



**OCEAN**  
COUNTY COLLEGE

# 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 **April 26, 2010, Board Meeting**

**DATE:** April 21, 2010

## Ocean County College Commencement Week

The **43<sup>rd</sup> Ocean County College Commencement** will be held on **Thursday, May 27<sup>th</sup>**, at **6:00 p.m.** on the **college mall**. In the event of **rain**, the ceremony will be moved to the **Ritacco Center on Old Freehold Road in Toms River**.

As always, the **Nursing Pinning Ceremony** will precede Commencement on **Tuesday evening, May 25<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:30 p.m.**, and the annual **Awards Ceremony** will take place on **Wednesday evening, May 26<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:00 p.m.** Both events will be held in the **Gymnasium**.

**Members of the college community** will be **invited** to a **reception** prior to commencement from **4:30 to 5:30 p.m.** in the **Arts and Community Center Atrium**. At **5:30 p.m.**, the **trustees and platform party** will **robe for the ceremony** in the **Boardroom**.

## NJ STARS Program

**Governor Chris Christie's** proposed **budget** alters the **NJ STARS Program** by **restricting new participants** from **entering** the **program** but **allowing current students** to **continue**. I am working with **Dr. Larry Nespoli, President of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges**, and several other **community college presidents** to develop **alternative options** for the Governor to **consider** to **save the program**.

The **NJ STARS Program** is **unique**; it has **positively impacted** our **finest students**, **lessened** the **outmigration** of New Jersey students going to **out-of state colleges**, and **strengthened** the **partnerships** between **Ocean County College** and **Ocean County high schools**. The **importance** of the **program** was **confirmed** by a **letter** I received from **Mr. Richard Starodub, Vice President** of the **Ocean County Association for School Administrators**, who described **NJ STARS** as one of the **finest initiatives** for



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**public education** in the **history** of **New Jersey**. He offered the **Association's support** and **assistance** in **preserving this exceptional educational opportunity** for high school students.

**Mr. Starodub's letter** is **attached** for your review. Also attached is an **article** I submitted to **The Viking News** for **publication** in this week's edition, "**Shared Sacrifice Can Save NJ STARS!**"

## Phi Theta Kappa

The **2010 Spring Phi Theta Kappa induction ceremony** was held on **Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>**, in the **Gymnasium**, at which **156 students** were **sworn in** to this **national honor society** for **two-year colleges**. I am always **pleased** to **participate** in this **ceremony** that **recognizes** Ocean County College's **best and brightest students**. **Membership** in OCC's **PTK chapter, Tau Iota**, is **extended** to those students who have **earned** at least **15 credits** and have a minimum cumulative **grade point average** of **3.60**.

Two Ocean County College students, **Ms. Marion Burke** and **Ms. Charis Chambers**, were recently **named** by the **New Jersey Council of County Colleges** as **members** of the **2010 Phi Theta Kappa New Jersey All-State Academic Team**. These students are among **Phi Theta Kappa students** from throughout the **State** who are being **recognized** for their **outstanding academic achievements** and **exceptional service** to their **communities**. They will be **honored** on **Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**, by the **Council** in **Trenton**.

I am **proud** to **inform** you that the **Tau Iota Chapter** received the **Hallmark Award for Leadership** at the **Phi Theta Kappa International Convention** held in **Orlando, Florida**, from **April 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>**. **Chapter President Charis Chambers** **accepted** the **award** on behalf of the chapter. **Ms. Kaitlin Caulfield**, **Chapter Vice President of Communications**, and **Mr. Kevin Rutz**, **Chapter Vice President of Publications**, also attended the convention.

**Tau Iota** was **one** of only **25 chapters** to receive this award on the **international level**, which consists of approximately **1,400 chapters**. The **Leadership Hallmark** recognizes the **outstanding leadership** in implementing **chapter activities** on **campus**, in the **community**, and within **Phi Theta Kappa**. To receive this award, the **members** of the **chapter** had to clearly define their **leadership goals**, describe the **specific outcomes** of their **activities**, and explain the ways in which individuals **benefitted** from their **efforts**.

