



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

TO: Members, OCC Board of Trustees

**FROM: Pamela Monaco, Ph.D.
President**

SUBJECT: Items of Interest for the September 26, 2024, Board Meeting

DATE: September 23, 2024

Dedication Ceremony – Dr. William J. Rickert

A ceremony is scheduled for October 1, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. to dedicate the College Tutoring Center as the Dr. William J. Rickert Academic Support Center. Dr. Rickert was appointed as a faculty member in 1967 and served Ocean County College until his retirement in July 2021, making him the longest-serving employee.

Professor of Mathematics Rickert was a remarkable mentor to his students. He supported them with kindness, compassion, and consideration, and all he did was for the benefit of the students. He began his service as an advisor to the Tau Iota Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa in 1977. Between his teaching and advising, Dr. Rickert profoundly influenced the lives of thousands of OCC students. Undoubtedly, Dr. Rickert played a significant role in ensuring the excellence of Ocean County College. We are proud to recognize Dr. Rickert for his dedication and commitment.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Ocean County College is celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 this year to honor the history, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities. This year's theme is "Pioneers of Change: Shaping the Future Together" to highlight the achievements and influence of those who have paved the way for others to follow and build upon.

A Flag-Raising Ceremony was held on September 16, 2024, sponsored by the OCC Cultural Heritage Committee and Student Life. Raising the flag symbolizes OCC's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the recognition of the many cultures in our world. A list of the many events throughout the month is attached. All are invited to participate.

It is respectfully requested that the Board of Trustees adopt a resolution proclaiming September 15 to October 15, 2024, as Hispanic Heritage Month at Ocean County College to reaffirm the Board's support for the advancement of Hispanic and Latino people and to encourage all members of the College community to participate in the activities scheduled to celebrate our Hispanic and Latino colleagues, students, and friends.

Faculty and Staff Recognition, Honors, Successes, and Awards

- Ms. Stephanie Kroeger, College Lecturer II in Accounting, announced that the School of Business and Social Sciences will open a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site on OCC's campus. The IRS has approved the application and issued a Site ID Number. The logistics are currently being reviewed, and the plan is to be operational for this upcoming Spring tax season.

Students can volunteer for various roles, such as greeter, basic tax preparer, or advanced tax preparer. The student volunteers will gain hands-on experience in tax preparation, receive IRS certifications, and include volunteer work on their resumes. This service also assists the community in preparing tax returns for low-income filers. Updated information will be shared as it gets closer to tax season and details are finalized.

- Adjunct Assistant Professor of Flute Beomjae Kim has joined the symphonic orchestra of the New York Pops, the largest independent pops orchestra in the United States. She will perform in its 41st season at Carnegie Hall.
- During the Fall Colloquium on August 29, 2024, the three recipients of the Outstanding Teaching Awards in the categories of Full-Time Faculty, College Lecturer II, and Adjunct Faculty were announced. The College extends heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Nathaniel Bard, Studio Arts Professor and Fine Arts Program Chair; Dr. Sharon Scrofino, DNP, RN, CNE, CEN, College Lecturer II in the School of Nursing; and Ms. Melissa Mocarski, Adjunct Faculty Member in the School of Business and Social Sciences.

The award recipients were nominated and endorsed by deans, faculty, staff, and students before being selected by the Award Review Committee. In addition to receiving this prestigious award, the three recipients will serve on the President's Cabinet this year. We eagerly anticipate the continued positive impact of their work within our campus community.

- Vice President of Finance and Administration Sara Winchester has participated in discussions with the County of Ocean and the Ocean County Vocational Technical School leadership to further our partnership on the OCC campus. These discussions have resulted in potential agreements to bring more students and funding to the OCC campus. The possibilities will be discussed at the September Board meeting.
- Ms. Darra Stack, Counseling Specialist, completed the Clinical Supervision Certificate for Social Work. She conducted training for the Manahawkin campus staff in Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR).

