

# OCEAN VIEWS

A NEWSLETTER FOR OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE ALUMNI, OUR COLLEGE FAMILY, AND THE COMMUNITY

Summer-Fall 2015 ■ Vol. IX : No. 2

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Summer-Fall 2015  
Vol. IX: No. 2

A NEWSLETTER FOR OCC  
ALUMNI, OUR COLLEGE FAMILY,  
AND THE COMMUNITY

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## Vision Statement

The OCC Alumni Office develops  
relationships and establishes lifelong  
connections between Ocean County  
College and its alumni, family, and  
friends, leading to increased support for  
the institution's mission and goals.

## Mission Statement

The Mission of the OCC Alumni Office  
is to create and sustain meaningful  
connections with alumni that foster  
a mutually beneficial relationship of  
support and advancement for graduates,  
the institution, and the Ocean County  
community.

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## Veterans Memorial Rededication

[1] On Thursday, May 21, the College hosted a Veterans Memorial Rededication Ceremony on the Campus Mall. [2] Dr. Jon H. Larson, Ocean County College President, gave a hearty welcome along with introductions. [3-4] The Ceremony was attended by community members and College employees including those who proudly served in the United States Military. [5-6] The VFW Post 8867, Brick, presented the Color Guard, and The Rifle Squad Salute was given by the American Legion Post 129, Toms River. [7-8-9] Guest speakers included Lt. Col. Todd Randolph, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst; Dr. Richard W. Schneider, Rear Admiral, USCCR (Ret.), President, Norwich University; and Dr. Maurice Hill, Rear Admiral, USNR (Ret.). [10] Rich Gato, Commander, American Legion Post 129, Toms River, presented Dr. Larson with a "Good Neighbor" plaque. [11] The Ocean County College Concert Band performed the "National Anthem" and "Salute to the Armed Forces." Frank Richetti, United States Marine Corps League, ended the rededication with an emotional rendition of "Taps," a fitting tribute to the Veterans who lost their lives protecting the United States and for the men and women who proudly serve our country today. ■



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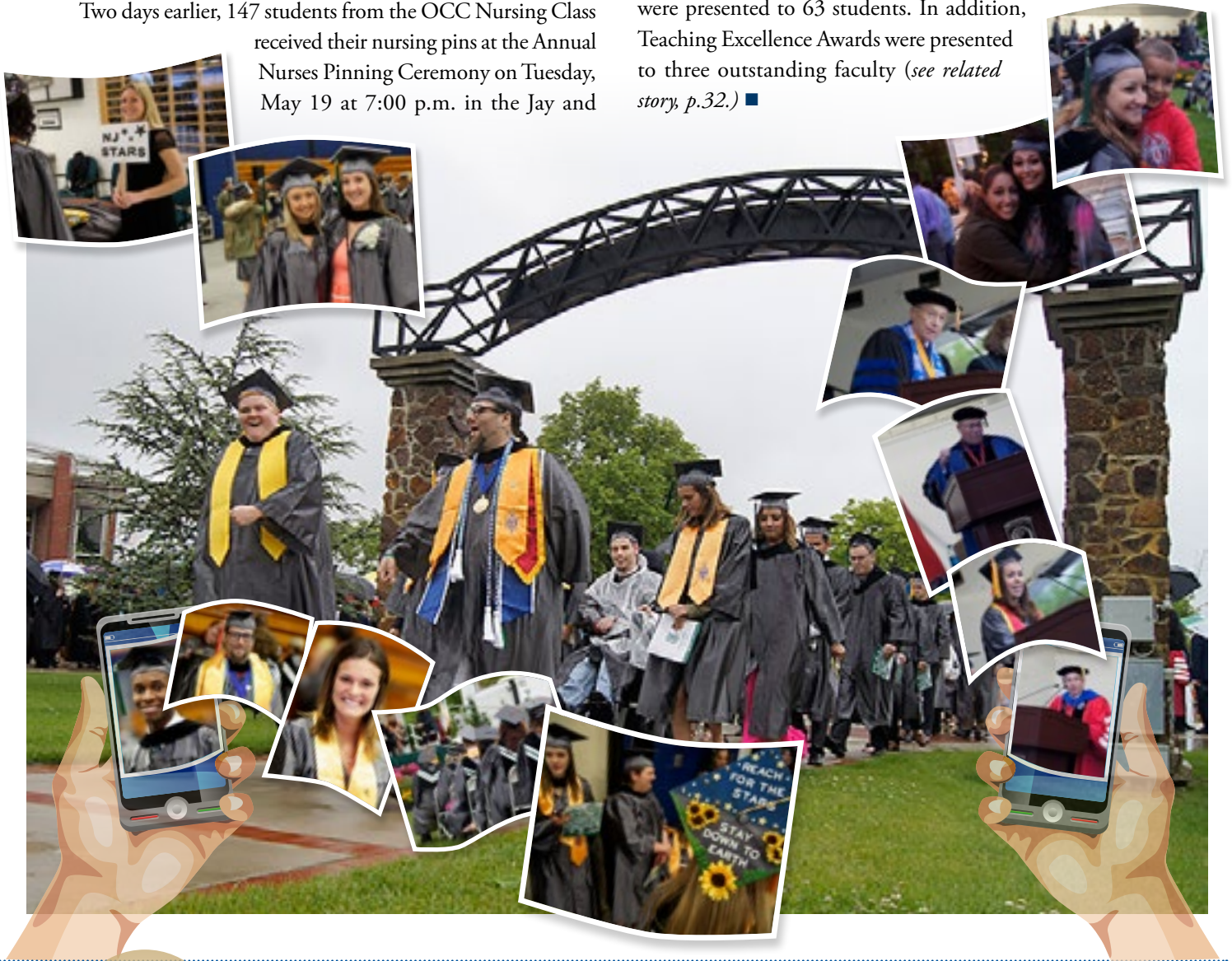
# Commencement Week Honors Graduates

One thousand five hundred and sixty-nine students received their associate degrees during Ocean County College's 48th Annual Commencement Ceremony on Thursday, May 21, at 6:00 p.m., on the Main Campus Mall. From the Class of 2015, Mariel Harrison delivered the "Student Remarks." Kevin Smith, OCC '72, Alumni Representative, gave the "Alumni Remarks." The Guest Speaker was Dr. Richard W. Schneider, Rear Admiral, USCGR (Ret.) President, Norwich University. Special announcements were made regarding the new STEM Building, a partnership with New Jersey Institute of Technology, and the naming of the new Student Center (*see related story, p.4*).

Two days earlier, 147 students from the OCC Nursing Class received their nursing pins at the Annual Nurses Pinning Ceremony on Tuesday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Jay and

Linda Grunin Center for the Arts. During the ceremony, special awards in Nursing were presented. "Dedications" from each of the Nursing graduates were printed in the program. Samantha Sabo, Brick, wrote, "I would like to dedicate my pin to my loving family. Thank you for always believing in me. I'd also like to thank the nursing faculty for being such amazing mentors."

The 48th Annual Awards Ceremony took place on Wednesday, May 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts. This annual ceremony recognizes OCC's outstanding student graduates. One hundred and three awards, totaling nearly \$50,000 were presented to 63 students. In addition, Teaching Excellence Awards were presented to three outstanding faculty (*see related story, p.32.*) ■



**Did You Know?**

At the Ocean County College 2015 Commencement Ceremony, **1,569** associate degrees were awarded.

As of 2015, there are **39,212** Alumni.



## STEM Spearheads the Future

According to Dr. Jon H. Larson, President of Ocean County College, New Jersey is seeing an ongoing increase in job growth in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, also known as STEM. However, the talent pool of college graduates majoring in STEM has not kept pace with current and anticipated job expansion.

As a result, OCC is spearheading a center for STEM Innovation, Education, and Business. Through this new center, along with strategic partnerships in education and business, including the New Jersey Institute of Technology, OCC will help to provide a talent pipeline to meet the growing demand for well-trained graduates.

The center will be named “The Joseph E. Buckelew STEM Building” and will be located on the Toms River campus in a newly designed state-of-the-art facility. “The Ocean County College Board of Trustees has chosen to honor Mr. Buckelew for his long-standing involvement in the enrichment of Ocean County. In addition, as a Board Member of the Ocean County College Foundation, Mr. Buckelew has been a tremendous supporter of the College,” Dr. Larson explained.

Among the College’s long-term goals, the Buckelew STEM Building will help to double the number of students majoring in engineering at OCC and increase student interest and participation in STEM-related research.

“This is an exciting endeavor certain to not only benefit Ocean County College students, but also the residents, and businesses, of not only Ocean County, but all of New Jersey,” Dr. Larson added. ■

## e-Learning Leaps into the Future!

**Parlez vous francais?** Ocean County College’s e-Learning team is rapidly expanding its online foreign language offerings with help from the world-renowned Rosetta Stone. The College’s foreign language instructors are creating online courses leading to the addition of 32 foreign language courses representing 24 different languages including English as a Second Language (ESL). In summer 2015, French, Italian, and Spanish were offered online; and in fall 2015, e-Learning will add Hebrew and Arabic. In 2016, plans are to offer courses in Russian, German, Chinese, Portuguese, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Swedish, ESL, Vietnamese, Hindi, and more.

**Innovators!** e-Learning’s two-year pilot program aimed at enhancing online remedial education is a success. By integrating the adaptive My Foundations Lab software, OCC’s online courses offer students individual learning experiences custom-tailored to their specific needs. The first round of

results reflects a significant increase in student achievement. The project has earned OCC the “Innovation of the Year Award” from the League for Innovation in Community Colleges (*see related story, p.33*).

**Putting Our Heads Together!** e-Learning is working to secure partnerships with like-minded four-year institutions offering fully-online degrees. Discussions are underway with Saint Leo University, Fairleigh Dickinson University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Arizona State University, and University of Alabama, Birmingham. In addition, e-Learning is working to secure corporate partnerships with a focus on companies that are open to providing educational benefits to their employees. Exploratory conversations have started with a number of companies, including CVS, Home Depot, Southwest Airlines, and McDonald’s. While still in the early stages of discussion, the company representatives find the concept appealing. ■

## Student Center Named



In 2014, the Ocean County College Board of Trustees announced plans for a new, state-of-the-art Student Center that would replace the existing College Center. As the College nears the completion of this impressive two-story building, a grand opening is expected in 2016.

This ultra-modern, amenities-abundant facility will provide OCC and Kean-Ocean students with a comfortable and appealing space to eat, study, see a performance, hear a lecture, and connect with their peers, faculty, and staff.

At the College’s Commencement

Ceremony on May 21, it was announced that the new facility will be named “The Jon and Judith Larson Student Center.”

“For 15 years, Dr. Larson and his wife, Judy, have dedicated themselves to promoting and bettering the College,” said Carl V. Thulin, Chairman, OCC Board of Trustees.

“Dr. Larson has been a student-centered College President who strives to ensure that Ocean County College provides the best educational experience possible for each and every student enrolled here. I can think of no other people who are more deserving of this special honor,” Thulin concluded. ■



# Study Abroad: Morocco



In summer 2015, Ocean County College, with support from a U.S. Department of Education Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program grant, offered Study Abroad in Morocco from May 24 to June 13. The program began with a week-long online orientation and introduction to the language and culture of the Middle East/North Africa. Participants flew to Morocco for an immersion program in language, culture, and history. Upon their return, participants engaged in a week-long online conclusion to the course, which was a time to reflect and share what they gained from the experience.

"The three weeks in Rabat, Morocco proved to be a rich experience for the students on the cultural, linguistic, and individual levels," explained Dr. Maysa Hayward, Dean of Instructional Outreach. "The students learned first-hand how to negotiate and appreciate differences in cultures as a point of celebration, not resistance."

While in Morocco, participants lived with Moroccan host families; engaged in language instruction; participated in field trips to local cultural institutions, art exhibits, musical performances, and historical sites; and had the opportunity to visit the country's beautiful beaches and excellent restaurants.

OCC students Ginnette Chaves, Elizabeth

McNeil, and Katie Labrutto enjoyed their time in Morocco immensely and took away with them a sense of community.

