to make connections between the approximately contemporaneous evolution of Kabuki theater in Japan and Shakespearean theater in England, between European and Japanese feudalism, between the Bushido and the Code of Hammurabi, between the roles of the Knight and the Samurai; to know the influences of China and North America on the original Japanese Jomon culture; to consider and develop an appreciation of Ruth Benedict's proposition in her controversial cultural study of Japan, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, that "interrelationships between people [in Japan] are heavily influenced by 'honor' and 'obligation' and 'duty' in a way that is much less true in the individualized West." If we ignore global culture and what it can teach us about our survival in the flat world, we do so at our peril.

Writing on the topic of competition in the flat world, Thomas Friedman noted that "the most important competition is between you and your own imagination, because energetic, innovative and connected

individuals can now act on their imagination farther, faster, deeper, and cheaper than ever before." I think this comment precisely captures the spirit of the "new community college" that I believe we at Ocean County College will model for our peers: competitive and enterprising, quick to act on the products of its own imagination. As Friedman says about enterprises that behave this way, they "... are going to thrive... [within] a culture that nurtures and rewards individual imagination ... with no respect for limits or hierarchies or fear of failure. It is a perfect fit with this era of globalization." (NY Times, 6/10/2007)

It also gives me great pleasure this morning to report on the agenda for campus facilities development. Though there are too many projects to describe here today, Dr. Parrish has developed a fine detailed report he will make available to you on line. Many of these projects are now or will soon become visible to all of us within this coming academic year. And, while the construction will create a modicum of inconvenience and temporary dislocation for some on campus, our efforts will, in the end, dramatically expand our campus and enlarge our service areas. By February of 2008, we will have completed and will share with you a new Facilities Master Plan which will provide guidance for construction, renovation and site work on roads, parking, infrastructure, building locations, environmental permits, transportation impacts, signage, and athletic fields for an entirely new campus footprint essentially doubling the current developed campus area. This plan will include buildings for the Kean at Ocean partnership and so will both enable and a permanent Kean presence on our campus and will add a new entrance road to facilitate access.

In September of 2007, almost as we speak, we will begin the first of three stages of the already-planned construction in the expansion of our Fine Arts Building. The first stage is the construction of a new academic wing and is scheduled for completion by July 2008. It is a 15,000 square foot addition housing seven new instructional spaces as well as faculty offices, lobbies, and support space. The second and third stages will renovate the east and west wings with final completion scheduled for April 2009. The new structure will be outfitted with photovoltaic cell panels on the roof to provide free electric energy from the Sun.

We are also planning the construction of a new academic building on the quadrangle between the Administration Building and the Library. As you can see, its design fits the campus aesthetic very comfortably. This will be a 31,000 square foot building with fourteen hi-tech classrooms, two lap-top classrooms, and one PC computer lab as well as faculty offices, a faculty lounge, and a student lounge. The structure will have additional parking for faculty and staff, a wireless environment and will be ADA and LEED compliant, utilizing various "green design" features. Occupancy is planned for fall 2009.

In addition, plans for the J. Phillip Citta Community Sailing Center, primarily funded by former trustee Joseph A. Citta, in support of the college's sailing program, are under current review by the NJ State Department of Environmental Protection. We anticipate final approval very soon and construction to begin shortly thereafter.

As well, when you parked in front of the Fine Arts Center today, you may have noticed a new building near the North end of the tennis

courts. It is the new Ocean Inc. Child Development Center, a state-of-the-art facility, which is within days of completion and we hope will be ready for business on September 4th.

Construction of the Verizon wireless communication cell phone tower is due to begin in spring of 2008, to be located East of the Facilities Maintenance building, from which we will have the ability to provide a wide area wireless network covering the entire campus mall, as well as permitting Verizon to film a TV commercial on Buckwald Drive, asking "can you hear me now?"

Also, detailed plans and specifications for the Planetarium renovation are nearing completion with a projected reopening date of September 2008. With regard to this item, I am pleased to report that the fundraising efforts for the Planetarium, sparked by the leadership and generosity of Trustee, Stephan Leone and his wife Judi, and the dedication of Trustee, Judge Robert Fall, whose efforts are all being smoothly coordinated by our college advancement team, Tara Kelly, Sandy Broughton, Jan Kirsten, Kathy Buffum and Gina Suriano, are moving along on target. With the extraordinarily generous support of the Board of Chosen Freeholders, and especially of our champion, Freeholder Jack Kelly, we are feeling more confident each day about reaching our funding goals as we 'reach for the stars'. We are also grateful for the wonderful outpouring of community support organized by the Save the Planetarium Committee which has been very active in grass roots fundraising. Also, thanks to the OCC Foundation, all proceeds from this year's Sumer Gala will be dedicated to funding the new planetarium technology. I welcome each of you to participate in the Gala this year in support of this wonderful cause.

