



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 **July 27, 2015, Board Meeting**

DATE: July 22, 2015

Ain Shams University

On Tuesday through Thursday, July 21-23, 2015, Dr. Hussein Mohammed Ahmed Eissa, President, and Dr. Sayed El-Sayed Elkouly, Chair of the Department of Management, Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt, visited with Ocean County College to discuss partnership opportunities. On Tuesday, Dr. Eissa, Dr. El-Sayed, and OCC representatives visited with Dr. Dawood Farahi, President of Kean University, and on Wednesday, the group traveled to the New Jersey Institute of Technology to meet with Dr. Joel Bloom, President.

The visit was quite informative and productive. Dr. Eissa and Dr. El-Sayed are anxious to pursue a wide variety of opportunities for Ain Shams students to study at OCC, Kean, and NJIT.

Business and Financial Affairs

➤ College Relations

➤ Alumni Donations to the Library

- A collection of theater books was donated to the Library in memory of Ms. Jane Lynn Wiklund '70 by her cousin. Ms. Wiklund was actively involved in theater at OCC and loved the College. The donation will be added to the Library's Performing Arts collection, and a plaque will hang in the Library honoring the donation in Ms. Wiklund's memory.
- Mr. Steven Doyle '79 has expressed interest in donating his rare and extensive chess book collection, which approaches close to 1,000 volumes, to OCC. Mr. Doyle has been active with the OCC Chess Club and Toms River Chess Club and has served as the President of the United States Chess Federation. Mr. Doyle has hired an archivist to begin the inventory process and anticipates a fall delivery to the College.



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- **Alumni Picnic** - The **2nd Annual Alumni Picnic** will take place at the **First Energy Park** in **Lakewood** on **Friday, August 28**. The **gates will open at 6:00 p.m.**, the **picnic buffet** is from **6:30 to 8:00 p.m.**, and the **game begins at 7:05 p.m.** The **Lakewood Blue Claws** will be playing the **Hagerstown Suns** from **Maryland**.

Tickets are on **sale** in the **Student Life Office**. The price includes the **picnic buffet, game seat,** and **fireworks: \$22 for adults** and **\$14 for children** ages 5-12.

The **first Alumni Picnic** last year was a wonderful **success**, with **approximately 150** in attendance **representing OCC**. If your schedule permits, please come for a fun evening.

- **Grants** – During **FY 2015**, the **Grants Office** submitted **17 grant applications**:
 - **Total amount requested - \$7,264,597**
 - **Total amount awarded - \$1,452,817**
 - **Total amount pending - \$4,975,496**

The College has been **awarded a \$50,000 grant, \$25,000** for each of **two years**, from **Investors Foundation** in support of the **College's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Academy**. The new **STEM Academy** will **encourage students** of all ages, from **kindergarten through high school**, to consider pursuing an **education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics**, which will assist in meeting the **increasing demand** for **employees skilled in these fields**.

This **award** will be **accepted** by the **Board** on **Monday**. We are very **grateful** that **Investors Foundation** recognizes the **importance** of **STEM-related education**. We will have the opportunity to express our **appreciation** on **Monday** when **Investors Bank representatives** join us to **present a check**. With us will be **Ms. Victoria Magliacane, Senior Vice President of Sales and Service; Ms. Cindy Dundas, Market Manager; Ms. Lisa Carta, Branch Manager; and Ms. Sandy Broughton, Community Development Officer**.



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➤ Information Technology

- **Updates continue** in accordance with the **grant awards** received in **2013** through the **Equipment Leasing Fund (ELF)**, **Higher Education Facility Trust Fund (HEFT)**, and **Higher Education Technology Infrastructure Fund (HETI)**:

Wireless infrastructure upgrades are **underway**. This project will **improve** the College's **wireless security** and will provide **wireless coverage** throughout the **campus mall** and the area surrounding the **Gateway Building**.

