



# 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 May 26, 2009, Board Meeting

**DATE:** May 20, 2009

## NJ STARS Program

I am delighted to report that there are **240 NJ STARS students** graduating this May, the **highest number** of any **community college** in the **State**. The **presence** of **NJ STARS students** at Ocean County College has had a **significant impact**. These students are **highly motivated** not only to achieve **academic success** but also to be **socially conscious** of important issues facing our citizenry.

The **focus** of the **NJ STARS Club** this year was to **give back** to the **community**, and the students were involved in several **activities** to do so, such as **participation** in the annual **Harvest Party**, a day spent **volunteering** for **Habitat for Humanity**, and a **monthly commitment** to **manage** and **serve** at **Simon's Soup Kitchen** in **Seaside Heights**.

In addition to **volunteering** at the **Soup Kitchen**, the club members **raised money** to **fund** a **Christmas party** for the **children** who visit the **Soup Kitchen** by holding **bake sales** on campus and **teaming up** with local **middle school students** who **sold stars** to their friends and families.

**Ms. Elaine Schardien**, **NJ STARS Coordinator**, and several **NJ STARS students** will attend **Tuesday's meeting** to report on the **NJ STARS Club activities** this past academic year.

### **New Jersey Collegiate Press Association**

The Ocean County College Viking News won 13 awards at the annual New Jersey College Newspaper Conference and Awards Luncheon sponsored by the New Jersey Press Foundation. The conference was held on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, at the Trenton Marriott Hotel, and the theme was "College Newspaper Websites as a Destination for Students and the Campus Community."

The Viking News was recognized with the following awards:

**First Place:** Editorial Writing, Enterprise/Investigative Reporting, Sports Photography, Layout and Design

**Second Place:** Feature Writing, Column/Opinion Writing, Arts and Entertainment Writing, Enterprise/Investigative Reporting, Sports Photography

**Third Place:** Sports Writing, Arts and Entertainment Writing, Enterprise/Investigative Reporting

**Honorable Mention:** News Writing, General Excellence

**Congratulations** are extended to the staff of the Viking News.

### **Displaced Homemakers Program**

In 2007, Ocean County College applied for and received a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women, to establish the Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County on the College campus. It is one of 15 centers throughout the State.

Our Displaced Homemakers Center provides services to women who have lost their primary source of income, due to divorce, separation, death, or disability of a spouse, to become economically self-sufficient through career counseling, training, educational opportunities, and information/referrals to community resources and social services. In addition, the center offers various workshops, some of which address assertiveness, self-esteem, computer literacy, and resume writing, all important aspects to assist these women in securing employment.

The Displaced Homemakers Center resides in OCC's Office of Career, Employment, and Personal Counseling under Ms. Kate Pandolpho, Director. Ms. Kathleen Bombery is the Project Coordinator for the Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County. Ms. Bombery and a program client will be with us at Tuesday's meeting.

The State has designated June as Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Board of Trustees adopt the attached

resolution proclaiming June 2009 as Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month at Ocean County College.

#### Ocean County College Promotion

Ocean County College is being recognized in two articles of the May 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of the national trade newspaper, *Community College Times*. The first is an op-ed article written by Ms. RoseAnn D'Urso, Manager of Promotional Programming (College Relations), "Trading your college's trash for cash," which will be published in the special Going Green - Recycling edition.

In addition, Ms. D'Urso arranged for and coordinated an article written by a *Community College Times* staff reporter focusing on the newest trend of on-line science classes. Ocean County College's model on-line, at-home lab science courses are highlighted prominently in the article, "Science programs find a home online."

Both articles are attached for your review. I will also distribute to you at Tuesday's meeting the current edition of *Ocean Views*, OCC's bi-annual newsletter for alumni, the college family, and the community. Ms. D'Urso is also the editor of this publication.

Congratulations to Ms. D'Urso for her fine work in promoting Ocean County College at the national level.

#### Ocean County College's Periodic Review Report

Ocean County College's five-year Periodic Review Report (PRR) was completed and mailed to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education on May 13<sup>th</sup>, well before the June 1<sup>st</sup> due date. A copy of the report will be distributed to you at Tuesday's meeting.