Three other projects—the expansion of parking lot #4, the development of Phase One of the Citta/Sambol Gardens, and the implementation of our campus-wide energy conservation measures—should all be completed by June, 2008. In addition, there are eight major renewal and renovation projects currently or soon to be in progress: the HPE Center boiler repair; the underground heating pipe replacement; the college lake dam repair; the development of a crime scene laboratory in the Instructional Building; office conversions in the Library; HVAC upgrades; a pool chlorination system; and the on-going furniture replacement program initiated in 2005.

These latter items are more important than they might seem. According to *Business Week* magazine (7/23/07), the nationwide repair bill for deferred maintenance on college campuses across America could be conservatively estimated at \$40 billion. As the article points out, “more than half the buildings on U. S. campuses were slapped up in the 1960s and 70s, a period when enrollment nearly doubled. Today those buildings are pushing 40. It’s not a happy situation.”

Not only do we need to build new buildings to accommodate our growing student population, we also need to take care of what is aging. It is for this reason that we have added a permanent budget line item of a quarter of a million dollars to our set-aside funding for facilities maintenance in order to try to reduce the dangerous deferral and accumulation of crucial maintenance projects. We also want to cut down on Ken Olsen’s whining.

So as you can see, we are very busy building a better campus in myriad ways.

Another break-through achievement for OCC came this past spring when a task force of sixteen faculty members under the leadership of Dr. Frank Wetta developed a streamlined proposal for in-depth college support for faculty scholarship. As I detailed for you in my spring 2007 Colloquium address, and for the reasons detailed in the ACE report I mentioned earlier, this college is deeply committed to actively sponsoring faculty scholars in their pursuit of intellectual inquiry, wherever that inquiry might lead, and the faculty task force followed up on this goal by presenting a thoughtful and efficient proposal that was endorsed by the college's leadership team this summer.

The proposal consists of a comprehensive definition of scholarship, a list of many potential supportive resources available for faculty from the college, and an application and approval process. It is our strong hope that we will be able to implement this faculty recommendation during this coming fall semester.

We are also extremely proud of the fact that both Ocean County and our campus have been chosen to host three stellar state-wide events during the 2007-08 academic year. Our wonderful new Technology Building will be the site in October for the New Jersey Higher Education Commission meeting. In addition, also in October, because I will be chairing the NJ Community College President's Council, we will be hosting the annual president's retreat to be held at the Inn at Sea Oaks.

Our overall theme for this retreat will be Quality Improvements at the County College, focusing specifically on three items: 1) Institutional Effectiveness; 2) Online Learning Assessment and Quality Matters Applications; and 3) The Science-Math Initiative, designed to prepare high school students for entry into advanced community college math and science programs. These themes will carry forward into April of 2008 when the college hosts the annual Best Practices Conference here on our campus and welcomes more than 200 of New Jersey's best and brightest educators as they participate in this cutting edge exchange of pedagogical innovation.

This event not only links to our commitment to faculty research and scholarship but also to our belief in the high quality of the education delivered by community colleges, regardless of their so-called lack of what Stanley Fish has dubbed "the dubious coin of prestige." We wish to bear witness to what Fish identifies as "high-powered scholars and teachers" who can be found in the classrooms of public institutions (NY Times, 8/1/07) – especially at community colleges.

In line with this initiative, more than twenty Ocean County College online faculty and staff recently completed on-campus training in the Quality Matters design assessment program and were qualified to be online course design assessors for the only fully-functional, national distance learning assessment mode in the country. Dr. Virginia Reilly has already been a trained assessor for QM for some time now and reported on its value to Dr. Jim McGinty who then moved to make the Quality Matters training available here on campus. So, once again, we can take pride that OCC has taken a national leadership position in assessment. We look forward to implementing the QM program at

Ocean County College with the initial evaluations directed toward online courses selected from our student learning outcomes data.

You can also take pride, and comfort, in the knowledge that we are progressing rapidly with our re-assessment of campus security, primarily through the efforts of the campus and community Security Task Force, chaired by Dr. McGinty. In the wake of the Virginia Tech tragedy, we are working diligently to further insure the safety of our campus and all of our people as best as is possible using all community agencies and technological equipment available to us.