Faculty and Staff Presentations and Publications

- Dr. Jennifer Dellner, Professor of English and Literature, wrote an article, "Transformation and Change, Wholeness, and Wellness," published this month in *Issues in Interdisciplinary Studies*, the peer-reviewed journal of the Association for Interdisciplinary Studies (AIS). The article originated as the presidential keynote address at its annual conference. In August, Dr. Dellner completed the

requirements and received the MAPS Leadership Institute Leadership Certificate from the Modern Language Association (MLA).

- Dr. Sheenah Hartigan, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Services, contributed to the newly published book, *Building Resilient Education Models Post Crisis*. She authored chapter 8, “Navigating the New Normal: Post-COVID-19 Changes in the Post-Secondary Landscape.”
- **Student Activities**
 - The School of Nursing admitted 104 new students into the program for the Fall 2024 semester. There are 317 students enrolled in the program this semester. Thirty-four Clinical Instructors educate 35 clinical groups within various healthcare facilities.
 - On August 5, 2024, Social Work Field Outreach Coordinator Ana Tuzio joined the College staff. Ms. Tuzio will work directly with social work students to identify and match them to internships/practicum placements during their last semester in the program. She will also collaborate with Social Work Lecturer/Program Chair Anaïs Mompoint to identify new partners for practicum placements and to strengthen existing partnerships.
 - On September 9, 2017, as part of the Welcome Week event, Ms. Anaïs Mompoint and Ms. Ana Tuzio hosted a "Social Work Fall Social" lunch to welcome all new and existing Social Work students. During the event, students learned about opportunities to participate in the Social Work Club and could hear firsthand about the profession's diversity. The other professionals who attended the meet and greet were members of the Counseling Center, Displaced Homemakers Program, and Assistant Director of the Veterans Center Christina Hernandez, who also serves as an adjunct faculty member in social work.

Student Clubs

- The Accounting Club, advised by Ms. Stephanie Kroeger and Mr. Jim Hadley, both College Lecturers in Accounting, will host its first meeting on October 2, 2024. The meeting will have two presenters. The first is an alumnus, Mr. Craig Mortensen, from Klatzkin Accountants and Advisors, an accounting firm actively looking to hire student interns for the upcoming tax season.

The second presenter is an OCC alumnus and Senior Accountant at Ernst and Young, Ms. Skyler Nardini. Ms. Nardini will discuss an upcoming opportunity to tour Ernst and Young, one of the Big Four accounting firms, the largest accounting and audit firms in the world, measured by revenue. Students will be invited to visit the Philadelphia office to network with Ernst and Young employees and other accounting students from different universities and listen to a panel presentation. The goal is to expose students to various careers in the accounting profession and help them build their professional network.
- Student Life welcomed club leaders and advisors back for its annual “Kick-off Meeting” on Monday, August 26, 2024, to start the new academic year.
- On September 17 and 18, 2024, a Club Fair was hosted in and around the Student Center, where 30+ student organizations participated on campus to welcome and recruit students to join the various activities of the clubs during the semester. The Student Government will host its first meeting on Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. in the Larson Student Center, Room 201, and many other clubs are already meeting, providing opportunities for engagement at OCC.

Professional Development

- Nursing faculty attended an educational program on August 7, 2024, titled "Next Generation Nursing (NGN) Item Writing Bootcamp." This five-hour program focused on developing examination questions to assist students in preparing for the NGN licensure examination (NCLEX-RN®) that began in April 2023.
- On August 28, 2024, the Fall Teaching and Learning Institutes were held. Presentations included:
 - “Immersive Learning: Utilizing Modern Gaming to Enrich Student Outcomes” by Dr. Jack Kelnhofner, College Lecturer II in e-Learning.
 - “Next-Gen Pedagogy: AI Tools for Engaging and Effective Teaching Across Disciplines” by Ms. Kristyn Stout, College Lecturer II in English, and Dr. Justin Pfeifer, College Lecturer II in History.
 - “Starting with the ABCs (Attending, Building, and Coaching) - Supporting Equity and Belonging in the Classroom” by Ms. Anaïs Mompont.
 - “Interactive Learning Spaces: Bridging In-Person and Online Classrooms” Mr. Neil Mastroianni, Associate Director of Educational Technology.
 - “Self-Care for Educators: Nurturing Ourselves to Nurture Our Students” by Ms. Kristen D'Amico, College Lecturer II in Psychology.
 - “Brainfuse Academic Tools” by Ms. Karen Sanders, Sr. Program Manager, Brainfuse.