The development of the PRR began during the fall 2007 semester when Ms. Janet Hubbs, Assistant to the President for Institutional Excellence, was selected to chair the PRR Steering Committee. Subcommittees, with college-wide representation, were subsequently appointed, and efforts have been ongoing since then to complete the report. All timelines were met, and an outstanding report was achieved.

Sincere appreciation is extended to Ms. Hubbs, the Steering Committee members, those who served on the subcommittees, and all others who contributed to the document in any way. The report is a comprehensive evaluation of our institution's progress and growth since our last Middle States Self-Study Report in April 2004.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education will take action on our Periodic Review Report in November.

**Upcoming Dates to Remember**

- ♦ **Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> – Board of Trustees Retreat at 12:00 noon in the Technology Building Conference Room**
- ♦ **Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup> – Annual New Jersey Council of County Colleges Trustee Conference from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Trenton Marriott in Lafayette Yard. This year's conference is entitled "Strategies and Operations in Challenging Economic Times."**



## **Board of Trustees**

### **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS,** the New Jersey Displaced Homemakers Act was signed into law by Governor Brendan Byrne in 1979 in response to the rising divorce rate in the 1970's and the need for women to re-enter the workforce to support themselves and their children; and

**WHEREAS,** since then, the number of Displaced Homemaker Centers has increased from the original 6 to 15 throughout the State; and

**WHEREAS,** Ocean County College applied for and received a grant in 2007 from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women, to establish the Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County on the College campus; and

**WHEREAS,** the Program currently provides services to many women who have lost their primary source of income, due to divorce, separation, death, or disability of a spouse, to become economically self-sufficient through career counseling, training, educational opportunities, and information/referrals to community resources and social services; and

**WHEREAS,** throughout the year, the campus program also offers many workshops for displaced women, some of which address assertiveness, self-esteem, computer literacy, and resume writing, all important aspects of their efforts to secure employment; and

**WHEREAS,** the Displaced Homemakers Centers have significantly impacted the lives of many New Jersey women by helping them reach their full potential, gain self-confidence, and enhance their employability;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the month of June 2009 be proclaimed as Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month at Ocean County College; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the college community recognize the importance of the Displaced Homemakers Program as it provides women with the skills necessary to meet the challenges of the labor market so they can provide for themselves and their children.

*Adopted: May 26, 2009*

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Linda L. Novak  
Secretary



## Trading your college's trash for cash

By ROSEANN D'URSO

From private colleges and state universities to community colleges and local school districts, everyone's "going green"—or at least thinking about it.

College executives and trustees may agree in theory to find new ways to lower electricity consumption or dispose of trash in a friendlier way, but many pull back when "going green" affects the institution's bottom line. However, there are many alternatives to "going green" that not only can help save the environment, but can also save your college's most valuable resource—the greenback.

One successful project that is part of green efforts at Ocean County College (OCC) in New Jersey—and one of the least expensive to implement—is its recycling program. This comprehensive program includes all departments, faculty, staff and even the student environmental group, and it runs the gamut from grounds and construction to paper consumption and chemical disposal.

At the helm are the college's physical plant, facilities and operations and office services that work in tandem with other departments to carry out a variety of recycling efforts. The college's recycling program was started in response to mandated in-house initiatives with the choice of various items to be recycled based upon that mandate, the volume of consumption and the degree of hazard.

With its close connection to the nearby Barnegat Bay, OCC realized that harm-

ful chemicals are not only a danger to employees who work with them, but they are also a danger to the county's water system. For this reason, harmful chemicals on the campus are aggressively being phased out. Underground chemical storage tanks have also been removed and any chemicals that must still be used are carefully disposed.

For example, engine oil, anti-freeze, paints, laser and ink jet cartridges and copier toner bottles are recycled through the county's hazardous waste recycling center or through retailer incentive programs.

Some of the laser and ink jet cartridges are even reclaimed for profit that in turn is donated to the Barnegat Bay National Estuary Program, which is housed on the college's main campus.

OCC also recycles all lighting, including fluorescent lamps, computers, electronics, batteries and other scrap electronics. These are recycled back to the county's recycling center or through retailer incentives.

In addition, the college also sponsors a yearly "courtesy dump" of any electronics stored at employee and student homes. Metal, including desks and items commingled with other materials, is recycled, and then reclaimed for a profit for the college. Local scrap metal dealers are happy to haul away our junk and then pay us for it.

