



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

TO: Members, OCC Board of Trustees

FROM: Pamela Monaco, Ph.D.
President

SUBJECT: Items of Interest for the December 5, 2024, Board Meeting

DATE: December 2, 2024

New Jersey Council of County Colleges

I am delighted to share that Dr. Aaron Fichtner, President of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, will visit Ocean County College on Thursday, December 5, 2024, and spend time with the trustees during the Board meeting. As President of the Council, Dr. Fichtner supports and strengthens New Jersey's 18 community colleges and the 230,000 students they serve annually.

Dr. Fichtner visits all 18 community colleges to update the trustees on the Council's priorities and activities. During this visit, he will share with you the trends he senses are developing at the State level and his thoughts on how they will impact the community college sector.

Website Presentation

After many months of effort, OCC's new, updated website went live on Tuesday, and many positive comments have already been received. Last month, representatives from the vendor, iFactory, presented the prototype for the new site and explained the goal of meeting the expectations of prospective students who will visit the site. At Thursday's meeting, Ms. Jan Kirsten, Executive Director of College Relations, and Ms. Maureen Conlon, Associate Director of Web Services, will briefly tour the completed site.

Faculty and Staff Recognition, Honors, Successes, and Awards

- Ocean County College's proposed Associate in Science (A.S.) degree in Public Health program received final approval from the New Jersey Presidents' Council (NJPC). The Academic Issues Committee of the NJPC commended the program for its strong academic quality, alignment with labor market demand, and adherence to Ocean County College's programmatic mission. With this approval,

Ocean County College is well-positioned to implement this program and contribute to addressing the needs of the public health workforce in our region. The NJPC extended its best wishes to the College for the successful launch of this important new offering.

- In early November, Ms. Cynthia Fallon, School of STEM's Academic Administrator, successfully defended her dissertation on HyFlex in the classroom to earn her Ed. D. in Educational Leadership.
- Dr. Mary Gibson joined the School of Nursing and Health Sciences on November 25, 2024, as the Director of Program Services for Nursing and Health Sciences. In her new position, Dr. Gibson will assist in administering the Nursing Program and developing new healthcare programs, including Dental Hygiene and Radiography.

Faculty and Staff Presentations and Publications

- Several STEM faculty members participated in the Open Textbook Collaborative (OTC) Conference at Middlesex College on September 27, 2024. Presentations were given by Dr. Angel Camilo, College Lecturer II in Biology and Mr. Eric Antonelli, Assistant Professor of Science, on *The Importance of Developing Royalty-Free Ancillary Materials* and by Mr. Richard Lynch, Adjunct Faculty member of Science on *Challenges on Preparing Students to Assess*.
 - Individuals nominated for an award were:
 - Most Collaborative Author: Dr. Eugene De Silva, College Lecturer II in Physics
 - Most Interactive Project – Biological Specimen Slides: Dr. Angel Camilo and Mr. Eric Antonelli
 - Best Lab Manual/Workbook – Winners for Industrial Hygiene and Hazardous Materials Management: Mr. Lincoln Simmons and Mr. John McElroy, College Lecturers in Biology, and Mr. Richard Lynch and Mr. James Nuccio, Adjunct Faculty in Science.
- On November 15, 2024, Ms. Elizabeth “Biz” Metzger, Director of Instructional Design and Learning Systems, and Ms. Laura Wingler, Lead Instructional Designer, presented at the Instructional Technology Council's Northeastern Distance Education Conference at Mercer County Community College. The "Using AI to Increase Student Success" session showed how OCC's Instructional Design Team uses artificial intelligence to boost student success. They demonstrated how AI, used in conjunction with Subject Matter Expert-authored assessments, can customize grading rubrics to align with the course learning outcomes, create accessible video transcripts, and differentiate content for various types of learners, including those with disabilities or who are learning the English language.
- College Lecturer II in Philosophy Mark William Westmoreland's newest book, *The Philosophy of Charles W. Mills: Race and the Relations of Power*, was published by Routledge Press on November 29, 2024. His review essay on *Creolizing Hannah Arendt* was also published in *Choice*.
- On November 6, 2024, the Accounting Club invited Ms. Amanda DeBartolo as the guest speaker. Ms. DeBartolo is an OCC alumna currently attending Kean. She is employed in the Accounting Department at OCC and is currently interning at the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office in the Economic Crimes division. She delivered a fantastic presentation about her experience at the Prosecutor's Office, including the cases she works on and how students can apply for future internships. This opportunity exposed students to another type of career in the Accounting profession.

