

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

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

**SUBJECT:** Items of Interest for the **April 26, 2006, Board Meeting**

**DATE:** April 19, 2006

### **Legislative/Ombudsman Status Report**

I have asked **Mr. David Wolfe, Senior Assistant to the President**, to provide you with an **update of his activities** at each Board meeting. In his first report on Wednesday, he will review his co-sponsorship of **Senate Bill 1722**, which requires **water purveyors** to file **reports with municipalities** they service, and how it relates to the college. He will also provide a brief summary of his **activities** in his role as **College Ombudsman**.

### **39<sup>th</sup> Annual Commencement Week Activities**

The **Nursing Pinning Ceremony** will take place on **Tuesday** evening, **May 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at **7:30 p.m.** in the **Fine Arts Theatre**, and the annual **Awards Ceremony** will follow on **Wednesday** evening, **May 24<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:00 p.m.** in the **Fine Arts Theatre**. OCC's **39<sup>th</sup> commencement ceremony** will take place on **Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup>**, at **6:00 p.m.** If we are faced with **inclement weather** that evening, the ceremony will be moved to the **Ritacco Center** in Toms River.

We are extremely pleased that **Congressman Christopher H. Smith** has accepted our invitation to **attend commencement**. Last year, Congressman Smith sponsored the **legislation** for a **Congressionally-directed grant** from the **Department of Education** to award funds to OCC for the **administration** of the **Center for Coastal and Environmental Studies**. He is recognized as a **leader** in Congress, particularly in the areas of **human rights, religious freedom, veterans' affairs, and health care**. I respectfully request that the trustees to **adopt a resolution** at

Monday's meeting to award an **Honorary Doctor of Letters Degree** to Congressman Smith in appreciation for his **tireless efforts** on behalf of the **citizens of New Jersey**.

The college will be presenting its first **Distinguished Alumni Award** during the commencement ceremony to **Mr. Mir Imran**. Mr. Imran **graduated from OCC** with an **associate degree in engineering** and then continued his education at **Rutgers University** where he earned a **bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering** and a **master of science degree in bioengineering**. As a scientist, inventor, entrepreneur, and investor in numerous companies, he has been granted almost **200 patents** for **medical and high technology inventions**. Today, Mr. Imran is the **founder and chairman** of **In-Cube Laboratories, Inc.**, California, a company which provides **research laboratories** and serves as a **business incubator** for medical companies. We are delighted that Mr. Imran will attend commencement to **accept this award** and address our graduates with **brief comments**.

A **reception** will be held for the **trustees** and other members of the **platform party** prior to commencement from **4:30 to 5:30 p.m.** on **Thursday** in the **Boardroom**, where trustees will then **robe for the ceremony**.

### **Board of Trustees Retreat**

The **Board of Trustees retreat**, which is scheduled for **Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**, will be held in the **Conference Room** of the **Technology Building**. It will **begin** at **2:00 p.m.** and will **conclude** by **5:00 p.m.**, followed by **dinner** at a **local restaurant** for retreat participants.

Several current college issues are being considered for the retreat. If you have any **suggestions for the agenda**, please let me know. We will provide you with additional information prior to the retreat.

### **New Jersey Council of County Colleges**

At the **April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting** of the **New Jersey Council of County Colleges**, the **proposed FY 2007 State budget** was discussed as well as **its impact** on the **nineteen community colleges** and the ways in which the **cut in operating funds** will be addressed through **collaborations, efficiencies, and decreased expenditures**. Several **position papers** were **developed** by the **Council** which will

be **presented to the Governor** to highlight **issues of importance** to the **community college sector**, such as:

- ◆ Using community colleges as a key asset for **economic growth** through **customized training** programs and the recently created **Community College Workforce Consortium**;
- ◆ **Reforming health insurance** for community colleges through legislation;
- ◆ **Improving transfer policies** and practices with four-year institutions;
- ◆ **Expanding baccalaureate access** at community colleges; and
- ◆ **Aligning high school diplomas with college readiness skills** by developing a statewide approach with the New Jersey Department of Education.

Also discussed at the meeting were the Council's **priorities** on **pending legislation**. I have attached a copy of the **Council's Legislative Committee's** recommendations for your information.

**Upcoming events** sponsored by the Council include:

- ◆ **Best Practices Conference – April 28<sup>th</sup>** at Mercer County Community College
- ◆ **Phi Theta Kappa Day – May 4<sup>th</sup>** at the Trenton Marriott
- ◆ **Community College Spirit Awards – June 12<sup>th</sup>** at the Breakers Restaurant in Spring Lake
- ◆ **Annual Trustee Conference – June 22<sup>nd</sup>** at the Trenton Marriott

### **Distance Learning Assessment**

**Mr. Richard Strada, Dean of Social Sciences, Ms. Janet Hubbs, Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness**, and I gave a presentation at the **League for Innovations Conference** in Atlanta, Georgia, in March on **distance learning assessment**. The presentation was designed to dispense **practical advice** on how to **integrate** the **assessment** of **distance learning courses** and **teaching** into existing college practices. I have asked Dean Strada

and Ms. Hubbs to provide you with a **brief overview** of the presentation at Wednesday's meeting.

