



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

TO: Members, OCC Board of Trustees

FROM: Pamela Monaco, Ph.D.
President

SUBJECT: Items of Interest for the April 23, 2026, Board Meeting

DATE: April 20, 2026

Commencement Week

The week of May 18 will be a joyful one as we celebrate all of the achievements of our graduates. Please note the dates and times of events leading up to commencement on Thursday, May 21, 2026:

Monday, May 18, 2026 – Athletic Award Banquet at the Clarion Hotel at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are available through Athletic Director Ilene Cohen (icohen@ocean.edu).

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 – Student Award Ceremony in the Grunin Center at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 – Nurses Pinning Ceremony at the RWJBarnabas Health Arena at 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 21, 2026 – Two Commencement Ceremonies, both at the RWJBarnabas Health Arena:

4:00 p.m. – High school students who will earn their degree, and students earning an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) or the Associate of Arts (AA) degree.

7:00 p.m. – Students earning an Associate of Science (AS) degree

Bring Your Kids to Work Day

Bring Your Kid to Work Day 2026 is on **Thursday, April 23, 2026**. Celebrated on the fourth Thursday of April, this year's theme is "The Future is @ Work," aimed at inspiring children through hands-on career exploration and workplace experience, which helps them visualize their futures in a modern, technological workplace.

The schedule of events for the day are outlined in the attached flyers. Twenty children are participating this year. They and their parents have been invited to join the trustees at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday for the start of the Board meeting.

Appreciation is expressed to Ms. Christina Matuszewski, Assistant Director of Benefits Administration, and Ms. Tammi Burton, Human Resources Specialist, who developed and are coordinating a special program.

Displaced Homemakers Program

The Displaced Homemakers Program is designed to provide services to individuals who have lost their primary source of income due to separation, divorce, disability, or death of the primary family provider. The goal of the program is to help clients become economically self-sufficient and improve the quality of life for them and their families. The program is funded through a grant from the New Jersey Department of Children, Division on Women, and supplemented by the generosity of donors. Program services include career and employment readiness, life skills, personal development, connection to social and community organizations, financial literacy, financial assistance for short-term certificate training, and more.

Every year, representatives from OCC's Displaced Homemakers Program attend the April Board meeting to provide a brief annual report on the program activities and introduce a client whose life has been significantly changed due to participating in the program. Ms. Veronica Guevara-Lovgren, Executive Director of Student Services, and Ms. Stacy West, Displaced Homemakers Program Coordinator, will attend Thursday's meeting. They will introduce Ms. Emani, a program client who has shown tremendous strength and resilience in her personal and educational endeavors.

May is Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month. It is respectfully requested that the Board adopt a resolution proclaiming May 2026 as Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month at Ocean County College in recognition of the personal and professional achievements clients experience as a result of this program.

Phi Theta Kappa New Jersey All-Stars

Ms. Ellie Dowek and Ms. Sabrina Watts were recently named as members of the 2026 New Jersey All-State Academic Team, which is sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa. This prestigious recognition honors New Jersey's most accomplished community college students for their outstanding academic excellence, leadership, and service. Honorees were honored at a ceremony on Friday, April 10, 2026, at Rowan College of South Jersey-Cumberland Campus. This provided an opportunity to acknowledge not only the achievements of these exceptional students, but also the dedication of the Phi Theta Kappa advisors who help them thrive. Dr. Jennifer Dellner, Phi Theta Kappa Advisor, was in attendance with the students for this recognition.

Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarships

The Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship is a highly-selective scholarship opportunity for the nation's top community college students seeking to complete their bachelor's degrees at selective four-year colleges or universities. The highly competitive national scholarship aims for scholars to complete their undergraduate education with as little debt as possible. The award, which is last dollar funding after all institutional aid, can be as much as \$55,000 a year for up to three years, making it one of the largest private scholarships for community college transfer students in the country.

Ms. Laura Wills, Director of Transfer Services and Articulation, and colleagues from the Success Team, Student Success Coordinator Jenna Puglisi and Student Success Coaches Sarah Dowdy and Megan Thompson, will attend Thursday's meeting to provide information on the award and the five OCC semi-finalists: Ellie Dowek, Laura Garzon Salinas, Anne Nyangaga, Anthony Paris, and Sabrina Watts. Each student and mentor/coach will say a few words about their experiences.

The students' family members have been invited to the Board meeting and a reception following to celebrate the outstanding accomplishment of being selected as semi-finalists for this prestigious award. Please plan to stay after the meeting to congratulate the students for their semi-finalist status.

National Nurses Week

The nursing profession has been supported and promoted by the American Nurses Association since 1896. National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12. During this week, nurses are recognized for their service and dedication to caring for others and improving the health of patients nationwide. This year's theme is "The Power of Nurses."

Nurses Week celebrates the effort, dedication, and sacrifice nurses make every day. They are essential members of America's healthcare workforce who provide care through every stage of life. Nurses Week offers a chance to highlight and celebrate nurses for all they do.

It is respectfully requested that the Board of Trustees adopt a resolution in support of all nurses and declare the week of May 6 through 12 as National Nurses Week at Ocean County College to acknowledge and thank OCC's School of Nursing and Allied Health for their dedication to graduating nurses who are sought throughout the County and the State.

Adult Education, Civics, and Workforce Preparation Program

The Adult Education, Civics, and Workforce Preparation (AECWP) Program, also known as Title II, provides free comprehensive services to Ocean County residents. The program is part of the Ocean County Achievement Center housed within the Workforce Development and Strategic Partnership Division and is overseen by Ms. Gina Opauski, Director of the Ocean County Achievement Center.