"To see how differently Moroccans value their families is really admirable," explained Chaves. "As a whole, their entire culture makes their individual members feel part of something much bigger, never with the sensation of being alone, which is something not only people from the west, but all over the world should practice. Over all, I hope to carry such beliefs with me for the long run."

"My trip has taught me so many amazing lessons that I would not have learned without being there," said Labrutto. "A lot of Moroccans I met spoke French and Arabic. It amazed me that many of the people knew more than one language."

According to McNeil, "The Moroccan people are warm and loving with good hearts. I will cherish the memories of my trip to Ifran forever and I will strive every day to show others the hospitality its people showed me."

Dr. Hayward summed up the student's Moroccan experience. "They unveiled their self-awareness on political, gender, and identity issues that affected how they perceive themselves and their future vision of a better world. What a fertile field for knowledge!"







## Championship Soccer Action!

**Save the Dates for the 2015  
National Championship  
Tournament!  
NOVEMBER 12-15**

For Group Tickets and Sponsorship Information,  
Call 732.255.0400 ext. 0345.



**WWW.OCEAN.EDU**

## Vans Roll Out in Style



As our students travel throughout the county, state and region, they will be riding in two new Ocean County College vans wrapped in impressive branding designed by College Relations Coordinator of Publications Scott Bruinooge. Wraps were designed for Athletics and Student Life vans. The photos on each van highlight the accomplishments of our alumni, athletes, and students. ■

## An Intern by any other Name

Emerging data shows the value of an internship in students' academic careers, as well as the long-term positive impact on quality of life, including social, community, professional, financial, and personal. Ocean County College has initiated two exciting internship programs designed to help both current OCC students and graduate students from upper division schools.

The "e-Learning Internship Program" provides interns with real-world, hands-on experiences within a national distance learning program. Interns rotate through the e-Learning Department, including master course development, curricular quality assurance, document management, marketing, student recruitment and retention, data mining, research projects, academics, and the student experience. Recent interns have conducted research projects, learned new technologies, and presented innovative solutions to aid e-Learning in student advising.

Elsewhere, OCC is working on expanding its internal Internship Program to include a wide variety of opportunities covering a diverse selection of disciplines. The Program allows students to gain professional experience while connecting classroom learning to the actual workplace. In addition, students can experience a prospective career path first-hand, build a professional network, and help make their resume stand out.

Jason Ghibisi, Lecturer of Political Science, coordinates the Program. Students will earn three college credits after completing 135 hours of work at a local business. Currently, there are more than 40 businesses and organizations that participate in the program and more are being identified.

During the course of a semester, each student will be mentored by an OCC faculty member. After completing an internship program, many students receive job offers following graduation. ■



## Arts on Campus

Academic Affairs has implemented an Arts on Campus project, thanks to a generous gift from Tom Zorojew, an OCC alumnus, entrepreneur, and active community supporter.

The Arts on Campus project highlights the talent of current Ocean County College students, to beautify our campus, to inspire future students, and to provide rich artistic experiences for our community members.

The first display in the Library Tower Room will remain for the rest of the 2015 calendar year. Exhibits will be displayed throughout the campus on both a short-term and permanent basis. Each year, a panel of faculty will select the best student artwork for each exhibit. As the project is expanded, community artists will also be invited to display their artwork on campus. ■



## Grants

By Rebecca Feiler White

Director of Alumni Relations, Development, & Grants

### The OCC Grants Office is happy to report several recent awards.

In April, the College was awarded three Student Success Innovation Grants totaling \$1,495 from the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges for professional development purposes. Grant awardees included Dr. Toni Clay, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, for faculty training and professional development to integrate best practices and supplemental instruction into “gateway” courses to improve student passing rates. Britni Epstein, a graduate Intern in the e-Learning Department, will use her grant for purchasing a professional development membership to SoftChalk.com for access to educational webinars on incorporating best practices in online course design and instruction. And Dr. Angel Camilo, Dean of Adjunct Instructors, will use the funding from his grant to strengthen the existing

library of adjunct training videos to provide a systematic support system that is readily available and accessible to adjunct faculty.

In May, OCC was awarded \$5,000 from the New England Foundation for the Arts to support artist fees for the show *The Power Goes*, performed by The Seldoms, a Chicago based dance company performing at the Grunin Center from October 23 to 24, 2015. *The Power Goes* is a multimedia dance theater work that uses the figure of Lyndon B. Johnson to explore the costs and benefits of power. But it is about far more than just LBJ, The Seldoms reveal how power is present in intimate exchanges and collective public actions alike, in the past and in the present. Make sure to visit [www.grunincenter.org](http://www.grunincenter.org) to purchase tickets for this critically acclaimed dance theater experience.

In June, the College was awarded a multi-year grant award from Investors Foundation, of Investors Bank. The Investors Foundation will grant OCC \$50,000 over a two-year period to support the development and implementation of OCC’s year-round STEM Academy for students of different ages, school teachers, and families from Ocean County. This program is designed to create awareness about STEM and engage elementary, middle school, and high school students in exciting hands-on experiences that will engender an interest and passion for STEM fields. The STEM Academy is an element of the emerging OCC Center for STEM Innovation, Education and Business to grow the talent pipeline in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics to meet the increasing demand for a qualified STEM workforce in New Jersey and beyond. ■







# KEAN OCEAN

Earn credits toward your bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree on the OCC campus with the Ocean County College/Kean University degree program. Kean University and Ocean County College have established a partnership, which enables area residents to complete upper division courses required for certain Kean University undergraduate degree programs and specific graduate programs on the campus of OCC.

## BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

- Accounting
- Biology
- Biology, Teacher Certification\*
- Criminal Justice
- Elementary Education\*
- English, Standard Option
- English, Teacher Certification\*
- Finance
- Graphic Design
- History
- History, Teacher Certification\*
- Management
- Marketing
- Nursing
- Physical Education and Health K-12, Teacher Certification\*
- Psychology
- Public Administration
- Sociology
- Special Education\*

\* (Teacher Dual Certification Options Available in Special Ed, K-6, or 5-8 Subjects. For details visit [www.kean.edu/KU/Kean-Ocean](http://www.kean.edu/KU/Kean-Ocean).

## GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

- Counselor Education  
(State certification for School Counseling)
- Nursing (with options in Clinical Management and School Nursing)

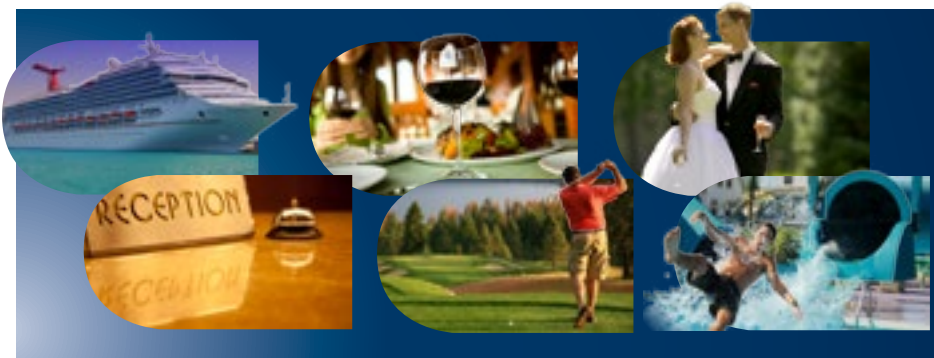
## DOCTORATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

- Nursing

## INFORMATION

732.255.0356 • [KeanOCC@kean.edu](mailto:KeanOCC@kean.edu).

## New Classes Focus on County's Service Industry



Ocean County College is offering a series of courses in Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Management, which provide instruction in hotel, travel, recreation, tourism, food and beverage, convention and meeting planning, facilities management, and related service industries.

According to Jennifer Evans, OCC Program Chair of Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Management, this is a developing industry and the need for educated, skilled employees is in demand and is expected to continue to grow.

"Ocean County College is centrally located within the beach counties of Ocean, Monmouth, and Atlantic counties, and is the gateway to New Jersey tourism, offering tremendous job opportunities for our students," explained Evans.

According to Evans, anyone considering a degree in Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Management should be a "people person," crave variety and excitement in their work day, and have a passion for food, travel, and special events.

"With an associate degree from Ocean County College, students can begin working right after graduation or can transfer to a bachelor's degree program in Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Management at a four-year school," she said.

Potential careers are plentiful whether students plan to work locally in Ocean County, statewide throughout New Jersey, nationally, or even internationally. For example, careers in travel might involve working on cruise ships. If fun and recreation are at the top of your list, trained personnel may find a position at a theme or water park. Other prospective careers may involve restaurants or catering; hotels; wedding, convention, and meeting planning; and facilities management such as golf clubs and gyms.

Students enrolled at OCC will learn to both provide superior service treating customers as guests and to develop marketing and sales techniques to use within their specific field. Students will enroll in a variety of courses related to their area of concentration including events planning; hospitality law; food, beverage, and labor cost control; and quality guest/customer service management; among others.

For more information contact Jennifer Evans, OCC Program Chair, at 732-255-0400, ext. 2821, or [jevans@ocean.edu](mailto:jevans@ocean.edu). ■

RoseAnn D'Urso, Editor  
Manager of Promotional Programming

Since colonial times, the warm and welcoming pineapple has served as a symbol of hospitality and friendship.







## Barnegat Bay Science Symposium Held at OCC

More than 130 individuals attended the Barnegat Bay Partnership's Science Symposium at Ocean County College on May 27 to learn about the latest Barnegat Bay research. The event focused on how science can be used to guide management decisions, build awareness, and improve stewardship to have the greatest positive impact on the Barnegat Bay and its watershed.

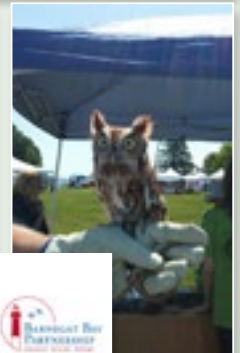
The Honorable Thomas MacArthur, Congressman from NJ-3rd District, welcomed everyone by sharing his own experiences as a boater on the bay and voicing support for efforts to protect its valuable resources. Congressman MacArthur is currently working on draft legislation that would provide a tax credit for developing and implementing plans to address non-point source water pollution.

The morning session examined "Human Responses to a Changing Environment." Dr. Rich Batiuk of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program Office discussed the role of science and monitoring in adapting to climate change, and Dr. Neil Ganju of the U.S. Geological Survey's Woods Hole Science Center talked about managing the future of critical natural features such as barrier islands, wetlands, and seagrass meadows. "How Can Science Inform Policy and Management Decisions for a Changing Bay?" was the topic of a lively panel discussion with experts representing government, academic, and private perspectives. In the afternoon sessions, scientists presented their research findings on the use of environmental indicators to assess the bay's condition and on the response of critical bay habitats (such as salt marshes and seagrass beds) to disturbances.

The PowerPoint presentations from the symposium are available on the Barnegat Bay Partnership's website at [bbp.ocean.edu/pages/383.asp](http://bbp.ocean.edu/pages/383.asp). Keeping the public informed about Barnegat Bay research and restoration projects through events such as this one is an important part of the Barnegat Bay Partnership's mission. The Partnership, one of 28 National Estuary Programs established to protect and restore the water quality and natural resources of nationally significant estuaries, is sponsored by the EPA, Ocean County, and Ocean County College. ■

## A Fun Festival Day for All

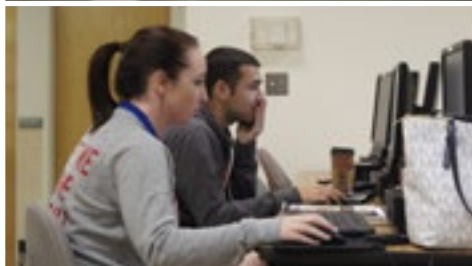
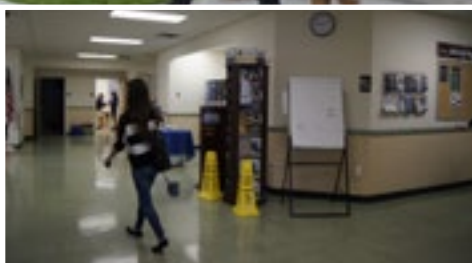
The 18th Annual Barnegat Bay Festival was held on June 7 at the Wanamaker Complex in Island Heights. Visitors learned how to protect and preserve the Bay, all while having fun! More than 60 environmental organizations were on hand and activities included canoe eco-tours; pontoon, kayak, and paddle board rides; aquatic touch tank, seining, and children's crafts; a native plant sale and eco-friendly vendors; along with music and food. ■



*Thanks to photographer John Bendel ("Kites," "Cute Dog," and "Enjoying the Music") along with the BBP staff ("Owl Perch" and "A Bird in the Hand") for photos.*



# 15 Years at the SEC



It's been almost 30 years since Dr. Richard Parrish took the first steps towards building the Southern Education Center (SEC) in Manahawkin.