The morning program had 84 attendees, including college lecturers, faculty members, tutors, and administrators. The evening program had 77 adjunct faculty in attendance. The newly updated Faculty Development and Innovation Center SharePoint site was launched at the event and is now accessible through the Faculty/Staff portal. Instructors from across the College can access Canvas and Simple Syllabus resources, school-specific information sites, a professional development calendar with registration links, e-learning resources, and WPE-specific information. Additionally, instructors can join the Viva Engage community for the site and connect with their colleagues to foster pedagogical growth, offer chances to explore new technology, and build a supportive faculty community.

- In preparation for the full implementation of Simple Syllabus in Spring 2025, Ms. Caroline Brittain, Director of Academic Affairs Processes, and Mr. Neil Mastroianni, Associate Director of Educational Technology, created a Simple Syllabus guide for Face-to-Face and HyFlex instructors. The guide includes step-by-step instructions for setup, a self-paced course in NeoEd for asynchronous training, and access to the Simple Syllabus Knowledgebase. All instructors can access the guide on the Faculty Development and Innovation Center site. Additional live training will be held throughout the Fall semester.
- Training sessions on Mental Health First Aid on Friday, October 11, 2024, will be held for faculty and staff as part of the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention grant. Registration is on NeoEd.

Community Outreach

- The 2024-25 season of the Grunin Center launched in September with Neil Berg's 100 Years of Hollywood, the Midiri Brothers, explorer and author Dan Buettner, Mariachi Herencia de Mexico, Tupelo Honey, and Stephanie Ramos.
- The Grunin Center hosted events for three Ocean County organizations: The Toms River Fire Training Center's graduation; a comedy show fundraiser organized by MD Keep the Faith, a non-profit that supports residents with muscular dystrophy; and a concert by local artist Joni Miller, to raise funds for the non-profit organization Unite.
- The Planetarium piloted the first event from the recently received Families on Campus Using Science (FOCUS) grant through NASA; games and activities were provided, including a themed dome show and immersive escape room-type activity for International Observe the Moon Night on September 14, 2024.
- Including currently pending courses, Ocean County College is offering 490 Early College dual-enrollment sections for the Fall. This is an increase of over 100 sections from last year.
- Ms. Haley Abruzzese, Assistant Director of Recruitment, and Ms. Lauren Simon, Enrollment Services Advisor for College Pathways, attended the Friday, August 23, 2024, orientation for Ambassador Christian Academy, the newest partner school for dual enrollment.
- Mr. Brian Schillaci, Director of Ocean County College Manahawkin, continued meetings and discussions with Pinelands Regional High School staff regarding OCC evening course opportunities this Fall and discussed offerings for Spring 2025.
- OCC's Afternoon Recitals began this year with Pianist Abraham Alinea on September 20, 2024, hosted by College Lecturer II in Music Brian Gilmore and the Music Club.
- The Grunin Center's education program began the school year with two great offerings in September: Ms. Mary Kenny's senior vocal students at the Grunin Performing Arts Academy participated in a technique workshop with Broadway actress Rita Harvey (Neil Berg's 100 Years of Hollywood) on September 13, 2024.
- Students from four Ocean County high schools, with participants from local adult day programs, attended the school matinee of Mariachi Herencia de Mexico on September 19, 2024.
- The Grunin Center welcomed 42 volunteer ushers during its annual training session on September 10, 2024.