Toward that end, the Toms River Police Department, under the leadership of Chief Michael Mastronardy, has shared with us an "Active Shooter" Response/Action Plan and, on August 16, the police staged on this campus, a hostage-taking simulation designed to test a number of response mechanisms to stop the criminal activity, to protect lives and property, to evacuate persons as required, to assist and advise other agencies, to notify personnel, to maintain order, to control traffic, to maintain communications, to record the event and action taken, and to assist in restoring operations to normal. The simulation, staged as a surprise to the campus community, was a highly successful event and adds, we believe, another safeguard and set of reassurances to our already strong security network.

Well, we are having a bit of fun with our music, but this is, of course, very, very serious business. And although our task force report is not yet completed, we are considering a number of recommendations very similar to those officially adopted at Virginia Tech last week when they released their official internal report, such as:

- Insure good cooperation and sound agreements between the college and the local police, fire, and EMS jurisdictions including ongoing training and exercises; the live shooter exercise is an example of the type of cooperative arrangements that we have with local responders. The exercise provided not only a live training opportunity for college security and local first responders but also offered an opportunity to establish and refine the cooperation and communication that must occur in this type of emergency situation.
- Provide mass communication techniques within classrooms and other locations. The College has already begun to take steps to install emergency telephones in all classrooms. These telephones will provide a direct connection between the classroom and the security office. An emergency call could be initiated by the instructor in a classroom or directed from security to a specific classroom or an entire building, or all classrooms and offices.
- The College is adding an automatic alert system to its Ocean Cruiser portal. Students and staff will have the opportunity to sign up for an emergency text messaging system by supplying their cell phone number. In an emergency, a text message is automatically sent to all who have registered for the system. The Task Force is looking at a number of additional communications options to insure that emergency notifications are broad and overlapping and employs a variety of modalities both high and low tech in nature.

- Make selected IT capabilities available to first responders. The College will be connecting a number of its security systems directly to the Toms River Police facility.
- Look at policies, procedures, and capabilities to identify at-risk students. The Intervention Subcommittee of the Task Force, which includes college staff and representatives for external agencies, is examining current capabilities and establishing procedures to identify and assist at-risk students and to assist the campus community following an unfortunate event. This afternoon a workshop is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Rooms A&B in the College Center that will provide further information on this topic.
- Increase the education of the college community about appropriate emergency response actions. Once the college's emergency plan is updated and again whenever new technologies are added, the college community will be informed and training activities scheduled. The College's Emergency Response plan and appropriate emergency response actions will become a part of our student orientation program and available on the College website.

We are pleased to have on our college task force a number of our own campus experts in addition to Mike Mastronardy, Chief of the Toms River Police, Marlene Lynch Ford, Ocean County Prosecutor, Frank Rodgers, Director of the New Jersey State Park Police, William Polhemus, Ocean County Sheriff, Jim Romer, Psychiatric Emergency

Screening Services, General Robert Pachon, NJ National Guard (Ret.), and many other distinguished community professionals.

So, we look with confidence to this initiative and its outcomes.

On another topic, during this past summer, our Ocean County College Foundation President, David Wintrode, announced six possible initiatives for Foundation support, expressing interest in not only continuing to provide strong support for student scholarships but also, perhaps, for the following projects:

- The Math-Science Initiative (mentioned previously);
- Creative programming and speakers for the renovated Planetarium;
- Establishment of a sponsored Speakers Series;
- A Child Care Center Library and Tuition Assistance for Head-Start Students;
- Offering scholarships for students who wish to further their education here at the Kean @ Ocean Alliance in collaboration with the Kean University Foundation; and
- Re-establishing the Camp Viking summer programs for Ocean County school children.

We are deeply indebted to the Foundation for its unwavering support for our students and to Dave Wintrode for his leadership. Foundation funding for these six initiatives would greatly enhance our ability to effectively serve our community.

So, friends and colleagues, our list of achievements is long and continues to grow—and, wait! I've saved the best for last!

As President, I get enormously enthused about enrollment increases, naturally, because this phenomenon not only increases revenue for the college and enables us to do more for everyone, but also because it is a characteristic of quality public collegiate institutions, a hallmark of success, our most significant evaluation as a college, our best grade. So you can imagine that I am ecstatic about the unmitigated good news on the enrollment front. We have experienced record-breaking enrollment increases this semester, in excess of 10 percent in total credit hours. This tells me that we are getting our message out, that our credentials are sound, and that students are selecting OCC because we have earned their respect and, moreover, they are then choosing to return to us.