As Vice President of Research, Planning, and Development, Dr. Parrish was charged with envisioning the future growth of Ocean County College. Although his primary focus was the College's Main Campus in Toms River (*which, at that time, had only 12 buildings*), he saw the need to extend educational opportunities to the citizens of southern Ocean County, home to a growing population and three large regional high schools. In a county with limited public transportation, the 20 miles between Toms River and Manahawkin represented an almost insurmountable distance for a significant part of the County.

Dr. Parrish did the legwork, looking at projected population growth and polling local schools and businesses. He then wrote a comprehensive, 73-page report detailing the need for a southern "branch campus." The research was valid, public opinion was favorable, and Stafford Township passed a referendum to convey 11 acres to the project. Now, substantial funding had to be secured.

That was made possible in 1994 by a \$1.6 million grant from the Higher Education Facilities Trust Fund. (*At that time, it was the largest single grant that OCC had ever received.*) It would be enough to construct a seven-classroom structure, initially

accommodating both credit and non-credit courses. Construction began in 1999.

In fall 2000, OCC opened the SEC at 195 Cedar Bridge Road in Manahawkin, at a site adjacent to Southern Regional High School. Dr. Parrish's original vision was now a one-story brick building of 19,175 feet containing seven classrooms, a computer lab, some offices, and a student lounge with vending machines. Dr. Jon Larson, OCC's new President, presided over opening day ceremonies. The SEC was an immediate success – approximately 500 students enrolled in 28 classes during that first semester.

The SEC staff, under the direction of Dr. Judith Icklan (*then OCC Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development*) endeavored to bring as many services as possible to students, who could register for courses, schedule advising appointments, avail themselves of testing services, buy and sell their textbooks, and make tuition payments from the central office. A small lending library was filled with donated textbooks, and lectures and special events were scheduled.

SEC students were also able to enjoy a small offering of Student Life activities, while completing their entire associate degree without ever leaving Manahawkin. Many students developed a strong loyalty to "their" campus, and helped to beautify the structure with donations of original art. Perhaps most significantly, students planted a small memorial garden honoring Dr. Icklan after her untimely death in 2008.

It was Dr. Icklan who brought a different partnership to the SEC. In 2005, OCC and the Ocean County Vocational Technical School District (OCVTS) signed an agreement to form the Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science (MATES). Ground was broken on adjacent land, in 2005, creating a mutually beneficial relationship. A career academy administered by OCVTS, MATES brings a different population of students from

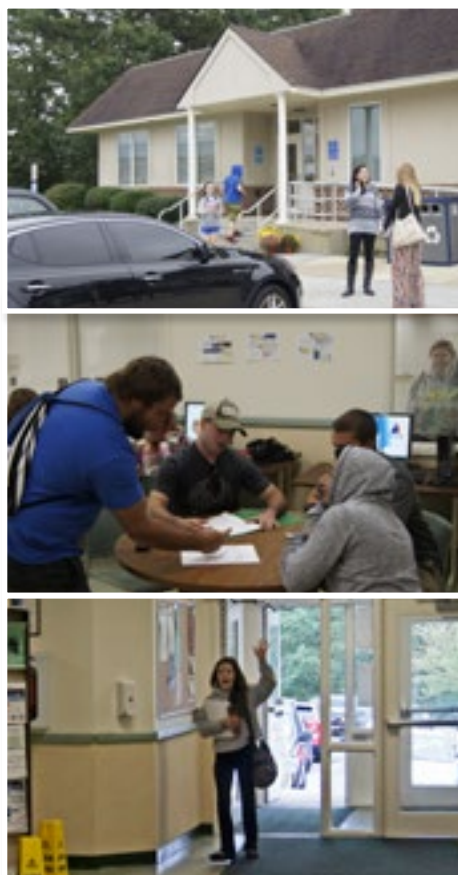


throughout the entire county, and high school students are able to take OCC classes in their junior and senior years through the Jump Start Program, while SEC students use the MATES science labs.

Today, SEC students consistently make up more than 10% of OCC's total enrollment – just as Dr. Parrish had predicted.

According to Sabrina Mathues, Director of Off-Campus Programs, these students are served by a dedicated on-site staff and supported by remote-access resources offered through several Main Campus departments. Mathues explained that the SEC maintains on-site staff including a student services supervisor, evening/weekend supervisor, security technician, and an enrollment management technician. “The faculty and staff who work at the SEC wear many hats, and take personal interest in and responsibility for everything from the well-being of the students who attend here to the condition of the building and grounds,” Mathues said. “This dynamic group well-represents the benefits of cross-training, open communication, and the type of flexibility and reliability necessary to lead a satellite location.”

SEC's student and enrollment services are available to all OCC students, even those who do not take courses at SEC/MATES. Enrollment services include, but are not limited to academic and transfer advising, basic financial aid counseling, course registration, transcript services, and payment processing.



Additional services include, but are not limited to student activities and events, social media campaigns, student groups/clubs, and student life initiatives, such as the sale of discounted movie tickets.

Jeff Kurz, Supervisor of Student Services, indicated that “The SEC provides a unique learning community for students to begin their academic journey and to find their lifelong passions.” Kurz coordinates a range of student activities and events, social media campaigns, student groups/clubs, and student life initiatives.

The SEC's intimate facilities offer students direct interaction with staff and professors. Thomas White, SEC student, was initially influenced to attend the location for the convenience and enjoys the welcoming atmosphere. “The staff is always available to help students with anything from planning classes to loaning pens out. Mr. Kurz and Ms. Mathues are very open to hearing feedback from students,” said White.

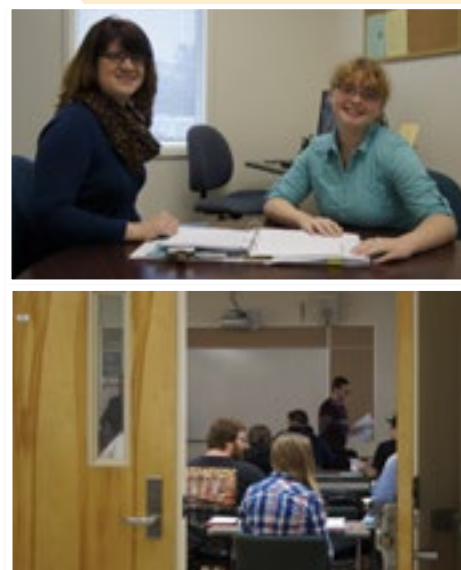
During the spring 2015 semester, White and several other students in an English class taught by Barbara Roshak, Adjunct Associate

Professor of English, arranged a dialogue with the SEC staff to share feedback on their experiences. White remarked, “The next week almost everything we discussed and suggested was implemented!”

In the 2014-2015 academic year, the SEC worked hard to expand activities for students and the community. Beginning in September 2014, the SEC held Welcome Week events for students and provided an Evening Coffee Session where professors volunteered their time to speak with students. Throughout the fall semester, several other events were held to encourage student participation and community engagement such as the OCC Completion Project, a community blood drive, and a Veteran's Day Event that included a drill performance by the Southern Regional High School ROTC. In spring 2015, the SEC offered speakers and presentations in honor of Black History Month and Women's History Month, the first \$1 lunch special on St. Patrick's Day, Instant Decision Days with Stockton University and Kean University, and a Transfer Fair with six institutions. A special element of these activities is that they also connect with what is happening in Toms River; this keeps the Main Campus and SEC united. Regardless of which campus students attend, they are experiencing the unique and quality services OCC has to offer. ■

**Dr. Marilyn Kralik**, *College Lecturer II of Humanities*

**Rebecca Feiler White**, *Director of Alumni Relations, Development, & Grants*





## Outstanding Students Represent PTK

Two officers of Ocean County College's Tau Iota Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society of two-year colleges, were honored during the spring 2015 semester.



Tau Iota President Kayla Burciar was named a Silver Scholar for the 2015 Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team. She received a \$ 1,250 scholarship and was recognized at Phi Theta Kappa Day in Trenton in May.



Christina Vardouniotis, Tau Iota Vice President of Publications, was named a Distinguished Chapter Officer at the Middle States Regional Convention in March 2015. At most, three

chapter officers are selected for this honor each year out of approximately 600 Chapter Officers in the Region.

"We are fortunate to have these outstanding students representing Ocean County College on the regional and international level," said Dr. William J. Rickert, OCC Professor of Mathematics and Tau Iota Chapter Advisor.

## Alumni Volunteer Request

Join our "Profile Project" with English 152 Students!

This is a great opportunity to connect with current students and share how OCC helped you succeed.

Contact Rebecca Feiler White  
rfeiler-white@ocean.edu.



## Student Lobbying Day

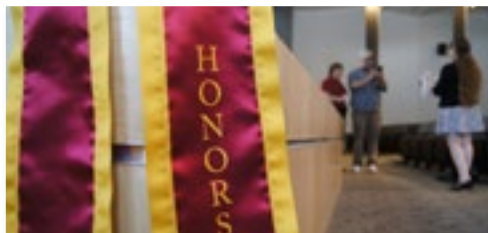
Ocean County College students participated in Student Lobbying Day held in Trenton on March 9, which was organized by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges.

Representing OCC were students Austin Greitz, Davina Resto, Jason Rodd, and Jean Paul Steinberg. They were accompanied by Team Leaders, Jennifer Fazio, Director of Student Life, and Elaine Schardien, NJ STARS Coordinator.

Students had the opportunity to informally connect with legislators and

policymakers as meetings were held with representatives from Ocean County's legislative districts. They learned about the type of support the College receives and were able to share issues of importance to our sector.

Students met with Assemblyman David Wolfe, Assemblywoman Dianne Gove, Senator Samuel Thompson, and Senator Kip Bateman. The students were also invited to attend several meetings and hearings that were in session, including the State Assembly. ■



## Contracts Honored

The Honors by Contract Program was officially launched in the spring 2015 semester; 100 student contracts were signed. Some of those students participated in a half-day Scholarly Horizons Honors Conference on May 5 on the Main Campus. The Conference honored outstanding academic excellence demonstrated by Ocean County College students in the program. The OCC Foundation Board provided more than \$3,000 to recognize the top graduating scholars along with their faculty mentors, who were selected by a faculty committee.

The Honors by Contract program allows students to work directly with faculty in developing creative and challenging projects in a wide range of courses including mathematics, science, business, computers, humanities, social science, and much more.

By participating in the Honors by Contract program, students will earn the designation of an OCC Honor Student thus receiving greater opportunities for scholarships from four-year colleges and universities.

Prize winners included from the School of Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics (STEM) – Christopher Etler '15 (\$500) and David Etler '15 (\$500) with mentor Michael Pezzimenti, Associate Professor of Mathematics (\$200); from the School of Arts & Humanities – Leigh Fisher '15 (\$1,000) with mentor Heidi Sheridan, Assistant Professor of English (\$200); and from the School of Business & Social Sciences – Jean-Paul Steinberg '15 (\$1,000) with mentor Jennifer Barnes, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Social Science (\$200). ■



# Alumni in the Arts

**On the occasion of signing into existence the National Endowment for the Arts, Lyndon Johnson, 36th President of the United States, remarked, “Art is a nation’s most precious heritage. For it is in our works of art that we reveal to ourselves, and to others, the inner vision which guides us as a nation.”**

“The arts,” former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan emphasized, years later, “are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity. What is there that can transcend deep difference and stubborn divisions? The arts. They have a wonderful universality. Art has the potential to unify. It can speak in many languages without a translator. The arts do not discriminate. The arts can lift us up.”

