

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 **May 22, 2006, Board Meeting**

DATE: May 17, 2006

39th Annual Commencement Week Activities

I hope you will be able to join us for some or all of the annual commencement week activities:

- ◆ **Tuesday, May 23rd – Nursing Pinning Ceremony at 7:00 p.m.** in the Fine Arts Theatre.
- ◆ **Wednesday, May 24th – OCC Awards Ceremony at 7:00 p.m.** in the Fine Arts Theatre.
- ◆ **Thursday, May 25th – Commencement at 6:00 p.m.** on the college campus. A **reception** will be held from **4:30 to 5:30 p.m.** in the **Boardroom** of the **Administration Building**. **Robing** will take place following the reception. In the event of **rain**, commencement will move to the **Ritacco Center**.

An **Honorary Doctor of Letters degree** will be presented to **Congressman Christopher Smith** at commencement, and **Mr. Mir Imran** will receive the college's first **Distinguished Alumni Award**.

Selected by the **Student Life Committee** to be our **student speaker** is **Mr. Eric Weinberg**. Eric is graduating with a **4.0 grade point average** and will be continuing toward his **bachelor's degree** at **Rutgers University**. He is a member of **Phi Theta Kappa, Phi Beta Lambda, Alpha Beta Gamma**, and OCC's **student government**. Eric is a **NJ STARS student**, who began his courses at OCC as a **senior in high school**, graduating in 2005.

In addition, **Dr. Dawood Farahi, President of Kean University**, will attend commencement, and I will present him with a **plaque in acknowledgment** of our **partnership**.

Ocean County College Foundation

- ◆ **Golf Outing** - The **5th Annual OCC Foundation Golf Outing** took place at the **Sea Oaks Golf Club** in **Little Egg Harbor** on **Monday, May 1st**. We had approximately **130 golfers** and raised almost **\$73,000** to support **student scholarships** and **special projects**. **Sungard Higher Education** and **Custodial Consultants** were again **major sponsors**, and we are very **appreciative** of their **continuing support** of this worthy event.
- ◆ **Foundation Gala** - The **Ocean County College Foundation "Happy Days" Gala** has been scheduled for **Saturday, September 9th**, at **6 p.m.** on the college campus mall. This year's **Humanitarian** is **Mr. Zev Rosen**, who was a member of the **Foundation Board** from **1985 to 2004**, serving on the **Executive Committee** from **1988 to 2001**. Mr. Rosen, a **long-time resident** of **Toms River**, has been extremely **active** in both **business** and **community activities**. This recognition is **well deserved**.

Please **mark your calendars** for September 9th so you will be able to **join us** for this fine event.

NJ STARS Program

I am very pleased to inform you that Ocean County College has the **highest number** of **graduating NJ STARS students** in the state this year. The **New Jersey Council of County Colleges** compiled data from the **nineteen community colleges**, and it reported that OCC has **43 NJ STARS graduates**, with Gloucester County College second at 24 graduates, and Brookdale Community College third with 21.

Since then, **another 3** OCC NJ STARS students have applied for graduation, bringing the **total to 46**.

The **success** of our NJ STARS program is the result of a **collaborative effort** since the inception of the program two years ago. Under the **leadership** of **Provost Dan Duffy**, with the assistance of **Mr. Don Doran, Acting Vice President of Student Affairs**, and **Ms. Laura Rickards, Director of the Educational Opportunity Fund**, a **NJ STARS Advisory Board** was established, which includes **representatives** from the **local high schools** as well as the **New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority**. The members of the Advisory Board and OCC staff have done an **exemplary job** of **strengthening** the process for the **recruitment** and **retention** of NJ STARS students.

This June, over **1,300 graduating high school seniors** are **eligible** for the NJ STARS Program. We are **actively recruiting** these students and anticipate many of them **choosing OCC** for their higher education.

Phi Theta Kappa

I have invited **Mr. Michael Mayo**, outgoing **President** of OCC's **Tau Iota Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa**, to make a brief **presentation** at Monday's meeting. He will introduce to you **President-Elect Susan Taylor**, will report on the **highlights** of his **presidency**, and brief you on **our trip to Seattle, Washington**, in April for Phi Theta Kappa's **annual convention**, during which I was presented with a **2006 Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction**.