- Associate Director of Education and Community Engagement Jaclyn Wood presented at the Toms River Schools Heritage Committee about upcoming programming for Spanish language learners.
- The posting about the OCC student visit to NJIT continues to grow social media exposure for the OCC Engineering and Industrial/Technical Studies program and OCC's relationship with NJIT with well over 8,000 likes, including such people as the President of NJIT, Dr. Teik C. Lim.

Student Successes, Awards, and Honors

- Shilletha Curtis, a former OCC student from 2012 who pursued an associate degree in Science, is a published author through Disney Publishing with her memoir *Pack Light: A Journey to Find Myself*. She is a sponsored athlete in the hiking world who has thru-hiked both the Appalachian Trail and the Continental Divide Trail. Her favorite professor at OCC, Mr. Duane Grembowicz, Associate Professor of Science, piqued her interest in foraging and birding.
- The athletic department recently hosted the NJCAA Region 19 Division III Men's and Women's Soccer Championships, in which OCC was fortunate to have both teams compete. The tournament was expertly handled by OCC staff, and our women's soccer team captured the Region title for the third straight season. The team recently returned from the national championship held at Genesee College in Batavia, New York, where the team was seeded seventh and has completed its third straight appearance at the National Championship. The department's focus has shifted to the winter season, featuring men's and women's basketball teams. There have already been some fascinating games. Join us in the gym for the action. Game schedules can be found at www.occvikings.com.
- EOF@OCEAN is pleased to announce that Sadain Siddique, EOF@OCEAN 2024 graduate and currently EOF @ NJIT, is a 2024-2025 award winner. EOF@OCEAN sponsored his nomination and completed the recommendation. Established in 2003 by the Educational Opportunity Fund Professional Organization of New Jersey, the Arrigo O. Rogers Memorial Scholarship honors the memory of a distinguished EOF program graduate and exceptional leader by recognizing students who embody similar qualities of leadership and service. Recipients are those who have actively engaged in leadership roles within their student communities or have shown dedication to community service and civic engagement while sustaining a commitment to academic excellence and career-related endeavors.
- OCC was invited to attend Columbia University's Center for Veteran Transition and Integration's (CVTI) Community College Roundtable. The roundtable was attended by Ms. Christina Hernandez, Veterans and Military Center (VMRC) Assistant Director, and representatives from four other community colleges nationwide. Everyone gathered to share best practices, emerging trends, and various challenges for building integrative cultures of veteran and military-connected student support. The findings from this session were compiled into a working document that CVTI will use to launch a rubric for working with community colleges and building capacity to serve veterans better.
- In honor of Veterans Day, OCC created its very own "Veterans Month" and is hosting the following events:
 - November 11 – Two OCC students, including one of OCC's alums, a current Kean Ocean student, were guest speakers at OCC's Veterans Day Ceremony.
 - November 12 – At the invitation of the VMRC, I enjoyed a wonderful lunch with the veterans at the Center.

- November 19 – Veterans Voices: A Day of Connecting and Listening – Columbia University’s Center for Veteran Transition and Integration staff led two sessions on Veteran Inclusive Campuses and Imposter Syndrome, which were well attended by administration and students. They led two listening sessions, one for OCC veterans and the other for OCC staff members. The day was well received by all who joined. It is hoped this opportunity will be offered again next year.
- To round out Veterans Month, the Center collaborated with OCC’s Vikings basketball team for the first Military and Veterans support game event scheduled for December 7, 2024. This event will provide an opportunity for attendees to donate items for VMRC students and participate in a special half-time event honoring OCC’s students who have served our country.