Here is another interesting statistic of which I think most of us were not aware:

Our FY2007 unduplicated headcount:

Credit students	12,744
Non-Credit students	6,768
Total students	19,284

In FY2008 total unduplicated enrollment, including non-credit students, will exceed 20,000, and our credit student enrollment will approach 15,000 students.

This in turn tells us all something about our wonderful Student Affairs Division under the leadership of Don Doran. Don and his team have shown a remarkable ability to radically increase our market share of enrollments thanks to the outstanding recruitment efforts of Jackie Rodemann, Mary Fennessy, Mary Keller, and their staffs. We also continue to experience record enrollments of NJ Stars students, leading all other colleges in New Jersey, much of which is due to the care given to these students and this program by Stars coordinator

Elaine Schardien as well as by Laura Ricards, EOF, and Norma Betz and Annemarie Harrison from Financial Aid. This fall, our NJ Stars enrollment will exceed 600 students!

I also want to mention the retention efforts of Kate Pandolpho—as well as the ongoing efforts of our entire faculty, whose excellence and caring attitude are the best retention tools we have. And finally, once again harking back to the points made in the ACE report that I cited earlier, we should note that OCC's entire enrollment process is now electronic in nature, fully automated, enabling greater ease for students while sacrificing none of the necessary advising assistance. Needless to say, this is just part of a trend we can expect to accelerate as we move into the future.

Our enrollment growth, in turn, has produced a good strong financial picture for the college and I am extremely pleased to say that we are once again enjoying fiscal health. We have re-established a sound reserve position. We will be able to provide the set-aside funding budgeted for FY08. We will continue to make technological and office furnishing upgrades as well as to establish the aforementioned new set-aside line item for deferred maintenance to fund those long overdue repairs and renovations to our physical plant.

I will be making a full report to the Planning and Budgeting Council on September 13 on increased FY08 disbursements based on the Council's prioritized list of new money requests. We, of course, have Vice President Sara Winchester and her staff to thank for insightful budget analysis, resource management, and a creative approach to new systems and efficiencies that has served us all very well.

The Colloquium theme today is *Writing across the Curriculum*. Some might say that this morning I have been “Bragging across the college.” I have, and unashamedly so. I hope you likewise take pride in these collective accomplishments of a very fine collegiate institution. Indeed, if we cannot be our own advocates, who can? What is the good of being the best if we cannot celebrate our success? Our achievements unite us across the curriculum and across college departments and divisions. In a sense, I have been speaking with you for these past minutes about a similar sort of collaboration: *Working across the College*.

Several semesters ago I suggested that one productive way for any enterprise to approach its mission is to tear down departmental silos. As Patrick Lencioni, president of a management consulting firm has written, “Silos and the turf wars they enable devastate organizations. They waste resources, kill productivity, and jeopardize the achievement of goals. They also cause enormous amounts of stress and pain to all parties involved.”

As an institution we have come to understand this, and have learned how to “work across the college” effectively. We have worked together productively, side by side, on Task Forces, Process Improvement Teams, Goal-Oriented Ad-Hoc Committees, inter-departmental cross-training, training in technology systems, Campus Civility events, the Planning and Budgeting Council, interdisciplinary courses, the College Senate, and in numerous other ways to better integrate our talents and ideas, to better activate that creative imagination about which Tom Friedman wrote – and we have used its energy to fuel our common enterprise.

I'd like to conclude by paraphrasing a section from Emory University's Strategic Plan for 2006-2011. (This won't be as bad as it sounds!) It clearly articulates what we have achieved and will continue to achieve as we work, shoulder to shoulder, across the depths and breadth of our wonderful college:

"We will forge strong bonds among faculty and staff. (We) ... will create an innovative community that will:

- Engage a larger number of partnerships
- More broadly educate our students and the public
- Inform larger issues of public policy; and
- Deliver tangible benefits to people with needs.

New partnerships will connect scholars. . . They will join (in) a vibrant community. . . Together, (our) aligned resources will create new knowledge, apply their discoveries to urgent needs, and actually provide vital services that improve the quality of life and transform lives."

We are realizing these aspirations today at Ocean County College—and so perhaps it is fitting that we pause for a while to take stock, to reflect, to weigh these achievements, and to celebrate something quite rare – because we are doing this together, we have the privilege of living, experiencing, and enjoying the greatest achievements in our institution's history. Congratulations to each of you; thank you for your contributions; and remember ... it's a wonderful world here at OCC ... enjoy the ride!

Welcome back – and have a wonderful semester!