Student Support Services and Activities

- The HUB completed 1,723 transactions during August. The average wait time was 4.4 minutes, with the average service duration lasting 3.5 minutes.
- The HUB enrollment team made 2,111 outgoing calls during August, and the Success team made 1,872 outgoing calls.
- The Student Success coaches began a series of visits to 88 sections of Student Success (STSC), the first-year seminar, which included both a classroom visit and a subsequent resource tour of the campus.

The visits, which reach over 900 students, collaborate with a variety of departments, including the Library, EOF, Counseling, Disability Services, Helping Hands, Tutoring, TRIO, Student Life, the VMRC, the SEB, as well as countless professors.

- College Pathways recruiters visit all county high schools to discuss the value of college, Financial Aid, advising, and registration. The visits began on September 16, 2024, with New Egypt High School and continue through September and October.
- Ms. Gina Opauski, Director of Communications and Workforce Development, organized and facilitated the ESL registration and orientation for new students at Ocean County College Manahawkin (OCCM) on Friday, September 20, 2024. These new students will begin their program at OCCM on Tuesday and Thursday evenings beginning Tuesday, October 8, 2024.
- Ms. Michelle Youngs, Assistant Director of Student Life, and the Counseling Center assisted with creating a new Helping Hands/Wellness space at OCCM that opened this week. This will allow OCCM students to connect and be supported throughout the school year.
- September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. On Tuesday, September 24, 2024, the Counseling Center will host “Fresh Check Day” to engage and educate the campus community about mental health. Staff and students will host 16 booths featuring a range of engaging topics.
- Upcoming events hosted by the Counseling Center will include:
 - Recovery Speaks on Monday, September 30, 2024, on the campus mall.
 - Empowerment Self-Defense on Thursday, October 17, 2024, from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.
 - Minding Your Mind on Monday, November 11, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Additional information about these events is available by calling 732-255-0400, extension 2911, or emailing counselingservices@ocean.edu.

- The Displaced Homemakers Program is currently working with 7 new clients and 59 ongoing clients. Twelve clients are enrolled in workforce training programs. Three clients are enrolled full-time at OCC for 36 credits and are on track to graduate in Spring 2025. Program Coordinator Carmen Mora was interviewed by OCC TV along with Providence House about the Displaced Homemakers Program as part of the series about the county’s non-profit organizations.
- Tuesday, September 17, 2024, was OCC’s first “Stay Late in 8” program, kicking off the new year with a fun, engaging “Family Feud” game for participants.
- On September 19, 2024, Helping Hands hosted its Open House in the food pantry located in the Library on the ground floor. The pantry is off to a busy start, with over 680 visits since the fall semester began.

Student Successes, Awards, and Honors

- OCC’s women's soccer team is off to a strong start, having won its first four games to start the season, ranking 7th in the National poll, while OCC’s men's soccer and women's volleyball teams each have 3-2 overall records.

- Ocean County College and OCC Athletics are pleased to host the Ocean County College Athletic Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on December 15, 2024, at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River, honoring some of OCC's distinguished graduates.

Workforce Development and Strategic Partnerships

Workforce Development

- Workforce Development partnered with the Community Ambassadors non-profit organization to provide ESL training to 150 students through the New Jersey Business and Industry Association's Workplace Literacy and Basic Skills Training Program. All costs for the students are embedded in the grant program.
- The Workforce Development Allied Health programs have received 22 scholarships from the OCC Foundation for the Fall 2024 term. The OCC Foundation supports scholarships in five Workforce Development Allied Health programs. The support of the OCC Foundation in providing ongoing financial assistance to Ocean County College students is deeply appreciated.
- Workforce Development is excited to announce that the State of New Jersey has granted over \$200,000 to start an onsite Center for Adult Transitioning (CAT). The program will allow students with an intellectual and developmental disability the opportunity to continue their educational journey at the collegiate level. The grant runs from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, and will have a lasting impact on the Ocean County community.