Student Activities

- On October 4, 2024, the Accounting Club hosted a tour of Ernst & Young in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Students attended a panel of speakers and toured the facility. Twenty OCC students and two advisors/College Lecturers in Accounting, Stephanie Kroeger and Jim Hadley, attended. The students were professional and asked the speakers many thoughtful questions. Touring a Big Four accounting firm assists students in determining their career paths and helps them make connections in the industry. Since then, OCC student Robert Giusti applied for a position at Ernst & Young. He has already been interviewed and accepted a full-time position.
- The Student Nurse Organization sponsored a blood drive on November 7, 2024, in collaboration with Robert Wood Johnson/Barnabas Health (RWJ/BH). Fifty units of blood were donated. This event was under the direction of advisors Linda Simmons, MSN, RN, Director of Nursing Skills and Simulation Labs; Mary Susan Gill, MSN, RN, Nursing College Lecturer II; and Tamila Purpuro, PhD, MSN, RN, Nursing College Lecture II.
- On Friday, November 8, 2024, Engineering and Industrial/Technical Studies students visited UNEX Manufacturing in Lakewood. Students in ENGR 103, Engineering First-Year Experience and Fundamentals, must complete an on-site visit as part of the career exploration included in this course. Students in this course also gain valuable career experience as they must complete 15 hours of engineering within one of the OCC Engineering Club projects: 1) Water for Rwanda Project, 2) Liquid Nitrogen Generator Project, 3) Egg Triathlon Competition, 4) Sewing Machine Maintenance Workshop, or 5) SICK (LLC) \$10K Challenge 2025 Proposal.
- On November 20, 2024, Ms. Anais Mompoint, College Lecturer II in Social Work, invited Social Work students to participate in a Virtual Mental Health training on campus held by the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey to discuss the different types of brain injuries and explore the multifaceted nature of brain injury, particularly in its intersections with substance use, domestic violence, and mental health challenges.
- In November, over 80 OCC students attended a panel discussion on careers in Environmental Science organized by College Lecturer Lincoln Simmons in conjunction with Rutgers University. Three graduate students spoke on why and how to go to graduate school in Sustainability, while three industry partners discussed how they should position themselves to secure a job in Industrial Hygiene. A lively question-and-answer session wrapped up this event, which attracted over 80 students.
- First-year student Alanna Heri spearheaded a student club information session at OCC Manahawkin on December 3, 2024. Alana had connected with Academic Administrator Jenna McAteer and OCCM Director Brian Schillaci about offering this opportunity to students at OCCM. The discussion resulted

in a meeting with Student Life Coordinator Theo Ponticello about potential opportunities for OCC's students. Alanna's leadership is genuinely appreciated.

- OCC music students will be busy this December. They will perform with the Ocean County College Concert Band in *The Sound of the Holidays* on December 7, 2024, and with the OCC Repertory Theatre's *Broadway for the Holidays 4* over the weekends of December 12 and 20, 2024.
- The Success Team collaborated with the Library and Student Life to host a game of Clue. During this activity, approximately 30 students served as detectives to solve a mystery by following clues that led them around the Library. During their sleuthing, they learned more about the Library and picked up helpful tips for succeeding in their classes.

Student Support Services

- Ms. Laura Wills, Transfer Coordinator, has created opportunities for students to receive assistance in the transfer planning process this Fall. She ran seven sessions, with another scheduled for December 4, 2024.

Students had the opportunity to attend a General Transfer Workshop to learn how to plan for a successful transfer, utilize NJ Transfer, use college websites to gather information and select a major that aligns with their transfer and career goals. Students could also attend Transfer Workshops for Special Topics, including transfer for out-of-state colleges, transfer for pre-health majors, transfer to Rutgers University, transfer to Monmouth University, transfer for STEM majors, and transfer for business majors.

- OCC students can meet with Ms. Laura Wills and Mr. Richard Harrell, Enrollment Specialist at Kean Ocean, for a dual advising appointment to understand that their credits will transfer seamlessly.
- OCC students can meet with Mr. Enrico DeRooy, Assistant Director of Admissions/Transfer Coordinator at Stockton University, every other week on the OCC campus. The students and Mr. DeRooy discuss transfer pathways to Stockton, including the new 3+1 articulations.
- Advisors are visiting each Student Success section this Fall with the following objectives for the class sessions. Students will learn to:
 - Use Student Planning to track degree completion
 - Understand and use the Academic Plan
 - Plan their Spring 2025 course schedules
 - Register for the Spring 2025 semester
 - Begin planning for transfer to a four-year institution
- This Fall, Ms. Elaine Schardien, Assistant Director of Educational Resources, has continued to train high schools to proctor the Accuplacer exam to determine whether students are college-ready in Math and English. Ms. Schardien has completed training for 12 high schools under the College Readiness Now Grant. Previously, OCC staff proctored the exams on-site; this new process provides more flexibility to the high schools, saving staff time and resources.
- The Grunin Center welcomed 242 students from nine high schools for the Ocean County Student Leadership Conference on November 12, 2024, in partnership with the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office, the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission, and the Jewish Federation of Ocean

County. The conference welcomed students from Ocean County schools and featured keynote speaker Ms. Aaliyah Booker, an advocate for the craniofacial and disability community.