The **Phi Theta Kappa advisors** continue to provide **outstanding guidance** to our **Tau Iota Chapter**. They are **Dr. William Rickert**, **Professor of Mathematics**; **Dr. Nancy Marashi**, **Assistant Professor of Science**; **Dr. Joaquin Rolon**, **Assistant Professor of English and Literature**; **Ms. Carolyn Showalter**, **Assistant Professor of Mathematics**; and **Ms. Robin Weitz**, **Assistant Professor of Computer Studies**. Several **advisors** and **PTK members** will attend **Monday's meeting**.



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## Alpha Beta Gamma

On Friday evening, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 68 students will be inducted into Alpha Beta Gamma, the national business honor society. This society, established in 1970, recognizes and encourages scholarship among college students in business curricula. In addition, six students will be inducted into Lambda Epsilon Chi, the national honor society for paralegal studies. The business and paralegal faculty, Mr. Dean Labollita and Mr. Benny Castillo, Assistant Dean and Dean for the School of Social Science and Human Services, respectively, Vice President Richard Strada, and I will be present to honor these students at the induction ceremony.

Earlier in the day on May 7<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Charis Chambers and Ms. Christine Gonzalez will be inducted into the New Jersey Collegiate Business Administration Association Honor Society at the State House in Trenton. Two top-achieving business students are nominated from every two and four-year institution in New Jersey to be inducted into this prestigious honor society. The two students, their invited guests, Assistant Dean Labollita, and Advisor Barbara Napolitano, Associate Professor of Business Studies, will attend the festivities.

We congratulate the inductees and thank their advisors for their commitment to the students: Ms. Napolitano and Mr. Hank Schwartz, Professor of Business Studies, for Alpha Beta Gamma, and Mr. Torris Andersen, Librarian, and Mr. Ed Kissling, Professor of Business Studies, for Lambda Epsilon Chi.

## Peer Mentoring and Peer Tutoring

As a result of the College's participation in the Foundations of Excellence Self-Study in 2008, several recommendations were developed to support student retention, learning, and development of skills to ensure future academic success. One of the recommendations emphasizes the need to increase the utilization of peer mentors and peer tutors, especially with first-year students.

The presence of tutors increases the students' awareness of academic and personal resources on campus, encourages communication with faculty and staff, and fosters a learning-centered environment. Three areas in which peer mentoring and peer tutoring are making a difference are the Center for Academic Excellence, the Writing Center, and the Mathematics Tutoring Center, all of which are using the services of Ocean County College graduates and work-study tutors to assist students.

- ◆ The Center for Academic Excellence uses peer mentors to extend to first-year students a welcoming environment through positive, encouraging relationships with other students. The Center's peer tutors provide academic support to students in a variety of subject areas and are positive role models for our new students.



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Ms. Maureen Reustle, Dean of Academic Services, will introduce Mr. Calvin Cheung, an OCC graduate who completed a bachelor's degree at Rutgers University and has just been accepted into a master's degree program at Indiana University in Pennsylvania, to discuss his experience as a peer mentor and peer tutor.

- ◆ The Writing Center has been employing peer tutors since fall 2009, both OCC graduates, who are now Kean-Ocean students, and work-study tutors. The Kean-Ocean students, with their advanced level of education and experience in English and other disciplines, have been particularly valuable to the Writing Across the Curriculum initiative; in fact, the Center has seen a marked increase in usage this year by students in all disciplines.

Ms. Christine Kephart, Writing Skills Coordinator, will also attend Monday's meeting to introduce two of the Writing Center's tutors, Ms. Christina Walling, a former OCC NJ STARS student and now a Kean-Ocean NJ STARS II student, and Mr. Matthew Cavalier, a former OCC student and currently a Kean-Ocean student. Ms. Kephart will also share with you the efforts being made to extend the Center's reach throughout the campus community.

## Ocean County College Sailing Team

On Saturday and Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, the Ocean County College Sailing Team and the Toms River Yacht Club hosted a Middle States Intercollegiate Sailing Association (MAISA) Team Race Regatta on the Toms River. In a stunning performance, Ocean's Sailing Team won the regatta with a perfect score of 6-0. Finishing second was Colgate University, Cornell University was third, and Drexel University followed in fourth place.