Dr. Terry Bergeson, Johns Hopkins University Superintendent of Public Instruction, pointed out, further, that arts *education* “not only enhances students’ understanding of the world around them, but it also broadens their perspective on traditional academics. The arts give us the creativity to express ourselves, while challenging our intellect. The arts integrate life and learning for all students and are integral in the development of the whole person.”

Many Ocean County College alumni were, and are, students, pursuers, and practitioners of the arts – music, painting, writing, sculpture, photography, media, multimedia – and will attest to the significance of creativity in their lives and work.

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“Art ... is such a wonderful communication device with multigenerational application: the fleeting thoughts and feelings of artists, over hundreds of years, are given a greater degree of permanence through their artistic creations (encoded symbolically in the substance of the medium, to be interpreted through the given conventions of the medium), bequeathing to the present age a vast wealth of imagination and insight to build upon for the creation of a better and more artistically dynamic future,” said alumnus Brian Joseph Blackmon '07, a self-taught artist who actively writes prose and poetry; illustrates in pen and ink, and pencil; paints in acrylic on canvas or wood; sculpts in clay; creates mixed media collages; and utilizes photography.

Blackmon produces original books through his *Neptune City-Saturn Town Press* publishing imprint. “These works are very art-centered regarding their plots and recurring cast of characters,” he explained. “For example, my most popular character – the Beatnik Fox – actually requires immersion in an artistic environment for his wellbeing: his mythical race dwindles day by day as art sadly fades from the human heart (due to cutbacks in afterschool arts programs).”

The Beatnik Fox – first introduced in OCC’s student newspaper *Viking News* – “derives needed sustenance from art exposure,” said Blackmon. “I created this aspect of the character’s background as a way of emphasizing the importance of art to my readership.”

Blackmon recently released a book of original paintings, photographs, and sculptures called *The Beatnik Fox’s Second Fashionable Number*. He is also busy composing what he hopes will be a modern type of epic poem, entitled “Freedom is Ink on the Page” – which he will also illustrate – about art and the positive influence of art on life, providing background on the Beatnik Fox and his sister Tawney.

As a student at OCC, Blackmon stated, “In addition to a few memorable literature courses and a history of modern art class, I had two articles published in the *Viking News* during my final semester at OCC, one of which was an interview I conducted with Canadian cartoonist Greg Hyland. A painting I did of The Beatnik Fox was published in the *Viking News* as well, and was the print debut of that character.”

“I’ve always been very proud that I was able to have his introduction connected with Ocean County College, a place that had such a huge impact on me,” he remarked.

While at OCC, Blackmon also had essays published in the English Department’s literary magazine, *Pen*; participated in the College’s Speech and Theater Competition, placing first in the “Persuasive Speech Category”; and also took first in a Phi Theta Kappa essay competition.

Blackmon credits four OCC instructors in particular – John Lehotay, Karen Veselits, Beth Sara Swanson, and the late John Morrison – for their kindness and support. “These teachers truly believed in me and my ability, and it is their encouragement, con-

current to the encouragement of my parents, which will always be with me, and which makes the supposedly intimidating prospect of putting my art out there for others to view not such an intimidating occasion at all,” said Blackmon.

After graduation from OCC, Blackmon earned his Bachelor’s degree in business administration, then an MBA, from Monmouth University. As he explained, “I’ve always planned to self-publish my own books, and felt that a degree in business would give me needed preparation for that often-elusive economic aspect of the art/publishing world.

“While the exciting and experimental process of creating art is very rewarding, my favorite part of the whole art experience is the chance to share my work with others,” he continued. “My greatest hope as an artist is that by putting my work out there, others will be inspired and encouraged to try art for themselves. I believe that art is a vital force in life: a force for peace, love, compassion, and all the other high ideals possible in the human spirit. The more art, the better.”

Blackmon’s advice for current OCC students considering the arts as a profession is this: “Never take rejection seriously; it is only up to the artist to decide the true merit of their own work, for it is the artist who creates the goal which inspires the work, and therefore is the only authority regarding the degree of success achieved through the completion of the work. Interpret each new art piece as an additional step taken toward further improvement, and accept and celebrate any perceived faults inherent in your style or execution, for faults are unique and individual and create a distinctive voice. Always believe in yourself, and get your work out there as soon as you can: you never know the positive and lasting impact the addition of your artistic presence can create.”







## Musician & Teacher

Similarly, professional jazz musician Brian Betz, who graduated from OCC in 1998, stated, “My advice for an individual that wishes

to pursue a career in the arts is to stay focused and follow your passion. A successful life in

the arts requires incredible discipline and perseverance. The hard work will pay off and is unequivocally worth it.”

Betz’s affinity for music is life-long, he explained. “I began studying guitar at age six, and when I was 14, began studying jazz. I could not imagine a life without music.”

As an OCC student, Betz played in the Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Gerald Ridsen. He has fond memories of that group, as well as of his piano and music theory classes with Karin Gargone.

After receiving his associate degree, Betz earned a Bachelor’s in Music, and then a Master’s of Music, from Rowan University. “OCC,” he noted, “was the gateway that helped me pursue my studies at a four-year university.”

In addition to his career as a jazz guitarist, Betz also works as a music teacher at Paulsboro Public Schools and an adjunct professor of music at Rowan University.

The talented musician has released seven jazz CDs for the Dreambox Media Record Label, out of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and he performs all over the country – concerts, master classes, and clinics.

And, this summer, Betz and saxophonist Denis DiBlasio are set to release a new CD project.



## For the Love of Art

Alumna Stephanie Shestakow agrees. “I always saw OCC as the center of arts offerings in Ocean County,” she said. Shestakow is a 1996 graduate of OCC’s Liberal Arts Honors Program who studied art history and was part of the OCC Theatre Company, as well as the Student Senate.

“It is important to be involved in arts initiatives on campus and gain experience,” she added. “Try taking classes in visual arts; don’t worry about the end result, but focus on exploring the world through art.”

After OCC, Shestakow received a Bachelor’s degree in art history from Barnard College, Columbia University, followed by a Master’s degree in art history from the University of London.

When she returned to the United States from England, Shestakow taught classes at OCC, then worked at various museums. After taking a job at Teachers College, Columbia University, she studied art and museum education, interned in the education departments of several museums in New York City, and earned a Master’s in art and art education.

Shekatow’s current work – as an academic advisor for Temple University’s Center for the Arts – bridges higher education and the arts. Previously, at The College of New Jersey, she worked in Student Affairs, but always actively promoted the arts on campus.

“I’ve always loved the arts since childhood; it is a means of expression unlike any other, especially the visual arts,” she commented. “My study of visual arts gave me a strong sense of visual literacy and the arts have always provided a means of self-expression. When looking at the revitalization of cities, it requires the arts. Arts are used to regenerate an area, by giving another perspective and providing dimension to our lives. The health of a culture is measured by how healthy the arts are. Art is not just in big cities;

there’s something local in your town to invest your time in.”

Shestakow currently resides outside Philadelphia, but said she would love to return to New Jersey at some point. “I always think about working at OCC again,” she stated. “I value the College so much, and I think it provides students with a strong foundation.

“I loved my time at OCC. I had excellent professors,” she noted. “I was getting a four-year experience at a two-year school. It gave me a great foundation to transfer to Columbia.”

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## It's a Wonderful World

Ricky Riccardi, OCC Class of 2001, also works as a musician, as well as an archivist. “Since I was a kid,” he explained, “I was fascinated by film and music and I knew I wanted to be a writer by the time I was in high school. Art moves me, whether it’s a live musical performance, a great piece of writing, a memorable theatrical production, or a memorable film or television experience.

“To me, the arts are more important than ever today. Future generations are going to need great musicians, great writers, great actors, great singers, etc., otherwise we’ll just have generations of folks staring at photographs of food on social media and calling that an exciting way to spend an evening!”

During his two years at OCC, Riccardi was editor-in-chief of the school newspaper and the yearbook, and, in addition, he hosted a student radio show on WOCC. “In every medium, I figured out a way how to promote the arts,” he pointed out. “At the *Viking News*, I started a weekly jazz column that won multiple statewide awards for arts and entertainment writing. I actually continued writing the column two years after I graduated. And as a pianist, I played dozens of events on campus.

“I tell people all the time that my years at OCC were two of the most important years of my life,” Riccardi added. “My jazz column in the newspaper solidified my desire to write about the music I love. I had a lot of fun playing jazz over the airwaves of WOCC, which helped as I do many radio interviews to this day. I loved that the college supported the Midweek Jazz series. I was a longtime fan of it before I took it over in 2013.

“Also, I was a member of the Honors Program, which mandated each student write an extended ‘research paper.’ I wrote 125 pages on Louis Armstrong’s later years, which became the core of my master’s thesis and, eventually, my book. And some of my greatest memories are playing the piano on campus and meeting other like-minded musicians.”

Following OCC, Riccardi earned a Bachelor’s degree in

journalism and a Master’s degree in jazz history and research, both from Rutgers University. He now works as an archivist for the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Queens, New York. He is also the author of *What a Wonderful World: The Magic of Louis Armstrong’s Later Years*.

“Louis Armstrong’s music changed my life when I was still in high school,” said Riccardi. “Today, I’m not only archivist for the Armstrong House but I have produced Armstrong reissues and written liner notes for them for Universal, Sony, Mosaic Records, and other labels. I have also given lectures on Armstrong around the world: the Satchmo Summerfest in

New Orleans, the Monterey Jazz Festival, the Bristol International Jazz and Blues Festival in England, the Piacenza Jazz Festival in Italy, and many more.

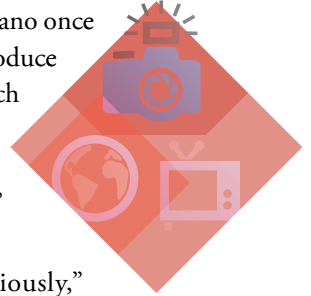
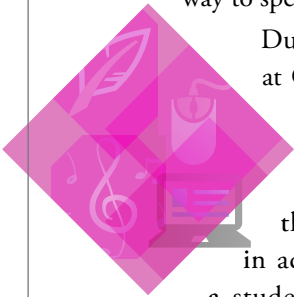
“I have also been playing the piano since the age of seven, and continue to play around New Jersey, as well as having experience playing in New Orleans and New York City.”

Riccardi spends most of his time giving lectures, presentations, and interviews on

Louis Armstrong. He also performs on piano once or twice a month, and he continues to produce OCC’s monthly Midweek Jazz series, which brings top jazz and swing artists to campus. “It’s quite a thrill bringing these wonderful musicians to my hometown,” he remarked.

“Take your time at OCC very seriously,” Riccardi advises students interested in the arts. “Some people only look at it as a two-year stepping stone. But in my two years, I honed my writing skills, won statewide awards, played many wonderful piano gigs, hosted a radio show, and made many lifelong friends. And all of that was outside of the classroom.

“You have to keep your grades up and take your classes seriously,” he continued, “but if you’re serious about the arts, OCC has great opportunities to explore writing, music, acting, and so much more, at an environment that is frankly more inviting and supportive than at larger four-year schools.”





## An Artistic Vision

"After taking an arts course at OCC, I realized how important it was to continue exploring the art making process," said Vellus Campbell, a 2007 graduate. "I began to expand and create using new mediums that I never would have tried had I not been exposed to them."

"The art phenomenon, to me, is so important because it is the greatest link between love and the human spirit. It draws people from different worlds together. It enhances our surroundings and captivates us in ways that are unimaginable. It moves us (sometimes to tears). It makes our lives fuller and richer. It is healing, spiritual, and therapeutic."

There are not too many things in life that affect us so profoundly!" she said.