Outreach to Students

- Registration is now open for the 2nd annual Ocean County College Engineering Technical Conference on Friday, February 7, 2025. Last year, this event earned \$7,000 for the new Next Gen Engineering and Technology Building a Better World Scholarship Fund that awards new, continuing, and graduating OCC students in the A.S. in Engineering or A.A.S. in Technical Studies programs. We look forward to raising even more scholarship funds in 2025. This conference allows engineers to earn the PDU/CEUs required to maintain their Professional Engineering (PE) license and encourages college and high school students to network with industry professionals.
- The Governmental Affairs Institute hosted Marny Requa, J.D., Research Operations Manager at the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, on October 30, 2024, for a lecture titled "Unpacking the Electoral College System in the U.S." This discussion provided students with an overview of the U.S. Electoral College system, the benefits and problematic aspects of this unique mechanism, as well as a discussion on how the Electoral College influences presidential elections, and the nuanced interplay between states and the popular vote. Students also enjoyed engaging in a lively question-and-answer segment addressing many voting-related concerns. The event took place the week before the November election, providing students with valuable knowledge and inspiring them to vote.
- OCC Manahawkin staff recently visited Barnegat High School, where they had the privilege of hosting a student panel. Sincere thanks are extended to first-year student Alanna Heri and second-year student Ema Croj for their outstanding contributions. They shared their experiences at OCC and answered student questions throughout the morning. The Barnegat team provided very positive feedback regarding the value of this opportunity for the students.
- In October, the HUB team made 2,276 outgoing calls, and the Student Success Coaches made 1,744 outgoing calls.

Community Outreach

- The Enrollment Services team attended Hispanic Heritage Night at Toms River High School East on November 21, 2024. Families were invited to the high school for dinner, a performance, and information about enrollment at Ocean County College.
- In November, the Novins Planetarium held three showings of the *One Sky Project* for Native American Heritage Month, hosted astronomy labs in the dome, and conducted a hands-on Moon Adventure workshop. The Planetarium also facilitated a career session for the Exploration of Career Pathways and Entrepreneurship through the Work Readiness Assistance Program (WRAP).
- The Grunin Center welcomed Ms. Martha Redbone for a musical performance on November 9, 2024, in recognition of National Native American Heritage Month, where she performed a wide variety of Roots music, from traditional indigenous songs to gospel.
- Grunin Center Spring 2025 events were announced on Tuesday, November 12; tickets went on sale on November 22, 2024, at noon.
- On November 10, 2024, the Grunin Center welcomed two return performances by the actors and singers of the much-loved show, *Assisted Living, The Musical*.

- The Planetarium kicked off the holiday season on November 30, 2024, and will offer numerous holiday and astronomy shows through the winter break, including the children's "Noon Year's Eve" celebration at 11:00 a.m. on December 31, 2024.
- On December 5, 2024, the Planetarium will host the Harbor House fundraiser, "A Night Under the Stars."
- December 4, 2024, ushered in holiday programming at the Grunin Center with Big Bad Voodoo Daddy's *Wild and Swingin' Holiday Party*. Yates Musical Theatre presents *A Christmas Carol* on December 7, 2024, and *The Nutcracker* returns the following weekend, December 11, 2024. The Center closes the holidays with The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra on December 15, 2024, and Christmas with the Celts on December 20, 2024.