While underground storage tanks have been removed, OCC's storm water management project has switched from open basin retention to an under-

ground water tank storage/cistern. By collecting the storm water and recycling it to irrigate the campus lawns, trees and foliage, the college's storm water is prevented from running into Barnegat Bay and thus reduces any leftover chemicals that may have been dumped into the bay. The college is also looking into converting existing retention basins into underground cisterns.

One of the most obvious things to recycle is paper. All photocopy paper used at OCC is made from 30 percent-recycled product and all paper—including white, color, newspaper and magazines—is recycled into special blue wastebaskets that are located in each office and/or at employees' desks.

A less obvious way of paper recycling is using Green Seal products, such as toilet tissue. Green Seal products are made from recycled materials that exceed EPA guidelines for post-consumer wastepaper content. The products also meet an Environmental Standard for U.S. Lodging Properties for waste minimization, water and energy efficiency, hazardous substances handling and environmentally responsible purchasing. The Green Seal can be found on paper and cleaning products, among many other items. OCC purchases Green Seal products whenever possible.

The college's physical plant is moving to implement a number of new green ideas. For example, leaves and cuttings will be composted to produce the college's own topsoil, and branches and limbs will be chipped on site, which will reduce cost



RoseAnn D'Urso

and waste stream. The college is also purchasing an electric vehicle and is looking at possibly converting a college vehicle to use bio-diesel fuel.

While cost containment is always a factor in choosing recycling projects, OCC has not yet compiled the actual cost or savings of each project. But the college is so committed to the importance of "going green" that compared to the harm done to health and environment, the cost is minimal.

If your college is thinking of making its footprint a little smaller and the environment a little greener, consider recycling. Whether you decide to tackle a large project or just start small, your institution can easily reduce its footprint and maybe even funnel some money back into the college.

*D'Urso is manager of promotional programming at Ocean County College (New Jersey).*

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# Science programs find a home online

By GARRY BOLLARD

Perhaps the biggest surprise when Ocean County College (OCC) in New Jersey decided to launch its initial online courses was how quickly the two-year college's students responded.

"We started out with a couple of nursing classes," says James Brown, an associate professor of science at OCC. "They proved to be a huge hit for us practically overnight. People started to tell other students about it. Plus the fact that the courses were online caused others to notice, too."

But perhaps the most stunning thing was that the college began to get students from other states, including as far as Alaska, continues Brown, who is also the former dean of science, engineering, health sciences and human performance at OCC.

Now up and running for two years, OCC's extensive online offerings total more than a dozen courses in such subjects as anatomy, astronomy, biology, chemistry, microbiology, nature science and sociology, making the community college one of the most comprehensive online two-year institutions in the country.

"Right now in any given semester, we easily have more than 1,000 students taking online sciences courses," says Brown, who notes that an online oceanography class is in the making for the fall.

"If we didn't know it when we started all of this, we very much know now that there is a tremendous need out there for this sort of thing," continues Brown. "And that is particularly true for parents who are working and don't have the time that is required to drive to a campus and sit in a class."

That same convenience factor is driving the growth of many community college online courses across the U.S. At Lake Tahoe Community College (LTCC) in California, students are now being offered online courses in anthropology, art history, digital imaging, business law, office procedures and history, among other subjects.

"And the demand for even more offerings just continues to grow," says Sandi Jorgensen, an administrative assistant

at LTCC. "Obviously, convenience has a lot to do with our success."

The college is located in a somewhat isolated area, so students are interested in taking classes that won't require them to travel long distances several times a week, Jorgensen says. Plus, the interactive features of LTCC's online offerings help to replicate the feel of a classroom, she adds.

"They may go to a chatroom with their instructor and talk about what they are studying just as they would if they were on campus in a classroom," Jorgensen says.

But Jorgensen, who notes that many of LTCC's online courses have as many as 35 to 40 students each, thinks the popularity of such learning is also fed by the large number of younger students who are comfortable with all things online.

"The youngest students have grown up with the Internet, so for many of them, this is a totally natural thing to do," she says.

Yet not all young students are academically successful online. Students in the 18 to 24 age range are very comfortable with things like e-mail and sending attachments, which are components of most online course, says Susan Peterson, chair of the business department at Scottsdale Community College (Arizona).