Campbell now works as Activities Director at Liberty Royal Rehabilitation and Health Care Center. "Luckily," she remarked, "I am able to use my creative skills!"

Her personal life, too, is informed by artistic vision. "I love drawing portraits, painting, crocheting, doing papier mâché, and making 3D pieces," Campbell stated. "I also enjoy making jewelry, clothing, and taking photos."

"I am currently working to unveil a project called 'Tales from the Heart,' " she added, "which involves people telling stories that are inspirational, heartfelt, or humorous. In exchange for their stories, I will draw a portrait of them. All aspects of the project will be caught on film and can be viewed on YouTube."

"I am also in the process of making some really cool multimedia art!"

Campbell believes that students considering jobs in the arts should "continue to think outside of the box, and be flexible, not only with respect to your craft, but in general. The world that surrounds us is a manifestation of someone's vision and art, so if you apply the same techniques that you'd use to create an art piece in regards to life's challenges, you'll always come out ahead."



## From Theater to Radio

Alumnus Jeff Smith, a broadcast engineer for iHeartMedia NYC, pointed out, "My personal and professional life requires a great deal of 'out of the box' thinking. I need to be creative in solving problems. I need to have a creative eye when designing a studio, both to be functional and visually appealing."

Smith earned his associate degree from OCC in 1992, and received a Bachelor of Arts in communication from Monmouth University two years later.

While a student at OCC, Smith was involved in "the tech side of productions" for the theatre, handling scenic work and sound design. "Working with someone as technically creative as (Fine Arts Technical Supervisor) Judi Madigan allowed me to see that the behind-the-scenes work was just as rewarding artistically as being on stage," he noted.

Now, he explained, "I work in radio, which is definitely an artistic endeavor. As an engineer I am responsible for all the technical needs."

Currently, he added, he is working on artistic projects that comprise audio processing and studio design.

More than two decades since he began college, Smith says to current students imagining a life in the arts: "Be passionate. There is no easy way or quick way. If you are passionate about what you want to do, you will succeed." ■



Juliet Kaszas-Hoch  
Staff Writer



# All in the Family

## OCC Alumni Legacies

**Family traditions are the basis for transferring knowledge, culture, and rituals. For several families, attending Ocean County College has become a shared tradition that provided a pathway to meaningful accomplishments and long-lasting relations.**

family





**Courtney Nelson '00**  
**George Eitel '04**

George Eitel began at OCC while working for United Water Toms River; he enrolled in a two-semester course for advanced water treatment. Eitel was so impressed with the College he decided to continue taking courses part-time to pursue a degree in social services. During this time, his daughter, Courtney Nelson, was preparing to enter college. She applied to many schools and decided to attend OCC on a full scholarship in the Honor's Program.

Nelson and Eitel shared the experience of attending OCC at the same time. Eitel indicates that "Because I attended before my daughter started college, I felt she would benefit from the quality education offered by OCC."

Nelson felt she was familiar with some of the demands of college life because her dad started at OCC a few years before she did. "It was a unique opportunity to relate to my dad as a student, both trying to balance work, school, and home life at the same time. I also really enjoyed sharing some 'school' moments with my dad like his induction into the honor society and having his support when I ran for student government president."

While they both attended OCC at the same time, they took different approaches, utilizing the flexibility OCC offers students with varying needs. Nelson was a full-time student, taking classes throughout the day and was actively engaged on campus. Eitel attended part-time, taking classes at night. Even though they didn't attend classes together, Eitel was happy to have the opportunity to vote for his

daughter for student government president.

Both Nelson and Eitel feel they received a great education at OCC and are fond of the experiences they had at the College. Nelson claims that "OCC was the best decision I could have made for myself. It gave me a great start in my college career and really helped set me up for success upon graduation – with less debt!"

After completing an Associate in Arts degree in Liberal Arts with honors from Ocean County College, Nelson continued onto Rowan University where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications with a specialization in Public Relations and a minor in Women's Studies. She is presently the Regional Director of Communications at the American Heart Association.

Nelson received recognition for her work after Superstorm Sandy from the New Jersey chapter of the Public Relations Society of America and the Jersey Shore Public Relations and Advertising Association. Additionally, she received the American Heart Association 2013 Rome Betts Awards for Staff Excellence in recognition of her contributions in communications throughout her tenure with the organization. Nelson was also inducted into Rowan University's PRSSA Hall of Fame in spring 2014.

Nelson resides in Lower Bucks County in Pennsylvania with her husband, two-year old twins Rosie and Samuel, and dog, Lucy. Eitel is happily retired and living in Toms River.

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## John Vermeulen '80, Eric Vitale '94, Monica Vermeulen '99

Being a part of the OCC community has been a long-standing family tradition for John Vermeulen, his wife Monica, and her son Eric Vitale.

It all started with Monica's mother, Pat Howlett, who was an OCC employee for many years. Vitale remembers being on the campus as a child with his grandmother, "It always felt comfortable to me, I knew the campus and people in administration." This connection benefitted Vitale several years later when he became a student, as he was able to get some inside help with identifying classes and professors.

John was the first to graduate from OCC in 1980, then Eric in 1994, and Monica in 1999. John and Monica's daughter, Ashley Lauren Vermeulen, attended OCC in 2005 and transferred to Stockton University in 2006.

As students, son Eric and his mother Monica were involved with OCC's Tau Iota chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society for two-year colleges. Vitale was Vice President and a few years later his mother took on the position as President. "My mom took it to a whole different level!" Vitale said. And as her son, he probably does have a slight bias but several faculty members and staff at OCC agree that Monica took her involvement and commitment to the college seriously and was a stellar student and leader. Even after graduating, Monica has maintained an active role in the PTK Tau Iota Chapter and served as the Alumni Representative on the OCC Board of Trustees.

Both mother and son feel that having a family member who also attended OCC was a major benefit. They agreed that it was helpful to have someone in the family who could be a guide and was willing to share valuable information. Monica said that "One teaches the next in a family. If you have a good experience, everything falls into place and then you bring up the next member in the same manner.

As a result, we all had great experiences at OCC."

After OCC, Monica transferred to Stockton University where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Non-Profit Management with a focus in Pediatric Cancer and graduated Summa Cum Laude. Being a cancer survivor herself and a parent of a cancer survivor, Monica established

the Ashley Lauren Foundation to ease the journey when pediatric cancer is diagnosed by providing direct financial, material, and emotional assistance, along with many programs developed to bring smiles to the children. Since establishing the Foundation, members of the OCC community have been significant supporters of the organization, helping to support the annual Harvest Party, a fun-filled day of activities for children affected with cancer, which was initiated on the OCC campus. "My mom is true inspiration in every sense of the word. I am so proud of her, who she is, and what she does. She is the best," Vitale said.

As a professional photographer, Vitale has been involved at OCC, most recently capturing photos at various Grunin Center concerts. During his time as a student, Vitale was very involved in the theater program and learned so much, especially from Judi Madigan, Fine Arts Technical Supervisor. Madigan reached out to him to photograph a series for the Grunin Center, which initiated his visit back to OCC for the first time in over ten years. "It was amazing to reconnect," Vitale said, serving

as photographer for performances by Sutton Foster, Emerson String Quartette, Rhythm in the Night, and Chanticleer.

When reflecting on the value OCC has had for their family, both Vitale and his mother recognize how the college served as a great jumping off point for them. Monica feels "OCC was the total community college experience that you do not get at a four-year school. The education we all received was solid and provided tremendous preparation for moving onto the next level. I can't say enough about the positive experiences our entire family had at OCC. Attending the College is an experience I would recommend to anyone."



Photo courtesy of Borella's Greasy Pictures





## Agnes (Aggi) Springsted-Hage '74, Phillip Springsted '79, Megan Springsted '87, Julie Springsted '87, Matthew Tutela '15

The Springsted family reflects two generations and five OCC graduates. Quite impressive!

Twins Phillip and Aggi started off the tradition. For them, OCC was affordable and close to home so they could continue to work while attending. "Coming from a family of six children, our parents didn't have the money to send us to college, so we all had to work and go to college at the same time to pay the tuition and support ourselves."

The other family members also attended OCC for economic and convenience reasons. Julie (niece to Aggi and Phillip) was interested in becoming a teacher and attended OCC because she knew that she could transfer easily to Glassboro State College (*now Rowan University*).

Matt (*son to Megan*) followed his mother's example, "I knew OCC had good academic programs so I decided to save money and live at home with the plan of transferring after I graduated." And Matt will be doing just that! He will be attending Stockton University, in fall 2015, to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Accounting. Matt also credits his mom with giving him the confidence to make this decision.

Even though the family's experiences at OCC span across 40 years, there has been an interesting occurrence of having the same professors. Julie and Megan both took Dr. Kozaur for history, Dr. Byrne for sociology, and Prof. Showalter for math. Megan and Phillip both had Dr. Alderfer and Prof. Love. And the most

incredible pairing is that Megan and son Matt both had Prof. Schwartz for business management, 29 years apart!

When reflecting on the value OCC had for the family, they all agree that "OCC opened the door for us to get a quality education that was affordable. We valued not only the degrees we received but the great professors that made us enjoy learning," Megan said.

Not only were Aggi, Phillip, Megan, and Julie, the first generation in their family to go to college, all five family members continued on with their education.

Aggi graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Glassboro State College (*now Rowan University*) and has been a medical technologist at Community Medical Center-Barnabas Health in Toms River for 38 years.

Phil attended Richard Stockton College (*now Stockton University*) and has been a facility manager for over 29 years and presently works with the NJ State Police.

Julie earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Glassboro State College and was a special education teacher for 15 years. She said "when my children are college age, they will be going to OCC!"

Megan earned a Bachelor of Arts from Thomas Edison State College and has worked at OCC for 26 years. She is currently the Assistant Director of Admissions. And as noted earlier, Matt will be attending Stockton University in the fall.



**These three families represent the growing trend of OCC Alumni Legacies. *Ocean Views* looks forward to continuing to feature stories of family members across generations who studied at Ocean County College and had great experiences. If you and your family would like to be included in a future "All in the Family" story, please email [rfeiler-white@ocean.edu](mailto:rfeiler-white@ocean.edu). ■**

Rebecca Feiler White, *Director of Alumni Relations, Development, & Grants*



## PTK Scholarship Pays Off for Alumna

**T**oms River resident Christina Nixon was awarded the Rutgers University Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Scholarship. Nixon's outstanding academic record at Ocean County College earned her this prestigious award totaling \$16,000 (\$8,000 per year for two consecutive years of study). This scholarship honors high-achieving community college transfer students who are members of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

"I'm really excited," said Nixon on winning the scholarship. "There are just 50 awards and you think about the fact that Rutgers is world renowned. All my hard work paid off. It makes me feel good about what I did."

The 29-year-old Nixon completed the requirements for an associate in science degree in Humanities at OCC in December 2014 and enrolled as a full-time student at Rutgers University for the spring 2015 semester. Nixon plans to double-major in history and anthropology with a minor in religion. After completing her Bachelor's degree, she'd like to continue studying and work towards a PhD.

In a letter to Nixon, Deborah H. Epting, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management at Rutgers University, wrote, "The entire Rutgers University community joins me in welcoming you to the university and congratulates you for achieving such a stellar academic record."

The scholarship is renewable for an additional year of undergraduate study provided Nixon continues as a full-time student at Rutgers and maintains a 3.0 or higher cumulative grade-point average and makes satisfactory progress toward her Bachelor's degree.

"I'm not at all surprised that Christina has received such a distinguished award," said Dr. Marilyn Kralik, College Lecturer II of Humanities at OCC. "She burns with passion and curiosity, and intends to take the academic world by storm – not only ultimately earning a PhD, but also hoping to do it in an entirely different country and culture."

"I'm also not surprised that she is pursuing history, anthropology, and religion. These interests were obvious over two semesters in my art history course, where Christina was the catalyst for many sparkling discussions, both in and out of class."

"Christina works hard; she writes like a dream; and she has very clear goals. Sometimes, it's just humbling to know that we at OCC have helped an individual of such potential and accomplishment," Dr. Kralik added.