Work Readiness Assistance Program

- The current Work Readiness Assistance Program awarded grant will expire on September 30, 2024. A new grant proposal was submitted to the Department of Human Services on September 4, 2024.

Adult Education, Civic, and Workforce Preparation

- In September, new students began registering for the Fall term. Registration was held on September 20, 2024, at the OCC Manahawkin campus and on September 21, 2024, at the OCC main campus. Currently, 30 students are registered for ESL at OCC Manahawkin, and 86 are registered for ESL at the OCC main campus. Also, 69 registered for high school diploma preparation.
- On August 28, 2024, the Family Literacy event occurred at the Toms River Library, where seven ESL students and seven children participated. The librarians gave a thorough library tour, organized three craft activities, and read books to the children.

Grants Administration

The following grant awards are being recommended to the Board of Trustees for acceptance at Thursday's meeting:

- \$202,570 from the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education for the Center for Adult Transition. The funding period is July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, and the project manager is Ms. Eileen Schilling, Executive Director of Workforce Initiatives.

The mission of the OCC Center for Adult Transition is to provide student-centered and accessible services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities so they feel safe and welcomed on OCC's campus and empowered to succeed. This mission is accomplished by developing, initiating, continuously improving, and sustaining a skill development program that helps individuals identify appropriate career fields that align with their skills and interests. Students build their interpersonal, life, and employment skills to meet their desired positions' requirements while participating in career and experiential learning opportunities. The project enhances programmatic support for adults with disabilities to transition into the most independent living possible, aligned with their achievement level.

- \$345,000 from the Ocean County Department of Human Services and the Ocean County Board of Commissioners for youth employment activities. The funding period is October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025, and the project manager is Ms. Gina Opauski, Director of Community and Workforce Development.

This grant continues to allow OCC to provide free services to out-of-school young adults aged 16 to 24. This program offers participants workforce skill development, career guidance, on-the-job shadowing, mentoring, and financial literacy.

- \$850,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) for the Barnegat Bay Partnership (BBP) Implementation. The funding period is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028, and the project director is Dr. Stan Hales, Director of the Barnegat Bay Partnership.

This cooperative agreement with USEPA Region 2 provides base funding for implementing the BBP's 2012 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, which has four priorities: water quality, water supplies, living resources (habitats, fish, and wildlife), and land use. The agreement provides funding for BBP staff to work with its Management Conference, the BBP partners whose efforts contribute significantly to the protection and restoration of and education regarding Barnegat Bay.

- \$909,800 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the Barnegat Bay Partnership Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) FY23 Implementation. The funding period is October 1, 2022, through March 31, 2029, and the project director is Dr. Stan Hales, Director of the Barnegat Bay Partnership.

This Bipartisan Infrastructure Law cooperative agreement provides significant funding to advance all BBP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan priorities. Funds are committed to projects and activities regarding water quality, water supplies, habitat protection and restoration, and land use. In addition, 40% of all funds are committed to advancing Justice40 requirements to benefit underserved communities (i.e., overburdened communities, as defined by New Jersey's Environmental Justice Law).

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 August 18, 2024, through September 19, 2024.

REQUIRED REPORTING STATISTICS

Board of Trustees Meeting: Thurs, September 26, 2024

County College Board of Trustees, for its regular meeting. This report consists of all offenses defined as reportable crimes under the federal Jeanne Clery Act, fires, and other emergencies, which occurred on campus during the reporting period of 8/17/24-9/19/24.