On **May 4th**, I attended the **12th annual Phi Theta Kappa Day** celebration in Trenton. Each year, the **New Jersey Council of County Colleges** hosts a **luncheon program** to recognize the members of the **New Jersey All-State Academic Team**, which is sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa, for their **outstanding academic achievement** and **exceptional service to their communities** as members of PTK at their local community colleges.

This year, **Donald Burke** and **Eric Weinberg** were named to the **All-State Academic Team**, both of whom have certainly earned this honor. Additionally, **Donald Burke, Eric Weinberg, and Adam Geib** have each been awarded a **Rutgers University Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Scholarship** for the **fall 2006 semester**.

Chi Alpha Epsilon

On Tuesday evening, **May 16th**, **OCC's Beta Chi Chapter of Chi Alpha Epsilon** held its **induction ceremony**. **Eight students** became **new members**:

Eunice Balague
Robert Coyle
Guner Kangal
Omar Kurdi

Regina Briggs
Christal Hardin
Edward Kraftmann
Carlos Ramirez

In addition, **two honorary members** were inducted: **Ms. Sally Crawford, Senior User Liaison in Information Technology**, and **Dr. Frank Wetta**.

Chi Alpha Epsilon was **established** to **recognize** the **academic achievements** of students admitted to colleges through **non-traditional criteria** and serves **developmental and Educational Opportunity Program students**. Its **purposes** are to promote continued **high academic standards**, to foster **increased communication** among its members, and to **honor academic excellence** achieved by those students.

Dr. Toni Clay, Acting Assistant Provost for Academic Operations and Outreach Services and **Chi Alpha Epsilon advisor**, and the **new inductees** have been invited to the Board meeting for **commendation**.

Planetarium

At Monday's meeting, **Dr. Judy Icklan** and **Ms. Gloria Villalobos, Director of the Planetarium**, will **update** you on the **Planetarium**. In response to the pledge from an **anonymous donor** to support the renovation of the Planetarium, a **Request for Proposals** was developed to seek **consulting services** to address the **goal** of **utilizing advanced technology** in a modern facility suitable for **multiple uses** by the college and community. The **key element** of this RFP is a **cost estimate for consulting services** on Planetarium **equipment, theatre renovation** for a multi-use facility, **staffing requirements**, and an analysis of the Planetarium's **operating costs** based on the implementation of recommendations. The **RFP's** are due on **May 19th**.

Campus Civility

At my request, **Ms. Janet Hubbs, Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness**, established a **Process Improvement Team on Campus Civility** for the purpose of **reviewing concerns** about the **campus climate, identifying problems**, and making **recommendations for improvement**. In addition to Ms. Hubbs, the team has **twelve other members** who represent **various constituencies** of the college.

I have asked Ms. Hubbs to summarize the work of the Process Improvement Team to date at Monday's meeting.

TV Studio

Construction of our new **TV Studio** is now **complete**, and the **equipment** has **arrived** and been **installed**. Studio employees are now **training** and becoming more **familiar** with the **equipment**.

Mr. Lee Kobus, Director of Broadcast and Instructional Technology, and **Mr. Ralph Bertini, Production Director**, will give you more information about the TV Studio at Monday's meeting, and you are invited to **join me** in a **tour** of the **facility** following the meeting.

Sailing Program Donation

I am delighted to inform you that **Mr. and Mrs. Austin Fragomen** donated to the OCC Sailing Program the "**Tamwok**," a beautiful **A-Cat** valued at more than **\$180,000**. **Mr. Austin Fragomen** is an active member of the **Sailing Program Advisory Board**, and **Ms. Gwendolyn M. Robosson**, his wife, you will recall, was our **guest speaker** at **commencement last year**.

We are **extremely grateful** to the Fragomens for this **donation** to the program. I also want to express **appreciation** to **Mr. Don Doran** and **Mr. Roy Wilkens, Manager of the Sailing Program**, for their **strong commitment** to the success of this **very successful program**.