Pamela S. Donohue, Assistant Director of Advising at OCC, also has high praise for Nixon. "It was a pleasure to work with Christina in the Advising Office during the fall 2014 semester. She is enthusiastic and goal-oriented. Christina learns quickly and was a true asset to the Advising team. Christina worked diligently to attain a 3.9 GPA and was rewarded with a prestigious scholarship to Rutgers University. I know she will be a success as she works toward her Bachelor's degree."

A non-traditional student, Nixon started college at a later age than traditional students right out of high school. "I made some very interesting choices early on," Nixon mentioned. "Then I started working and making money and thought I didn't need to go to college." But then Nixon's father passed away, she moved in with her mother, and things changed. "That gave me more opportunity to go to school."

While studying at OCC, Nixon worked in computers as a contract freelancer fixing computers for large brick and mortar stores. She'll continue working and said she is commuting from Toms River to New Brunswick and staying in a hotel three nights per week while going to school at Rutgers.

What does Nixon think of going to school at Ocean County College? She ended by simply saying, "I loved every second of it." ■

**RoseAnn D'Urso**, *Editor*  
Manager of Promotional Programming

## Non-Traditional e-Learning Grad Makes the Grade

As a mother with a newborn daughter and a full-time job, Andrea Duncan struggled to get to campus at the college she was attending in Washington, D.C., following high school. Although she had always been determined to better her life through higher education, Duncan's many commitments at home and work led her to frequently miss class.

Eventually, Duncan realized that online courses offered the flexibility she needed to fit school into her schedule.

In her search for an online college, Duncan discovered e-Learning at OCC, and was impressed with the broad range of classes she could select to complete an associate degree entirely from her computer.

Finally, as an e-Learning student – and with equal parts of time management, discipline, and hard work – Duncan was able to successfully juggle her education, her job, and her daughter.

OCC's online courses provided a supportive environment for students, with invested educators at the helm of each class. The e-Learning instructors, Duncan emphasized, were integral to her success at OCC. "The professors were all great and always offered students assistance," she explained. "Everything was organized and the school was very responsive in a timely manner. That was very helpful, especially because I live in Washington, D.C."

Duncan's last semester was especially challenging, with weekly labs and strict deadlines for a tough course in microbiology. But Duncan persisted. "It was hard, but I was determined to graduate," she remarked.



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## NJ STARS Alumna Soaring at NAVAIR

"What are you doing after graduation?" is a common and often overwhelming question for students completing college. But Kimberly Rutledge '12, was able to give an impressive answer even before taking her final exams as a math major at Stockton University. Rutledge was hired as an Operational Research Analyst in the Cost Department at NAVAIR and began her first "real job" on June 29.

As a student at Ocean County College, Rutledge was actively involved in the NJ STARS Club and served as club president in 2011-2012. When asked about her path to success, Rutledge gives a lot of credit to NJ STARS Coordinator, Elaine Schardein. "When I first started OCC, I wanted to study psychology. I met with Elaine for an advising session and she noticed that I was doing really well in calculus and encouraged me to pursue a math degree," she said.

After Rutledge graduated, she and Schardein remained in contact. Every winter break, Schardein organizes a volunteer activity for the College's NJ STARS students and alumni as a way for the group to stay connected and give back to its community. In January 2014, the group volunteered at a Soup Kitchen in Seaside Heights, NJ, and Schardein had an opportunity to advise Rutledge on her upcoming job search. Schardein reached out to Lisa Heuser '87, Supervisor/Site Leader of the Cost Department at NAVAIR in



Lakehurst, who stated there would be job opportunities in the near future and recommended that Rutledge search for positions on USA Jobs. Working at NAVAIR is highly competitive, but after Rutledge applied, she was selected out of a national pool of applicants.

To prepare for the prospective opportunity, Schardein worked with Rutledge on her resume and interview skills. "My mom and I set up a mock interview session from questions available on Stockton's Career Center website so I could practice my interview skills. This was helpful and gave me an opportunity to think through how I would respond to specific questions that would demonstrate I had the technical and interpersonal qualifications for the position. But I was still extremely nervous on the day of the interview!" Rutledge admits.

However, Rutledge was able to overcome her nerves and rise to the occasion throughout the interview process. Within a few weeks after the interview she was offered the position. "I felt so fortunate to have a job in place before graduating and it is such a prestigious position!" she exclaimed.

It seems that Rutledge's hard work paid off. Everyone at OCC is proud of her accomplishment. We wish her the best of luck as she begins a new career. ■

**Rebecca Feiler White**  
*Director of Alumni Relations,  
Development, & Grants*





ANDREA DUNCAN  
continued from p.23

When graduation day arrived, Duncan was excited to attend; she felt a great sense of pride as an OCC student. “This is my school, and I’m taking pride in my school,” she noted. “I had a great experience.”

Now, as an equally proud alumna, Duncan can reflect on how she changed – and improved – as a student once she began her studies within OCC e-Learning. Prior to that, Duncan stated, she would do just enough to pass. In comparison, as a more independent e-Learning student, she pushed herself harder, working towards maintaining a 3.0 GPA. And, if she began to disregard her coursework even slightly, Duncan’s professors, and her e-Learning counselor, would keep her on her toes by contacting her if they noticed she hadn’t logged into a course or posted on a discussion board in several days. “I knew I would be held accountable for participating,” Duncan explained.

All in all, Duncan added, as an online student, she “always felt a part of OCC. That’s what I really liked.”

Duncan is the first college graduate in her family, and she is proud to be a role model for her sisters and daughter. She has had to work hard, and overcome many challenges, but she was determined to graduate and set a new pattern of options for others in her family and community.

As Duncan remarked, “I am not going to stop fighting until I get to where I want to go.” ■

Juliet Kaszas-Hoch, Staff Writer

## Alumna Got Her Start "Down South"

Leigh Fisher ’15 embodies the success and achievement possible for students at Ocean County College. She took advantage of the small class sizes and engaged with all of her professors, embarked upon opportunities for advancement, and got involved with student clubs available at the College, making her mark as a trailblazing student and alumna.

As a Manahawkin resident, Fisher started her first year of classes at the Southern Education Center. The SEC was accessible as a location and she soon learned that the sense of availability expanded into the classroom and with student services. “The SEC has such a community feel and is very inclusive,” Fisher said.

In addition to taking classes at the SEC, Fisher also served as a student worker and assistant. As she entered her second year, Fisher ventured onto the Main Campus in Tom River and eagerly enrolled in several courses in the Honors by Contract program. “I love literature,” Fisher explained. “I took as many English courses as I could at OCC, which was between 23 to 27 credits.”

Fisher is the type of student all professors hope to encounter in their career. She is extremely bright, self-motivated, immerses herself in coursework and has a positive and kind personality.

Graduating with Honors and 73 credits (*nine credits over the required 64*), Fisher completed her associate in arts degree in General Studies, concentrating in Humanities. Her overall GPA was a 3.98. She was also awarded the Scholarly Horizons Award from the School



of Humanities, served as editor for *Seascape*, and was an active participant in two different honors clubs, Phi Theta Kappa and Sigma Kappa Delta.

Fisher proudly walked at OCC’s Commencement Ceremony in May 2015 but completed her coursework in December 2014 and began taking courses at Stockton University in spring 2015. She remains connected to OCC as a part-time Enrollment Management Technician in the Office

of Registration and Records on the Main Campus. Eric Daniels, OCC Registrar, said, “It is one thing to be an OCC alumna and want to work at your alma mater. It is another to be among the best and the brightest and to have a passion for helping others succeed, as well.”

It is no surprise that Fisher is majoring in literature at Stockton University and is aggressively pursuing her studies, taking 20 credits a semester with the intention of graduating in just three semesters. Over the summer, she took a digital humanities internship and enrolled in a research fellowship focusing on the Three Kingdom Period in China. “My dream is to attend Princeton for my Master’s, studying comparative literature with a focus in Chinese literature and history,” she said.

Fisher’s professional ambition is to be an English professor and everyone who has had the privilege of working with her knows that she will reach her goals. *Ocean Views* looks forward to reporting more on her future successes! ■

Rebecca Feiler White  
Director of Alumni Relations,  
Development, & Grants





**Bethanna Abate '09** completed her first year at New York Law School and pursued two internships during the summer to provide her with experience toward her goal of practicing Immigrant Law. The first was working with a Family Court judge in Monmouth County and the other was with the organization Safe Passage in New York that provides immigrant children facing deportation with legal counsel.



**Adam Binder '03** has made a name for himself as a leading expert in the field of digital marketing since launching his business, Creative Click Media, several years ago. Creative Click Media, a full service digital marketing firm, uses a multi-disciplinary approach to advertising that brings together cutting-edge web design, responsive social media management, eye-catching graphic design, and promotional video production to generate award-winning results. Binder was recently named as one of New Jersey's "Best of the Best Under 40" by the Jersey Shore Public Relations & Advertising Association (JSPRAA) and was recognized as one of Ocean County's top

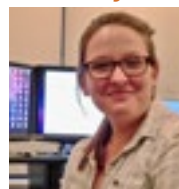
"Movers & Shakers" by the magazine *Ocean Happening*. Binder is also a proud member of the Greater Toms River Chamber of Commerce, Stafford Chamber of Commerce, and Southern Ocean County Chamber of Commerce; and donates his time and talents to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ocean County and the American Cancer Society, among others. Binder credits the guidance and instruction he received while attending OCC for helping to build the educational foundation that allowed him to not only pursue his dreams, but to do so on his own terms.



**Tim Moore '76** has taken a position as the Manager of Community Engagement and Economic Development Programs for North Carolina's General Administration (UNC-GA) in Chapel Hill in the International, Community, and Economic Engagement (ICEE) office. His department helps the Board of Governors oversee 17 University of North Carolina system campuses state-wide. One of his major responsibilities is to help all UNC campuses expand on experiential learning opportunities (i.e., internships, co-ops, clinicals, practica, student teaching, field experience, etc.) for approximately 220,000 students.



**Reverend Chaplain James Occhipinti '87** was selected to receive the 2015 John A. Price Award, Excellence in Chaplaincy. This prestigious honor recognizes his dedication to law enforcement chaplaincy. In addition, he was recognized by the International Conference of Police Chaplains for his years of dedicated service and ministry to law enforcement in Ocean County. Rev. Occhipinti is the Ocean County Police Chaplain serving the officers of the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office, Sheriff's Department, The Police Academy, and Fraternal Order of Police.



**Lindsay Rassman '11** accepted a job offer as a Web Production Assistant at NJTV News. Lindsay has also been conducting freelance work, filming plays, sweet 16s, and music videos.



**Samantha Williams '15** was awarded three \$1,000 scholarships from the New Jersey Broadcasters Association. Williams will be attending Montclair State University in the fall 2015 semester. ■

## EXPRESS UPDATE

The Alumni Office is eager to update our records to ensure we have your accurate contact information and communication preferences. Please complete this form online at [www.ocean.edu/alumni.htm](http://www.ocean.edu/alumni.htm) or fill out this "Express Update" form and mail it back to our office. Your time and participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Name (first) \_\_\_\_\_ (middle) \_\_\_\_\_ (last) \_\_\_\_\_

Name at Graduation (if different) \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Mailing Address: Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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### COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES:

☐ Paperless (electronic communications via email ONLY – including *Ocean Views*)

☐ Keep As Is (electronic communication via email AND paper mailings via post office)

☐ Traditional (paper mailings via post office ONLY)

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## 2015 OCC Foundation Board Members

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Heather S. Barberi  
*Executive Director*

## Scholarship Celebration a Huge Success!

The Ocean County College Foundation netted over \$225,000 at its 2015 Scholarship Celebration on June 20. The annual event was held in the Health and Human Services Performance Center on the OCC Main Campus in Toms River.

The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation received the prestigious Humanitarian Organization of the Year award in honor of its outstanding support of the arts, education, and health care in Ocean County (*see related article below*).

