



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Jon H. Larson, Ph.D.*

**TO:** Members, OCC Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Jon H. Larson, Ph.D.  
President

**SUBJECT:** Items of Interest for the August 23, 2010, Board Meeting

**DATE:** August 20, 2010

## Robert J. Novins Planetarium Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

The Robert J. Novins Planetarium Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will take place immediately following the Board of Trustees meeting on Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Light refreshments will be served and a tour of the building and an inaugural demonstration show will be provided.

The Robert J. Novins Planetarium was originally constructed in 1974. Its renovation and renewal began in 2007 with the "Reach for the Stars" campaign, chaired by Mr. Stephan Leone, to raise funds to replace outdated equipment and renovate the facility to provide rich astronomical, scientific, and cultural learning opportunities. The result is a Planetarium that is equal to the best available in today's world of digital technology.

Please also join us at the Donor Reception on Friday evening, August 20<sup>th</sup>, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Planetarium. This reception will give us with the opportunity to express our gratitude to the many people whose donations, large and small, provided the funding to support this major renovation.

### Fall 2010 Colloquium

The Fall 2010 Semester Colloquium will take place on Thursday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, in the newly renovated Theatre of the Arts and Community Center. The morning will begin with a continental breakfast and meet and greet at 8:00 a.m., with the President's State of the College Address beginning at 9:00 a.m. The theme for the Colloquium is "The Economic State of Higher Education in New Jersey and its Impact on Ocean County College."

Dr. Lawrence A. Nespoli, President of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, will be our guest speaker, offering his perspective on the economic challenges facing community colleges statewide. He will then participate in a panel discussion on the "Impact of the Economic Environment on Ocean County College" with fellow panel members Ms. Sara Winchester, Vice President of Finance; Mr. David Wolfe, New Jersey Assemblyman, member of the State Assembly Budget Committee, and Senior Assistant to the President; and Mr. Lou Goetting, Cabinet Secretary from the Office of the Governor of New Jersey.

An Evening Adjunct Faculty Colloquium will be held at 5:30 p.m. My presentation will be followed by a panel discussion on "The Role and Importance of Adjuncts at Ocean County College."

If you are available, please come to the Colloquium. I am certain the panel discussion will be enlightening and interesting.

### Ocean County College Foundation Summer Celebration

This year's Ocean County College Summer Celebration, "An Evening by the Sea," is scheduled for Saturday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. The event will be held in the OCC Gymnasium, which will be transformed into an elegant setting. The Foundation is honoring Jim and Marion Caldwell as the 2010 Humanitarians of the Year.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell have been extremely active in the Ocean County community, serving on various boards of trustees and participating in fundraising activities to benefit many non-profit charities. They are long-time Toms River residents whose generous donations of time, energy, and resources have made a significant impact on the lives of many Ocean County citizens. They are indeed deserving of this recognition.

The proceeds from this year's Summer Celebration will be dedicated to the continuing development of the OCC Foundation's endowment, which is devoted to making the dream of a college education a reality for hundreds of students annually.

I hope you will join us on September 11<sup>th</sup> for a delightful evening.

### Smoking Policy

Following the revision of Policy #3075, **Control of Smoking**, at last month's Board meeting, which now prohibits smoking throughout the campus, a committee has been established to develop procedures to ensure effective communication and enforcement of the policy.

**Dr. James McGinty**, Executive Vice President, is leading this effort with the assistance of **Mr. Bob Kumpf**, Director of College Security. During the next few months, the new policy and procedures will be fully implemented. I have asked **Dr. McGinty** to provide you with a progress report of the committee's work at Monday's meeting.

### Board of Trustees Retreat

Please mark your calendars for the next **Board of Trustees Retreat**, which is scheduled for **Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup>**, at **12:00 noon** in the **Technology Building Conference Room**. Please let me know if you have specific issues you would like to discuss at the retreat.

### Student Success

I recently received a letter from the parent of **Robert (R.J.) Norcia**, who graduated from the College in May. I knew R.J. personally because he was quite involved in campus activities and he was a participant in the annual **Student Leadership Conference**.

R.J. served an internship this summer in **Washington, D.C.**, in **Mr. Newt Gingrich's** office, known as **Gingrich Communications**. He will earn four credits for the internship from **The College of New Jersey**, where R.J. will continue toward his bachelor's degree. During his internship, R.J. wrote an excellent article, which is attached, for the online newsletter, "**The Americano**," on the benefits of attending a community college.

### Faculty Success

Last month, I informed you that **Dr. Ali Botein-Furrevig**, Assistant Professor of **English and Literature**, wrote a book, which was recently published, "**Heart of the Stranger, A Portrait of Lakewood's Orthodox Community**." **Dr. Botein-Furrevig** will attend Monday's meeting to discuss her book with you.

Tuesday, August 17, 2010



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Monday, July 26th, 2010 | Posted by [Editor](#)

## College Decisions

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By [RJ Norcia](#).

In a world that seems to be focusing more and more on the rising federal debt, concern about finances is oftentimes lost on college students. More times than not, high school seniors take out massive college loans to go to schools that they cannot afford. Students choose the big name schools, the party schools or any school, rather than the school that is the best choice for their major or that they can financially afford.

In my own experience as a high school senior, I could not wait to get out of the house and go away to college. I was feeling the pressure of having to go away to school in order truly get the "college experience." And that is just what I did. I made a misinformed, immature decision to go away to a school that was not the right fit for me. And the result of this decision was that within two weeks, I could not wait to leave the four year school that I so desperately wanted to attend, and I was \$10,000 in debt with nothing more than ten college credits to show for it.

The school that I had chosen had completely failed at giving me the experience and the education that I was so sure I was going to receive. Unsure about what was next for my education and even my future; I decided to attend the one place that I vowed to NEVER attend: the local community college.

After careful consideration and numerous arguments with my parents, the decision to attend the local community college was reached. Little did I know, that this decision would be one of the best decisions I have ever made. Upon enrollment in the college's honors program, I met some of the brightest and friendliest people I have ever met. I am now glad to call them some of the best friends I have. Every professor I encountered had a true passion for teaching that could not be matched by any of the professors at my previous school. The extra-curricular program opened more doors than I ever imagined possible. And not to mention, the price-tag was a fraction of the cost of the other schools I was considering. This college was shaping up to not be as bad as I thought it was going to be after all.

Although I do not intend to patronize every community college and demonize every four-year school, I think it is of the utmost importance that students make finances an important factor in their pursuit of higher education. There are numerous ways that students can finance the education they deserve, including financial aid and scholarships, among many others. The struggling economy and job-market should be a clear indicator that now is the time to save as much money as possible. Perhaps consider attending your local community college or state school to help lighten the burden of higher education tuition costs. Maybe commute to your local four-year school or stay in-state to avoid the out-of-state fees. Perhaps attend a community college then transfer to the prestigious private school and pay half of what the other students pay, while still getting the same degree.

As college students, we are expected to be responsible for all of our actions. The first step should be choosing the college that will provide you with the best education at the cheapest price.

Do we want to follow in the footsteps of the federal government and spend money we do not have? I think not.

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