The **firewall upgrade** was **completed** successfully during **June**. This project also improves **security**, provides real-time **intruder detection and prevention**, and strengthens **protection** against **malware**.

- **Ocean Connect** is OCC's **new portal**; it **replaced Ocean Cruiser** as of **June 30, 2015**. With this new portal, all of OCC's **sites and services** will be **connected** with **one easy log-in**. **Mr. Hatem Akl, Chief Information Officer**, will provide additional information about Ocean Connect at the Board meeting.

The official **Human Resources website** has been **completed** and is now available on **Ocean Connect**. Much **positive feedback** has been received regarding its **content** and **usability**. **Ms. Jackie D'Amore, Human Resources Specialist**, will provide a brief **demonstration** of the **new site** at **Monday's meeting**.

➤ Facilities

The **Facilities Maintenance Department** initiated its **LED upgrade program** in **Parking Lot #1** last month; **52 parking lot lights** were replaced with **LED lighting**, which provides **better illumination**, requires virtually **no maintenance**, and is **cost-effective**.

At the start of summer, **Facilities Maintenance** implemented a **schedule** for **staff** to **paint** and **repair facilities** in need of **immediate care**. Working with **Ms. Debra Pfaff, Academic Administrator for the School of Language and the Arts**, through the **R25 space utilization program**, **classes** are being **relocated** to provide the **flexibility** to make the **necessary repairs**.

➤ Auxiliary Services

- **Ocean Happening Magazine**, an **online publication**, provides an **insider's view** of **Ocean County**. **Written by locals**, Ocean Happening shares **valuable insights** about **dining, culture, shopping, entertainment, and events**.



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Each year, a competition is held for "Ocean County's Best." This year, the Planetarium has been nominated by readers in the category of "2015 Kids: Children's Entertainment." Voting is going on now; the link to vote is:

<http://ocean.happeningmag.com/happeninglist/2015-kids-childrens-entertainment/>

- The Grunin Center for the Arts is presenting the Moon & Mars & Superstars on the main stage on Tuesday, August 4, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. Stories include the tale of Skylar Sunshine and Luna Moon, Timmy and the Telescope, and Mother Earth and the Milky Way. This program was written and will be directed by OCC's own Dr. Beth Willetts-Brierley, Associate Professor in Communications and Theater.

On Wednesday, August 5, 2015, at 8:00 p.m., young trumpet phenom (and Toms River native) Geoff Gallante will perform on the main stage. Mr. Gallante only seems to get better as he enters his teenage years. As his star continues to grow and he becomes more in demand around the country, this will be a great opportunity to see him back home.

- Ocean County College Foundation Scholarship Celebration – The OCC Foundation Scholarship Celebration held in June was extremely successful, netting over \$230,000 to support student scholarships. This year, a special scholarship pledge drive was held during the evening. I want to recognize and thank three OCC employees who made significant contributions: Mr. Paul Chalakani, College Lecturer II, Communications and Theater; Dr. Lisa DiBiseglie, Acting Vice President of Academic Affairs; and Ms. Bobbi Krantz, Part-Time Director of the Grunin Center for the Arts. This special pledge drive raised \$34,500, which the Grunin Foundation graciously matched, for a total of \$69,000.

Student Services

- Advising - The Advising Office has been proactive in reaching out to 166 students who have been sanctioned as a result of their poor academic progress. These students are restricted to registering for no more than 6-7 credits in Fall 2015.

Advisors personally spoke or met with nearly 30 percent of these students of academic concern. Conversations focused on identifying the causes for the students' difficulties; how to register for the Step-by-Step program, which assists students in getting back on track; the option of filing appeals; and Fall registration. Advisors left voice mail and sent email messages to students they were unable to reach by phone. These measures will, hopefully, encourage students to continue at OCC and improve their performance.