The evening's major sponsor was Investors Bank. "Sincere appreciation is expressed to Investors Bank, and the many generous sponsors and supporters who allow us to continue to enrich the lives of our students," said Heather Barberi, Executive Director of the OCC Foundation. "We are truly thankful for the outpouring of business and community support for our students."

The evening's festivities included a gourmet buffet, live entertainment, a silent auction, and scholarship pledge drive. More than 200 guests were treated not only to live music by The ASAP Band, but also to a theatrical performance by the

OCC Repertory Theatre Company directed by Paul Chalakani, College Lecturer II of Communication and Theatre. During the scholarship pledge drive, which raised nearly \$70,000, due to the generosity of guests and a dollar for dollar match by

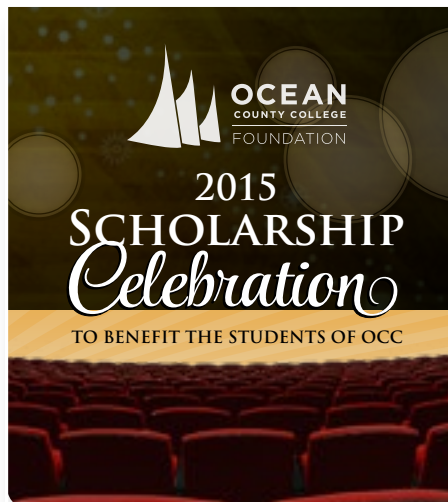
The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, two former OCC students, RJ Norcia '10 and Mariel Harrison '14, shared their incredible stories of determination and how the Foundation assisted them in achieving their educational goals through scholarship funds.

This year's Scholarship Celebration was co-chaired by Kenneth J. Malagiere (Toms River), owner of Narcissus Florals, and Domenick M. Servodio (Toms River), Vice

President of Government Banking at TD Bank. Both are members of the OCC Foundation Board of Trustees.

The Ocean County College Foundation is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to the growth and development of the College through scholarships, endowments, and capital and special projects. ■

RoseAnn D'Urso, Editor  
*Manager of Promotional Programming*



JAY & LINDA  
**GRUNIN**  
FOUNDATION

## 2015 Scholarship Celebration Honoree

The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation is a proactive grant-making 501c3 working to make Toms River the regional template for quality of life and strong economic health through root-cause focused investments in health care, education, and the arts. The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation will accomplish its mission through three signature programs: Engage Toms River, Elevate Toms River, and Impact Toms River. Since 2013, over \$10 million has been committed to the community.

In 2014, The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation made a \$5.75 million donation to Ocean County College, the largest gift in the College's history. The gift established The Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts on the Main Campus, and transformed the performing and visual arts at the College and in the community.



2015  
**SCHOLARSHIP** *Celebration*  
TO BENEFIT THE STUDENTS OF OCC

HONORING



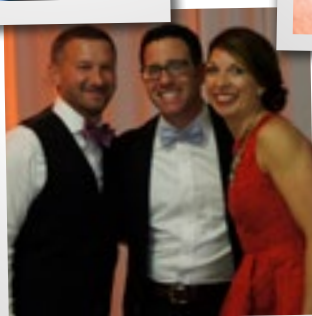
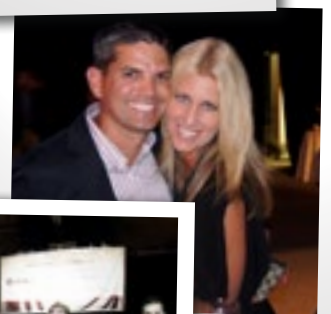
JAY & LINDA  
**GRUNIN**  
FOUNDATION

For its Outstanding Support of  
the Arts, Education, and Health Care  
in Ocean County

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## A Delicious Way to Raise Scholarship Funds!

The Ocean County College Foundation partnered with Jersey Mike's in Silverton to host a fundraiser for student scholarships. Over 200 patrons stopped in throughout the day to help raise over \$500 dollars to support OCC students.

"Community enrichment is a core value of Jersey Mike's," said franchise owner Kevin Smith. "From our founder and CEO Peter Cancro, to our newest team members, we strive to give back to the communities we proudly serve."

And give back they did! Twenty percent of sales from the April 16 fundraiser were

donated to the Foundation's Dollars for Scholars campaign, which is dedicated to raising funds to broaden the base of our scholarship program and provide much needed support to the College. The OCC community truly came together – students, faculty, administrators, coaches, and staff members stopped in to show support and help raise money. Smith stated they were up almost 5% from last year's transactions on the same day!

In addition to the April event, Smith has been actively involved on the campus. During Welcome Week he donated free sub coupons to students and faculty. He also donated lunch for several OCC events including the

National Junior College Athletic Association's National Soccer Championship Tournament, 3 Sails Jazz Festival, and select Grunin Center performances. In addition, during Spring Day, Smith and his team held a fundraiser for an OCC student battling cancer.

"We are truly grateful for the philanthropic support and generosity of the Jersey Mikes Franchise System, and all our supporters who help make a difference in our student's lives," said Heather Barberi, Executive Director of Ocean County College Foundation. ■

**Sherri Bray**

*Manager, Special Events & Development*

## New Foundation Trustees Named

Congratulations go out to the four newly elected members of the Ocean County College Foundation Board of Trustees in 2015. Linda L. Novak, representative from the OCC Board of Trustees; Arvo Prima, President, Prlma Corporation; Paul J. DeMartino, MD, FACG, Associates In Gastroenterology, PC; and Noelle W. Lotano, Executive Director, Greater Toms River Chamber of Commerce. ■



## New Online Scholarship Platform

The Ocean County College Foundation recently launched its new online scholarship platform, AcademicWorks, the leading provider of scholarship management solutions for institutions of higher education. This online solution will help to improve the compliance, stewardship, and utilization

of scholarship funds, as well as improve the process for students, donors, and the campus community. The online solution officially launched on April 20 for the fall 2015 semester, and will house all the Foundation's scholarship opportunities – including academic and study abroad. ■

### SAVE THE DATE!





**OCEAN  
COUNTY COLLEGE  
FOUNDATION**

*Please Note the New Autumn Date!*

## 14th Annual GOLF OUTING

**Monday,  
September 28, 2015**

**Pine Barrens Golf Club • Jackson, NJ**

For more information, contact the Foundation Office at 732.255.0492 or visit [www.ocean.edu](http://www.ocean.edu)





## 100 Women Campaign Launches

Recently, women from across Ocean County came together to help launch the Ocean County College Foundation's **100 Women Campaign!** The evening event took place on the College's Toms River Campus in the Black Box Theater, Grunin Center. The launch was sponsored by Investors Bank.

According to Heather Barberi, Executive Director of the Ocean County College Foundation, the mission of the "100 Women Campaign" is to bring together dynamic, innovative, and accomplished women who will support each other's life and career goals, share their insights and experiences, and encourage education through Ocean County College.

"In less than six months, the Campaign has brought together over 100 incredible women in the community who are passionate about education and giving back," Barberi said.

Over the next five years, the goal of the "100 Women Campaign" will be to raise its first \$50,000 in order to retain and reward talented students, in both STEM-related (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and general academic disciplines at Ocean County College through scholarship support.

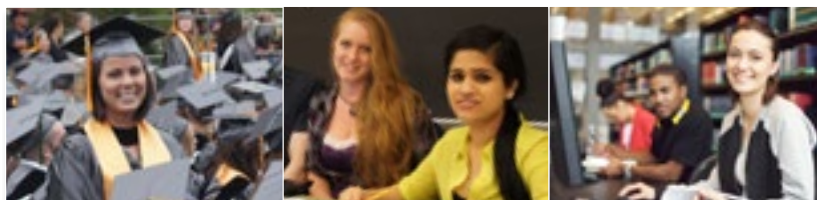
"Additionally, these students will be mentored throughout their tenure at Ocean County College," Barberi continued. "This type of support is known to have a tremendous impact on the lives of students, creating a positive, crucial difference in ensuring their future success."

The "100 Women Campaign" also seeks to provide an avenue for connections to be made among the women, and networking events will take place throughout the year.

"This was such an incredible night, not only for Ocean County College and the Foundation, but for Ocean County," said Barberi. "The passion and excitement surrounding this campaign from the start has been amazing and we are looking forward to great things in the future."

For information on the "100 Women Campaign," an application to become a member or contributor, or a scholarship application for students, visit [www.ocean.edu/100women](http://www.ocean.edu/100women), or call Heather Barberi, Executive Director of the Ocean County College Foundation, at 732-255-0400, ext. 2534. ■

RoseAnn D'Urso, *Editor  
Manager of Promotional  
Programming*





### Senior Art Exhibit

The 39th Annual Ocean County Senior Citizens Art Exhibit was held in June at the Jay and Linda Grunin Art Gallery on Ocean County College's campus. The exhibit was an opportunity for visitors to surround themselves with the beauty and emotion that art is meant to illicit.



Artwork was created by talented professional and non-professional artists, 60 years of age or older, who are residents of Ocean County. Displays included acrylic, craft, draw-

ing & prints, mixed media, oil, pastel, photography, sculpture, and watercolor. Entries awarded first place were eligible to enter the New Jersey State Senior Citizens Annual Juried Art Contest and Exhibition. Over the years, many Ocean County artists have gone on to achieve recognition at the state show.

Sponsors of the Ocean County Senior Citizens Art Exhibit included OCC's Senior Art Advisory Committee, Office of College Relations, and the Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts, along with the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Ocean County Office of Senior Services, and the Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission. The Reception Sponsor was Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield, Blue to You. ■

### Senior Living Expo



The 5th Annual Senior Living Expo was held in the College Gymnasium on March 19 and brought over 600 people from the community, primarily seniors, to the campus for an informative and interactive day.

The Expo showcased over 70 local and state-wide businesses. Attendees received health and wellness screenings from Community Medical Center/Barnabas Health, and information on active living services and financial planning. In addition, the Expo featured free food samples from local restaurants, door prizes, and giveaways.

Major sponsors for the event included New Jersey Natural Gas, AAA, Community Medical Center/Barnabas Health, and Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, Blue to You. ■

### The official Bed & Breakfast for Grunin Center performers and artists.



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## ANTICIPATED PERFORMERS 2015-2016 SEASON

### Singer Songwriters

Art Garfunkel  
 Danny Aiello  
 Peter Yarrow  
 Bronx Wanderers  
 Rave On! Salute to Buddy Holly  
 The Skivvies  
 Neil Diamond Tribute  
 A Night with Remember Jones  
 The Basement Musician: Men in Black  
 1910 Fruitgum Company

### Musical/Theater

Adam Pascal and Daphne Rubin-Vega  
 Nunziata Brothers: Broadway Our Way  
 National Players presents  
 "A Tale Of Two Cities"

### Country/Folk

Home Free • Paper Bird  
 De Temps Antan

### Classical

Canadian Brass • Vienna Boys Choir  
 Cameron Carpenter • Salut Salon  
 Westminster Concert Bell Choir  
 Philadelphia Gay Mens Choir  
 Julia Lima • Chelsea Wang

### Jazz

John Pizzarelli • Tom Wopat  
 The Brubeck Brothers  
 Renee Marie • Mid-Week Jazz

### Dance

Alvin Ailey II • ABT Studio  
 Pradhanica • The Seldoms  
 Alborada

### Family

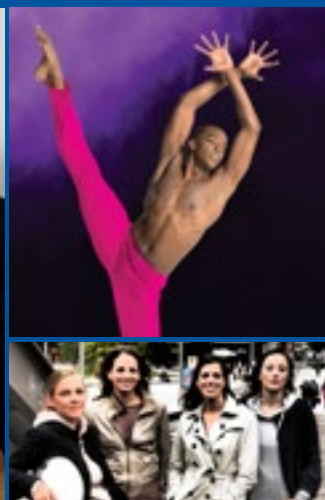
The Golden Dragon Acrobats  
 Yates Musical Theatre's  
 "A Christmas Carol"  
 Ballet F or Young Audiences:  
 "The Nutcracker"  
 Theatre IV Presents:  
 "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea"

### OCC School of Performing Arts

OCC Band • Repertory Theater

### Performing Partners

Garden State Philharmonic  
 Ocean County Performing Arts Academy



**2015  
2016  
SEASON**

Jay and Linda  
**GRUNIN CENTER**  
 FOR THE ARTS

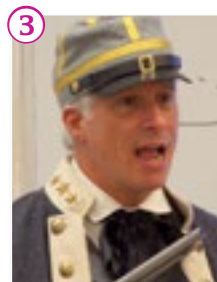
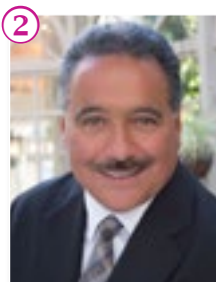


**Dates • Full Schedule • Tickets**  
[www.grunincenter.org](http://www.grunincenter.org)

**Virginia Chinni, Marilyn Knight, and Sally Tumminelli**, all CPE Health Care Instructors, earned the credential Certified Medical Reimbursement Specialist. In addition, the staff of **Continuing & Professional Education** – NJ's Business Action Center (BAC) presented a seminar, "NJ Resources for Business Growth," followed by business-to-business networking in February at the Lakewood Strand Auditorium. OCC participated by hosting the event with the Lakewood Development Corporation, the NJ Manufacturing Extension Program, and the Ocean County Workforce Investment Board.