1.) A count and classification of all criminal incidents (defined as reportable crimes under the federal Jeanne Clery Act) which occurred on campus and which were recorded by campus security, campus security authority (CSA) or local police departments.			
DATE	CRIME	SUMMARY	STATUS
Occurred: Reported:		Nothing to report	
Occurred: Reported:			
Occurred: Reported:			
2.) A list of campus alerts, threats or emergencies which occurred on campus			
DATE	ALERT/THREAT	SUMMARY	STATUS
Occurred: Reported:		Nothing to report	
Occurred: Reported:			
Occurred: Reported:			
3.) A count and classification of all fire incidents which occurred on campus and which were recorded by campus security and local fire departments.			
DATE	FIRE INCIDENT	SUMMARY	STATUS
Occurred: Reported:		Nothing to report	
Occurred: Reported:			

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Thomas DeSimone



BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTION

Hispanic Heritage Month

WHEREAS, *National Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated annually from September 15 through October 15; and*

WHEREAS, *this year's theme is "Pioneers of Change: Shaping the Future Together," shining a spotlight on the remarkable strides made by the Hispanic community in economics, politics, and societal advancement; and*

WHEREAS, *recognition of the achievements and contributions of all Hispanic and Latino people is important to understand and appreciate the rich cultural diversity of the American people; and*

WHEREAS, *Ocean County College continues to provide educational opportunities for Hispanic and Latino people residing and working in our community; and*

WHEREAS, *Ocean County College's enrollment of Hispanic and Latino students is continuing to increase;*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED *that Ocean County College proclaims the period from September 15 through October 15 as Hispanic Heritage Month and will implement special events to celebrate this observance and reaffirm the Board's support for the advancement of Hispanic and Latino people; and*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED *that all members of the College family are encouraged to actively participate in the activities designed to raise awareness about the rich history, vibrant culture, and remarkable achievements of our Hispanic and Latino colleagues, students, and friends.*

Adopted: September 26, 2024

Jerry Dasti, Chair



Pamela J. Monaco, Ph.D.

Join us in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month at Ocean County College from September 15 to October 15 as we honor the rich history, diverse cultures, and significant contributions of Hispanic and Latinx communities. This year's theme, "Pioneers of Change: Shaping the Future Together," highlights the remarkable achievements and enduring influence of Hispanic and Latinx individuals who have paved the way for a brighter future.

From trailblazing leaders like César Chávez and Sonia Sotomayor to innovative thinkers like Ellen Ochoa and Mario Molina, to passionate advocates like Dolores Huerta and Sylvia Rivera, and talented artists like Frida Kahlo and Lin-Manuel Miranda, Hispanic and Latinx excellence is woven into the fabric of our society and life. At Ocean County College, we are proud to support and uplift our Hispanic and Latinx students, whose vibrant perspectives and dedication enhance our campus community.

We invite everyone to join us at events throughout the month, including guest speakers, cultural performances, workshops, and festive celebrations. Let's celebrate the achievements, resilience, and vibrant culture of our Hispanic and Latinx students, faculty, and staff. Happy Hispanic Heritage Month!

SEPTEMBER 9-OCTOBER 1

Creative Writing Contest

- **What:** The Writing Center and Peer Language Support Leaders will be hosting a creative writing competition for all Ocean and Kean/Ocean students that celebrates Hispanic/Latin Heritage. Students can submit a poem, song, short story, or any other form of writing. Submissions will be accepted beginning 9/1 through 10/1. Students are highly encouraged to submit their writing in the language(s) that feel most comfortable to them, such as English, Spanish, or Spanglish.
- **When:** Submissions accepted September 9 - October 1
- **Where:** Virtual- [**Creative Writing Event Submission Form**](#)
- **Hosted By:** The Writing Center and Peer Language Support Leaders

SEPTEMBER 16

Flag Raising Ceremony

- **What:** The OCC Cultural Heritage Committee and Student Life invites Students, Faculty, and Staff as we proudly celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with our inaugural Flag Raising Ceremony. This event honors the rich cultural traditions and contributions of the Hispanic and Latinx

communities, both within our college and beyond. The raising of the flag symbolizes our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the recognition of the vibrant cultures that shape our world. All are welcome to participate in this meaningful event as we come together to celebrate the unity and diversity of our campus community.