Professional Development

- On November 19, 2024, the VMRC launched new military-cultural training, "Operation THRIVE." Staff from a variety of departments attended this inaugural training. Additional sessions will be offered in Spring 2025 as the previous training (The Green Zone) is phased out to create a campus grounded in Veterans Critical Theory.
- On November 8, 2024, representatives from Academic Affairs attended the New Jersey Council of County College's Essential Learning, General Education, and Career Readiness CWI Kick-Off at Raritan Valley Community College. Participants included Dr. Eileen Garcia, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Ms. Catherine Mancuso, Dean of Academic Affairs Processes and Faculty Development; Mr. James Marshall, Executive Director of Curriculum and Academic Assessment; Mr. Jonathan Molinaro, Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities; Dr. Samantha Glassford, Assistant Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities; Dr. Vandana Saini, Interim Assistant Dean of STEM; Ms. Kristyn Stout, College Lecturer II in English; Dr. Justin Pfeifer, College Lecturer II in History; Ms. Kelly Bicking, Interim College Lecturer II Psychology; Dr. Chad Sexton, College Lecturer II in Sociology; and Dr. Caterina Gibson, College Lecturer II in Anatomy. The day was spent learning about the NACE competencies and aligning syllabi and assignments to showcase competencies students will use in the workforce. The group is excited to bring this information to OCC to see how it can be implemented and utilized in courses.
- In November, the Office of Academic Affairs Processes and Faculty Development presented its first "Spring Training" to equip faculty with the skills needed to prepare for a successful Spring semester. Recognizing the need to support all staff, two sessions were offered via HyFlex technology. The final session was offered remotely via Webex. Spring Training covered the following topics: course setup and skeleton walkthrough, Canvas basics and best practices, and Simple Syllabus for new users. In addition to events like this, "snackable" training sessions called Tech Bytes continue to be offered.

Workforce Development and Strategic Partnerships

➤ **Workforce Development**

- The Workforce Education Department is working with the Ocean County College Veterans and Military Resource Center, the Ocean County Library, Seeds of Service, and the Community Ambassadors to launch a new Project Management program. This program is provided under the New Jersey Pathways Grant for Construction Management. It will allow students to earn five Google Project Management certificates, a Google Project Management Specialist credential,

and the opportunity to earn either Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) or Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI).

- The Workforce Education Department is working with Community Ambassadors to develop a Workplace Readiness Program for our students. The Workplace Literacy and Basic Skills Training Program will fund the readiness program. Students will learn to search for employment, create a resume, and develop interview skills.

➤ **Work Readiness Assistance Program**

- September concluded the FY24 Work Readiness Assistance Program with 38 young adults receiving services.
- Field trips were conducted for students to explore various careers at Narcissus Florist, Red House Music Production, Grunin Theatre, Hovnanian Health Sciences, OCC TV Studio, Ocean County Library, and the Ocean County Court House.
- Thirty-two participants completed the Exploration of Career Pathways and Entrepreneurship program, earning credentials in OSHA, CPR/Basic Life Skills, and Customer Service and Sales.
- Eight participants will roll over to receive follow-up services and support during FY25, and 23 will continue into FY25 for additional program services.

➤ **Adult Education, Civic, and Workforce Preparation**

- Currently, 392 students are enrolled in this program, including 95 in high school diploma preparation, 217 in ESL, and 80 in Civics.
- Winter registration opened on November 1, 2024, with 78 students in high school diploma preparation, 100 in ESL at the main campus, 38 at Point Pleasant Beach, and 25 at Manahawkin.
- Manahawkin winter registration will be held on December 2, 2024, and January 10 and 13, 2025.
- Staff visited Mercer County Community College's Title II program to exchange ideas, discuss procedures, and explore offerings.
- Several classes and instructors with the program participated in the Hispanic Heritage event sponsored by the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.

Grants Administration

- Ocean County College received a \$1,000 grant from AmeriCorps to fund Engage NJ: Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service 2025, from January 5 to 27, 2025. The project manager is Ms. Jenna Puglisi, Student Success Coach.

This funding will support two student clubs, the Community Ambassadors Club and NJ STARS Club, to work with OCC staff to lead volunteer projects on Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. The Community Ambassadors Club will lead a children's clothing drive with volunteers collecting donations on campus and delivering them to the Church of Grace and Peace in Toms River. Other student volunteers will be at the church to assist in receiving, sorting, and preparing donated items for

distribution to community members. The NJ STARS Club will prepare personal care kits for Choose Love, Celebrate Life, a non-profit that supports a homeless youth shelter in Ocean County. The kits will include basic hygiene products and bedding. Kits will be packaged and delivered to the shelter on the day of service. Grant funds will be used to supplement the donations received.

- Under the purview of Mr. Jim Campbell, FIPSE Program Manager, almost \$10,000 was awarded to needy students. Thus far, 151 unique students have been served, which exceeded the program goal of 150 students served within three years.

Monthly Security Report

In accordance with New Jersey Public Law 2015, Chapter 220, and College Policy #2332, Reporting of On-Campus and Fire Events, attached is the monthly statistics report of crimes, fires, and other emergencies on campus for the reporting period of November 2, 2024, through November 27, 2024.