"But a lot depends on how disciplined such students are personally," Peterson notes. "Online courses are particularly good for self-disciplined persons of any age. But some students just don't do very well if they don't have those constant reminders about their work that they might get from sitting in an actual classroom or talking with their fellow students. That's something that has to be taken into consideration."

Also to be taken into consideration are the potential burdens posed by popular online courses on instructors.

"When a teacher is teaching an online course, they may not have to do all of the same prep work that they would for a traditional classroom course, but they do have to do a lot of grading," explains Peterson, who notes that SCC limits such courses to 25 students. "There are more assignments in an online course to make up



Ocean County College offers home-based lab kits, which allow students taking online science classes to participate in a hands-on lab experience.

for the class discussions, so we limit the number of students in order that the instructors won't have a ridiculous amount of grading to do."

Other colleges are upgrading their online technology in an attempt to replicate the actual classroom experience as much as possible.

"Our courses are no longer just static online courses," says Jamie Green, the interim director of e-learning and outreach at North Idaho College (NIC). "We have incorporated technologies that allow for synchronized sessions that give us the ability to replace the face-to-face environment using audio or video or constant sharing."

With online courses in accounting, anthropology, biology, communications and nursing, among other subjects, NIC's distance learning has seen growth not only in the number of students taking such classes but also in the disciplines offered.

However, despite the diversity of offerings, not all classes at NIC are totally online, Green says.

"We also have to have hybrid courses where the course is taught both online and in a classroom," Green says. "With a biology class, for example, instructors have discovered that they can put lecture material online, but that the lab work still has to be done in person."

The same mix is offered at OCC in

New Jersey.

"Every one of our online classes has a twin that is totally hands-on and face-to-face, so the student has the option of going face-to-face or online," says Brown. "But we also have onsite-online hybrid classes where the online is the didactic portion and the on-site is in the lab."

The continuing growth and expansion of community college online courses is coming at a time when many two-year colleges are experiencing significant enrollment increases, a factor that may lead to the development of even more online course offerings in the near future.

"That's why we are right now looking into having additional disciplines online," says NIC's Green. "The demand is there, and as a community college, we respond to such demands."

That demand may also significantly ease a financial challenge that continues to burden many community colleges—expanding facilities in order to accommodate new student growth.

"It's what they call 'bricks versus clicks,'" says OCC's Brown. "We were looking at a \$12 million nursing building, which we ended up not having to build. We grew our nursing program by one-third because of our online courses, but we did not have to expand our classroom space. This has saved us millions of dollars that we would have otherwise had to spend on new buildings."

## ECONOMY, from page 3

The leaders at the meeting sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education also discussed longer-term efforts, such as better aligning K-12 with postsecondary education so students are ready to do college-level work and are not stuck in remedial courses.

"One of the problems we have in our education system in the U.S. is that we don't have a set level of expectation from one grade level to the next," Boggs said.

The lack of expectations is prompting an increase in students enrolling in developmental courses, where students focus on material they should have mastered in K-12, Brown said. Aside from using valuable time, such courses are also eating into colleges' resources, he said.

"On average, it costs about \$9,000 for a student to take a semester of remedial courses and to retake courses that did not transfer," Brown said. "That is a waste of taxpayer, government and the student's funds."

Boggs advocated for developing a national standard of education to smooth the transition from one education level to the next—from K-12 to college to graduate studies.

More effective communication between high schools and colleges could also help close the academic gap with minority and underrepresented students, particularly in the high-demand areas of science, technology, engineering and math, Boggs said.

Communicating better with businesses and industries can also help community colleges to train a more highly skilled workforce that not only helps local businesses but also helps to position the country to become more competitive globally, the panelists said.

The down economy is also a good opportunity to explore new business ventures. To that extent, community colleges could focus more on helping local residents start their own businesses, according to Brown.

"Two-thirds of community colleges are located in

rural areas. One of the things community colleges can do is work in entrepreneurship to help grow businesses in their local communities," he said.

The panel also discussed how serving minority and underrepresented students could assist in solving some of the country's economic woes. Diane Troyer, senior program officer for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and a former community college president, detailed the foundation's efforts to help better prepare students through using data.

"We are really seeing a renewed interest in developing a culture of evidence—looking at data and seeing what is happening to underrepresented students," Troyer said.

For community colleges to best execute their roles in strengthening the economy, Troy suggested that the federal government strengthen K-16 links, set high expectations for students and develop partnership models for colleges and businesses.