This win in a major two-on-two team race against seven four-year Ivy League colleges was the greatest accomplishment in the College's sailing history. Other colleges that participated were Monmouth University, Villanova University, Princeton University, and the University of Maryland.

Mr. Roy Wilkins, Manager of Recreation Activities, Sailing Coach Bill Warner, and team members Brendon Hogan, Autumn Hoover, Jamie Wasco, Sarah Salter, Tyler Kennedy, Derek Douglas, Bradford Wright, and Brianna Bruns all deserve our accolades for their exceptional achievement. They will be with us at Monday's meeting for recognition.

## Who's Who Among Ocean County College Students

Members of the campus community are invited each year to nominate students for Who's Who Among Ocean County College Students. Nominees must have made a significant contribution to the College through scholarship and leadership, be graduating in May or completing degree requirements by the end



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of the **summer**, have earned a minimum cumulative **grade point average of 2.5**, and **completed** at least **half** of their **coursework** at **OCC**.

This year **101 students**, the **highest number** ever, were nominated by **faculty and staff**. The **large number** of nominees **reflects** the **increasing level** of **academic achievement** among our students. The **Student Life Committee** selected **35 students** from the **101 nominated** for **Who's Who** recognition, **one** of whom will be **invited** to serve as the **student speaker** at **Commencement**.

## Displaced Homemakers Program

The **Displaced Homemakers Program** of **Ocean County** continues to be **active** on the **Ocean County College** campus. Since **2007**, when a **grant** was received from the **New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women**, to establish the program, almost **200 women** have been **assisted** in gaining **self-confidence** and enhancing their **employability**.

**Ms. Kate Pandolpho, Director of Career, Employment, and Personal Counseling**, and **Ms. Susan Ebeling-Witte, Community Services Specialist**, will join us on **Monday** for a brief **review** of the program's recent **accomplishments**. Following their presentation, I will **respectfully request** that a **resolution** be **adopted** to proclaim the month of **May 2010** as **Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month** at **Ocean County College**.

## New Jersey Council of County Colleges

The **New Jersey Council of County Colleges** sponsors a **series** of **educational workshops** throughout the year, "**Trustee Essentials: Seminars for New Jersey Community College Trustees**." The **next seminar** is scheduled for **Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>**, following our Board meeting, with a **networking session** from **4:30 to 5:00 p.m.**, the **seminar** from **5:00 to 6:00 p.m.**, and **dinner** at **6:00 p.m.** The **speaker** will be **Arnold Chait, Esq.**, from the firm of **Vogel, Chait, Collins, and Schneider**, who will discuss the **recent legislation** signed into **law** by **Governor Chris Christie** regarding **reforms to health care, pensions, and other benefits** for full-time **community college employees**.

Other scheduled **Council** events are **Phi Theta Kappa Day** on **Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**, and the **Trustee Conference Spirit Award Dinner** on **Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup>**, both of which will take place at the **Lafayette Yard Marriott Hotel** in **Trenton**.

## Trustee Recognition

**Mr. Stephan Leone** and his **wife Judi** are being **honored** as **Distinguished Citizens of the Year** by the **Toms River-Ocean County Chamber of Commerce** at its **Gala Reception and Dinner** being held on **Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>**. The event is being held at **The View Restaurant** at **Eagle Ridge Golf Club** in



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**Lakewood.** The **Leones** are **most deserving** of this **recognition** for all they do for our **community**. I extend my **deepest congratulations**.

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ The **Ocean County College Civility Team** and the **Full-Time Faculty Constituency** are co-sponsoring an **Employee Picnic** on **Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**, on the **College Center patio** from **12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.** If it **rains**, the picnic will be moved **inside** the **College Center**. The cost is **\$5 per person**.
- ◆ You are **cordially invited** to attend the **annual Student Spring Dinner/Dance**, which is being held on **Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:00 p.m.** at **The View Restaurant** at **Eagle Ridge Golf Club** in **Lakewood**.
- ◆ The next **Board of Trustees Retreat** is scheduled for **Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>**, from **12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.** in the **Technology Building Conference Room**.