Three faculty from the School of Language and the Arts were selected as National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Scholars from a national applicant pool to attend summer programs that provide faculty an opportunity to work collaboratively and study with experts in humanities disciplines. **Dr. Jennifer Dellner**, Professor of English and Literature, was one of 28 professors selected to attend an "Advanced Topics in the Digital Humanities Summer Institute" in Eugene, Oregon. This institute will develop a national community of practice among community college faculty in history, English and writing, classics, and other humanities disciplines. **Dr. Marilyn Kralik**, College Lecturer II of Humanities, was one of 25 professors who participated in "The Alhambra and Spain's Islamic Past," a four-week program in Granada, Spain. NEH scholars studied archival resources and used the magnificent 13th and 14th-century

Alhambra palace complex to examine firsthand its architecture, gardens, and courtyards as a means of exploring the culturally complex history of Muslim-Christian relations in Europe. **1 Robert Marchie**, College Lecturer of History, was one of 25 professors chosen to participate in "Slavery in the American Republic: From Constitution to Civil War" in Washington, DC, and Charlottesville, VA, with study tours to Mount Vernon and Monticello. This institute provided a multidisciplinary perspective on slavery in America.



**2 Michael Forcella**, Manager of Business Engagement, was appointed to the Ocean County Tourism and Business Advisory Council. The Council encourages responsible promotion and development of tourism and businesses in Ocean County and serves as a contact point between the tourism/business community and county government including the Ocean County Freeholders.

**3 John Fraterrigo**, Adjunct Associate Professor of History and Computer Studies, received the President's Volunteer Service Award by the President of the United States in recognition of sustained volunteer service and commitment to improve the communities of our nation. To earn the Bronze National Honor, he volunteered more than 100 hours during 2014 as a Civil War reenactor. Living history, which commemorates the lives of those who lived and died during the Civil War, helps raise money to preserve and reclaim lost Civil War battlefields and historical sites while educating the public about life during the war. In addition, Fraterrigo was one of three outstanding faculty who

the President's Volunteer Service Award by the President of the United States in recognition of sustained volunteer service and commitment to improve the communities of our nation. To earn the Bronze National Honor, he volunteered more than 100 hours



**Dr. Jianping Wang** has resigned her position as Vice President of Academic Affairs at Ocean County College, effective July 1, 2015. She has accepted the position of President of Mercer County Community College. Dr. Wang's contributions as Vice President of Academic Affairs will have a significant impact on the future of Ocean County College. Her enthusiasm, tenacity, and commitment during the past three years have effected noteworthy changes and accomplishments in academic affairs, always for the benefit of OCC's students. We wish Dr. Wang continued success as she assumes the presidency of Mercer County Community College. Congratulations!



received OCC's Teaching Excellence Award – **Dr. Sandra Brown**, Professor of English & Literature received the Full-Time Faculty award; **Jason Ghibesi**, College Lecturer of Political Science & History received the Professional Educator award; and Fraterrigo received the Adjunct award.

④ **Jeffrey Harmon**, Executive Director of e-Learning, and **Julia Itani**, e-Learning Adjunct Assistant Professor and Academic Consultant e-Learning (Ellucian), received the Innovation of the Year Award by the League for Innovation in the Community College. The League recognized them for “Making a Difference for Students – Advancing Online Student Remediation.”

⑤ **Gina Jorge**, EOF/OMS Office Manager, earned her Master's degree in English from Kean University in May.

**Robert Kumpf**, Director of Security, serves as President of the New Jersey College & University Public Safety Association (NJCUPSA). This organization has been keeping safety an integral part of campus life for more than 40 years and places a strong emphasis on training; one such example is the meeting Kumpf attended, in January, where the Title IX/Criminal Investigation issue was discussed.

Under the leadership of **Matthew Kennedy**, Associate Vice President of Facilities, an All-Staff Meeting, including Facilities Management, Office Services, and DTZ Custodial employees, is held twice a year. The March 4 meeting opened with “Who Are Our Customers?” and followed with a discussion on the ways in which the campus will be adapting to new methods of learning in the future. The meeting had an impressive turnout.



⑥ **Dr. Lynn Kraemer-Siracusa**, Program Chair, Assistant Professor of English, earned a doctorate in educational leadership from Rowan University. In addition, she and **Veronica Guevara-Lovgren**, Coordinator of Academic Support, along with alumna **Neva Lozada '11**, Assistant Director, Writing Services & Supplemental Instruction



at Monmouth University, presented “Reinforcing Writing Strategies through Cross-Departmental Collaboration” at the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges’ Best Practices Conference and at the New Jersey Writers’ Alliance Conference.

**Donna Parsons**, CPE Technology Instructor, is an Executive Board Member of the Alumni Association of the FBI Citizens Academy, and holds the position of Education Chair for Community Outreach Programs in New Jersey. Parsons has been the keynote speaker for a number of events in Ocean County on topics such as identity theft, cybercrime, computer and cell phone security, network security, and personal safety.

**Dr. T. Madison Peschock**, English Lecturer II, had an article, “Sister Aloysius’ Hypocrisy and Lack of Charity in John Patrick Shanley’s *Doubt*” published in *Pennsylvania English*.

⑦ **Laura Skrable**, Assistant Nursing Skills Specialist, had her article “Simulation in associate degree nursing education: A literature review” published in *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, the peer reviewed journal dedicated to associate degree nursing. ■

## In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of four exceptional OCC employees. **Virginia Reilly**, Professor of Business Studies, passed away on February 8. She was a much loved instructor who worked at OCC from 1994 to 2015. **Stacy Nekervis**, Adjunct Associate Professor of Social Science, passed away on March 5. A dedicated faculty member, she worked for OCC from 2001 to 2015. **Robert Czarniewski**, Scoreboard Operator, passed away on May 2. He announced sporting events at OCC from 1972 to 2015. **Patricia DeFoe**, Receptionist/ Console Operator, passed away on June 16. She worked for OCC in various offices from 2003 to 2015. Their presence on

the campus will be greatly missed by faculty, staff, and students. Our deepest condolences go out to the Czarniewski, DeFoe, Nekervis, and Reilly families.

The College community is also mourning the passing of **Richard S. Sambol** (OCC Board of Trustees and OCC Foundation Board of Trustees) on May 23. A significant contributor to both the College and Foundation for over two decades, his active participation and generous contributions of time, energy, and resources greatly impacted the development and success of OCC. Our deepest condolences go out to the Sambol family.





## Student-Athletes Make the Grade On & Off the Court

The 2014-2015 winter sports season was remarkable for Ocean County College Men's Basketball player Anthony Walker. On February 16, Walker became the sixth person in OCC Men's Basketball history to score 1,000 points. Walker needed 21 points entering the game and hit 1,000 points late in the first half on a free throw on his way to scoring 45 points in the OCC Vikings' 121-78 victory over Atlantic Cape Community College. This season, Walker led the team in scoring, averaging 25 points per game. He was voted National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region XIX and Garden State Athletic Conference (GSAC) "Player of the Year," in addition to being named to the 1st Team All-Region XIX and GSAC.

Elsewhere, Vikings Women's Soccer player Marykate Sullivan received the honor as "OCC Player of the Year" at the National Girls & Women in Sports Day held on February 1 at Seton Hall University. Two-year and four-year colleges along with high schools throughout New Jersey each honored a female player.

Earlier, Sullivan was awarded National Soccer Coaches Athletic Association (NSCAA) "Scholar All-America Player of the Year." She was selected the top scholar-athlete of all junior college women's soccer players in the country, regardless of division. In her two years as an OCC Viking, Sullivan has been named an All-American in each season and holds a perfect GPA! ■





# Men's Tennis Scores Big in 2015

The Ocean County College Men's Tennis team had an outstanding season and placed six players on the All-Region Team and five players on the All-Conference Team.

The Vikings finished second in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region XIX and Garden State Athletic Conference (GSAC) standings this season and earned a chance to play in the NJCAA National Tennis Tournament in May hosted by Colin College in Plano, Texas.

Just as they did throughout the season, the team did not disappoint and finished in 4th Place at the National Championships! Congratulations go out to Viking Head Coach Stan Friedman and team members Romel Academia, Mike Costa, Leonard Duarte, Tyler Fordyce, Jason LaVoie, Josh Packen, Alex Stevens, and Alec Williamson for their hard work this season! ■



## 2nd Annual Picnic for Alumni, Students, & Staff

at the  
Lakewood BlueClaws game • FirstEnergy Park

Friday, August 28, 2015

Gate Opens 6:00 pm • Picnic Buffet 6:30 – 8:00 pm • Game Starts 7:05 pm

Enjoy family friendly evening of  
**baseball, games, prizes, & fireworks!**

**COST:** \$22 Adults • \$14 Kids (Ages 5-12)

Bring your game ticket to the OCC bookstore and receive **50% off**  
select items of OCC apparel!

FOR TICKETS, contact the Student Life Office at 732-255-0348  
or visit the office on the Toms River campus.

*Student Life summer hours: Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm.  
Credit cards, checks, and cash are accepted.*

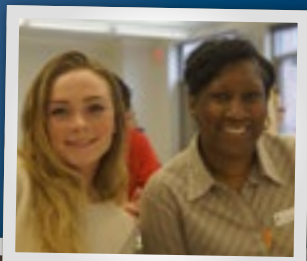




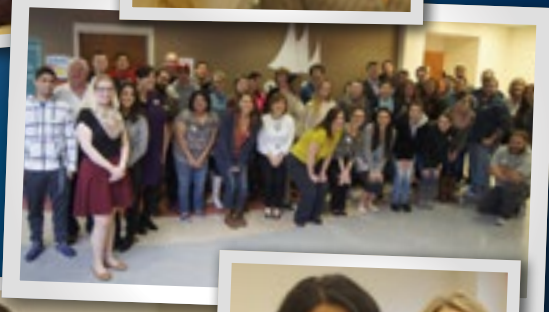
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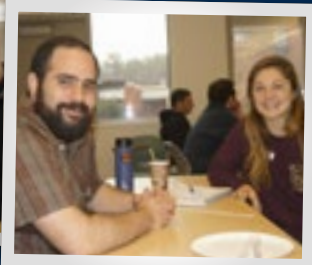
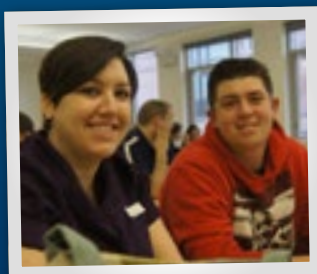
## Join us on campus for alumni events!



*Alumni Profile Project  
w/English 151 students  
4•10•15*



*Networking Event  
w/Kean-Ocean alumni  
3•18•15*



[www.ocean.edu](http://www.ocean.edu)



Please address comments and submissions to [rfeiler-white@ocean.edu](mailto:rfeiler-white@ocean.edu).