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- **Student Orientations** – New student orientations have been **running well** this **summer**. Students are **introduced** to the new **Student Planning** program and have been using it to **register** for their **Fall courses**. **Excellent feedback** has been received from students via the **student survey** at the end of each Orientation program. A **few examples** of these **positive comments** are:
 - The **advisors** were a **big help** in the **scheduling process**.
 - This was **very informational** and everyone working here today was very helpful!
 - Everyone was **exceptionally helpful** and I felt as though every new student got the attention that they needed. All the instructors were extremely **helpful, polite, patient, and understanding**. We all felt very accepted here at Ocean County College.
 - Every person at the student orientation was **super helpful**. Everything was **easy and useful**.
 - It was a **good orientation. Very informative and helpful**, especially in understanding the website and its functions.
 - Everybody was **very helpful**. I now understand how to register for my classes and what I need to take in order to get my degree.
 - **Wonderful and very helpful**, everyone was very **patient and kind**.

The total **number** of students attending **Orientation** this **summer**, however, is **down** from **last summer**. In an effort to **encourage students** to **register** for **Orientation** and **increase enrollment**, the **Advising Office** coordinated **outreach** to **students** who had been **invited** to, but **not yet registered** for, an **Orientation session**. The **Advising Office**, with support from the **Office of Admissions**, contacted **457 students** by phone. Of those **457 students**, they **spoke** with **178** and left **messages** for **214**. Students were **encouraged** to **schedule** their **Orientation**, and the **staff** was able to **answer questions** and **provide assistance**. This **effort** will be **repeated** in **August**, if needed, pending enrollment numbers at that time.

- **Student Planning** - The **Advising Office** will be coordinating **full implementation** of the **Student Planning program** during the **Fall 2015 semester** in preparation for **Spring 2016 advising and registration**. A **summary** of the **steps** to be taken by Academic Advising over the next **few months** follows:
 - **Testing** and **data validation** by the **Advising Office** will continue, with **IT** and **Academic Affairs** assisting to **address issues** and **ensure accuracy**.
 - **Collaboration** with **College Relations** regarding **specific communications** to campus stakeholders.
 - A **Training Plan** will be developed for **campus advisors, faculty, and students**.
 - In **September**, the **Advising Office** will begin **final preparations** for **campus-wide implementation**.



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- **Parent Orientations** - **Parent Orientations** have been **extremely successful** this summer. A total of **180 parents** have attended orientations so far, with **one program** remaining on **August 3, 2015**. **Feedback** on the events has been **excellent**. A few **examples** of the **positive comments** received are:
 - **Well worth coming** here - thank you.
 - **Wonderful and informative** program - thank you.
 - Appreciation for an **informative and enjoyable parent orientation**.
 - Orientation staff made it **easy to ask questions** and not feel intimidated.

- **Financial Aid**

Financial Aid continues to offer students **important information** regarding the **financial aid opportunities** available to them. They are **particularly focused** on providing **assistance** in **completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. A **FAFSA Workshop Series – Opening Pathways to Education Now** is offered throughout the year:

- **10 workshops** were conducted **servicing 167 attendees** in **2014**
- **8 workshops** have been conducted to date in **2015** **servicing 252 attendees**
- **3 additional workshops** are scheduled for **2015**
 - **August 8, 2015** – Last workshop prior to the start of the Fall semester
 - **October 24, 2015** – For students who decide after starting the semester that they need financial aid and for prospective Spring 2016 students
 - **November 7, 2015** – Last workshop for students to attend prior to the start of the Spring 2016 semester

In addition, students have available to them **Financial Aid TV – Digital Financial Aid Answers on Demand service** on the OCC website. These videos have proven to be **very popular** with students:

- **1,195 videos** viewed through **June 30, 2015**
 - **901 videos** viewed through presentations embedded directly into **Financial Aid web pages**
 - **294 videos** viewed directly through the standard **FATV portal site**
- **955 videos** viewed through **December 31, 2014**
 - **538 videos** viewed through the standard **FATV portal site**
 - **417 videos** viewed through presentations embedded directly into **Financial Aid web pages**