- **Where:** Campus Mall
- **When:** 12:30 pm
- **Hosted By:** Student Life & The Cultural Diversity/ Heritage Committee

Photo Op

- **What:** Atención! Students, Faculty, and Staff, please report to the Instructional Building, dressed to impress by wearing your pride (however YOU interpret it) that celebrates your Hispanic or Latin heritage and have your photo taken at our photo op. Show up and Show off!
- **When:** September 16th
- **Where:** Outside the Instructional Building (bldg. 5) *In the event of rain we will update the location
- **Hosted By:** The Writing Center and Peer Language Support Leaders

SEPTEMBER 19

Mariachi Herencia de México

- **What:** [Visit this link](#) for more information and to purchase tickets
 - **General Public Cost:** Main Stage Orchestra \$42, Mezzanine \$34
 - **Student Cost:** Free with OCC ID
- **Where:** The Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts
- **When:** 7:00 pm
- **Hosted By:** The Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts

*Additional School 'N Stage performance at 11:00 am (free to students with OCC ID)

SEPTEMBER 25

A Conversation with Stephanie Ramos

- **What:** [Visit this link](#) for more information and to register
- **Where:** The Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts
- **When:** 6:00 pm
- **Hosted By:** The OCC Foundation and The Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts through The Blauvelt Speaker Series

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 4

Hunt for Knowledge: Hispanic Heritage

- **What:** The Tutoring Center invites students and faculty to participate in a hunt for knowledge across campus. This will expose participants to just some of the many incredible historic and contemporary advancements and contributions from people and cultures of the Americas who are often referred to or identify as Hispanic/Latin. To get started, participants can pick up an answer sheet from the Tutoring Center starting September 30.
- **Where:** Across campus

- **When:** September 30 – October 4 to be entered in a drawing for a gift card
 - October 7- October 15 submissions completed during this time will be entered in a separate consolation prize drawing.
- **Hosted By:** The Writing Center and Peer Language Support Leaders

OCTOBER 14

Inspiring Change: Voices of Our Community

- **What:** In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, join us for an uplifting panel discussion featuring Hispanic and Latinx leaders making a positive impact in their communities and on our campus. This event highlights dedicated campus and community members who embody and spread joy through their work, activism, and creativity. Our panelists will share their journeys, revealing the challenges they've faced and their triumphs. These changemakers will share inspiring stories of perseverance, dedication, and love of community.
- **Panelists:** Dr. Tara Chalakani, CEO of Preferred Behavioral Health Group, Laura Garzon, OCC Community Ambassadors Club, Mary Guarin, Community Ambassadors
- **Moderator:** Veronica Guevara-Lovgren, Executive Director, Student Services
- **Where:** Gateway Lecture Hall
- **When:** 12:30-1:45 pm
- **Hosted By:** The Cultural Diversity/ Heritage Committee & The Jay and Linda Grunin Center for the Arts

OCTOBER 15

Concluding Reception

- **What:** In conjunction with the Creative Writing Contest, The Writing Center and Peer Language Support Leaders will be hosting a reception for students who submitted a piece to the Creative Writing Contest, where they are invited to read aloud/perform their work. All students and staff are welcome to attend and show support. Winners will be announced, and light refreshments will be served. Please join us in marking an end to a month, and a powerful beginning of visibility.
- **Where:** Gateway 104 (Lecture Hall)
- **When:** 1:00-2:00 pm
- **Hosted By:** The Writing Center and Peer Language Support Leaders

All Month Long

Library Overlook Drive

- **What:** Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month by checking out [OCC's Library Overdrive page](#) for access to eBooks written by Hispanic and Latinx authors
- **Where:** [OCC's Library Overdrive page](#)
- **When:** Now- October 15
- **Hosted By:** The Ocean County College Library

Warm regards,

Pamela