### **Provost-Related Activities**

I have asked **Dr. Dan Duffy, Provost for Academic Operations and Outreach Services**, and **Dr. Toni Clay, Acting Assistant Provost for Academic Operations and Outreach Services**, to provide an **update** on their activities at Wednesday's meeting. Dr. Clay will review plans for implementation of a **comprehensive retention initiative** at OCC, and Dr. Duffy will be discussing the development of an **adjunct faculty professional development program**.

### **National Public Health Week**

OCC and the **Health and Human Performance Department** participated in **National Public Health Week** from **April 3<sup>rd</sup>** through **April 9<sup>th</sup>**. This year's theme was "**Designing Healthy Communities.**"

The college received the **New Jersey Public Health Association's President's Award** for creating a **smoke-free campus** at the **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Health Association Conference** held on **April 3<sup>rd</sup>** at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick. In addition, **Dr. Jim Brown, OCC Dean of Health Sciences and Human Performance**, presented **two poster sessions**, one on **OCC's smoke-free campus** and the second on innovative approaches to **increase physical activity** on campus.

In recognition of National Public Health Week, the following **initiatives** have been undertaken:

- ◆ **Royalties** from a **published text book** were used to **refurbish** all of the equipment in OCC's **new Fitness Room**.
- ◆ The department is urging the college and the community to **take "A Walk to Health."**
- ◆ In conjunction with our smoke-free campus, a **smoking cessation program** has been developed to encourage and support smokers who decide to quit.

- ◆ Through courses offered by the department, students are encouraged to **alter their behaviors** to adopt a **healthier and more active lifestyle**.

### **Ocean County College Foundation Golf Outing**

The **5<sup>th</sup> Annual OCC Foundation Golf Outing** is being held at the **Sea Oaks Golf Club** in **Little Egg Harbor** on **Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>**. The **rain date** is **Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>**. The outing begins with **registration and lunch at 11:00 a.m.** The driving range is available from 11:00 a.m. until the **shotgun start at 12:30 p.m.** The **awards ceremony** and **dinner** will take place from **5:30 to 6:30 p.m.**

Almost **\$220,000** has been raised from the **first four golf outings**, and the **goal** is to add another **\$60,000 this year** to support OCC students with **scholarship opportunities**.

If you are unable to play in the golf outing, you may still purchase tickets to attend the **Awards and Dinner Reception** at 5:30 p.m. You have already received a copy of the outing brochure; however, we will have them available at the meeting if you need one.

### **Organization for Black Unity**

During the recent spring semester break, **four OCC students** traveled to **New Orleans** to assist in the **clean up** of the devastation resulting from **Hurricane Katrina**. The students, **Shalonda Maples, Venus Figueras, Brandon Benoit, and Shuller Destin**, all members of the **Organization for Black Unity**, left by bus for the **22 hour ride** on **Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>**, and returned on **Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**.

Despite the fact that it has been seven months since the hurricane, all four students were **deeply affected** by the destruction they witnessed and the **amount of work** that still needs to be done. While in New Orleans, Brandon and Shuller were assigned to **remove sheetrock and waterlogged furniture** from homes that were still standing. Shalonda and Venus performed several different jobs. Both assisted a **community clinic** as it attempted to **serve uninsured women**, and they worked with a local group to prepare a **grant proposal** for funds to **replace cultural artifacts** lost in the storm.

**Ms. Grace Johnson, Assistant Director of Multicultural Services** and **advisor** to the Organization for Black Unity, **coordinated** the students' **travel**. **Ms. Laura Rickards, Director of Multicultural**

**Services**, provided information to the students on **safety** and **self-defense**. The students themselves **collected the funds** for travel through a **gospel show, bake sales, and donations** from the community.

I have asked the students to join us at Wednesday's meeting. In recognition of their initiative, compassion, and generosity, I respectfully request that the trustees **adopt a resolution** to **commend** the students for their **unselfish act** and to express appreciation for **representing OCC so well**.

### **Volunteer Week**

The week of **April 23<sup>rd</sup> through April 29<sup>th</sup>** has been proclaimed as **National Volunteer Week**. **Established in 1974** by **Presidential executive order**, National Volunteer Week designates a special time to **recognize and celebrate** the tremendous **efforts of volunteers** and the ways in which they **benefit our society**. This year's **theme** is **"Inspire by Example,"** in recognition of the **power** volunteers have **to inspire others** to join them.

To commend the volunteers who provide outstanding support throughout the college, I recommend that the trustees **adopt a resolution** proclaiming **April 23<sup>rd</sup> through April 29<sup>th</sup>** as **National Volunteer Week at Ocean County College**.