AECWP provides classes in adult basic education, high school equivalency test preparation, English as A Second Language (ESL), ESL Transition, and Integrated Education and Training (IET). All classes have workforce skill development and career exploration embedded to assist participants with goals in education, career, and trainings. The program provides events, speakers, and workshops to the participants that include Family Literacy night, Financial Literacy, Immigration Services, Domestic Violence awareness, and more. The AECWP assists adult learners to become self-sufficient, to obtain the skills necessary to become partners in their children's education, and to support adults who desire to complete a secondary school education or industry-valued credentials.

Ms. Opauski will attend Thursday's meeting to discuss the program and introduce a program participant, Ramon Talavera. Ramon began his journey at the Ocean County Achievement Center. He was enrolled in ESL classes within AECWP. Ramon is now an OCC student. He will begin the transfer process soon, eager to continue his education and start a new career.

Staff Highlights

Ms. Sara Winchester, Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration, served as a member of the Middle States visiting team during an accreditation visit to Rockland Community College in Suffern, New York, which took place from March 29 through April 1, 2026. The visit involved a comprehensive review of institutional documents; meetings with faculty, staff, administrators, and students; and collaborative evaluation of how the college meets Middle States standards. Participating in this process provided valuable insight into best practices in assessment, governance, and strategic planning. The experience will directly benefit Ocean County College by strengthening our accreditation work, reinforcing a culture of continuous improvement, and bringing back practical ideas that support institutional effectiveness and student success.

Faculty and Staff Presentations and Publications

- Dr. Sheenah Hartigan, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Services, collaborated with Dr. Nicole Cippoletti, Dean of the Scotch Plains and Virtual Campus, Union County College, to present *Building Capacity Without Burning Out: How Two-Year Colleges Scale Support Smarter* on March 5, 2026. The virtual webinar had over 50 attendees from across the country.
- Dr. Mark William Westmoreland, College Lecturer II in Philosophy, serves on the Committee for Philosophy at Two-Year Colleges and the Virtual Planning Committee for the American Philosophical Association (APA). He organized and facilitated a grant workshop for the APA and the American Council of Learned Societies on March 19, 2026.

Dr. Mark William Westmoreland also had an article titled “James Baldwin and Socrates: Teaching Spiritual Exercises” accepted for the book *James Baldwin’s Question*, which is forthcoming from Temple University Press. He was also selected to serve as a peer reviewer for Routledge Press.

- Ms. Deborah J. Taranto, Assistant Adjunct Professor of English, has authored and published a memoir titled *Nine Ways to Crazy: Surviving My Mom’s Dementia*. She has been traveling to Florida to visit memory care centers, where she shares insights from her personal caregiving journey and offers guidance on navigating the complexities of the system. Most recently, she presented at six Arden Courts Memory Care communities and has additional plans for 2026.

Ms. Taranto presented at the Banned Books event held at the Larson Student Center. Her presentation provided a relevant modern-day review of Margaret Atwood’s, *The Handmaid’s Tale*.

- On March 26 and 27, 2026, a poster, “End of Program Student Learning Outcomes Evaluated Through Scripted Student-Led Simulation” was presented at the National League for Nursing Convention in Atlantic City by Ms. Sharon Scrofine, DNP, MSN, RN, CNE, CEN; Ms. Danielle Pfeffer, MSN, RN; Ms. Susan Schneider, MSN, RN, APN; and Ms. Danielle Piccione, MSN, RN, Assistant Dean, Nursing and Health Sciences. The focus of their presentation was the utilization of scripts to prompt students during simulated clinical experiences for assessment of hands-on and critical thinking skills prior to completing the Nursing program.

Staff Professional Development

- On April 7, 2026, staff from Disability Services attended a professional development program titled “The Role of NJLAD in Protecting the Rights of Individuals on the Autism Spectrum.” The session explored how the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (NJLAD) safeguards the rights of individuals on the autism spectrum.

Student Honors and Awards

- On April 9, 2026, the Psi Beta Community College National Honor Society for Psychology held its Induction Ceremony for approximately 35 students in the Gateway Building. Mr. James Indelicato and Ms. Kelly Bicking, College Lecturers for Psychology, hosted the event. During the ceremony, I delivered the opening remarks and a musical performance was given by OCC music program students.
- Student leaders from OCC's Tau Iota Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa recently travelled from March 25 to 29, 2026, representing OCC at their Middle States Regional and Catalyst Conventions. Ayleen Mujica, Ana Jimenez, Ellie Dowek, Sabrina Watts, and Anellie Lopez took the road trip to Baltimore, Maryland, with Executive Director of Student Life Jennifer Kane to learn more about the four PTK hallmarks – scholarship, leadership, service, and fellowship – so OCC's chapter can be a part of “legacy in action.”

Tau Iota Chapter's celebrated successes at the convention included: Five-star level chapter plan, 2026 MSR Legends Award, 2026 Middle States Region Membership Excellence Award, Chapter President Hall of Honor awarded to both Areeba Zulkarnain (president 2024-25) and Sabrina Watts (current president), and Chapter Member Hall of Honor awarded to Ellie Dowek.

- The Phi Theta Kappa Spring Induction Ceremony was held on the evening of April 16, 2026, in the Grunin Center Theater. OCC's Tau Iota Chapter looks forward to welcoming its new members. This semester, 893 invitations were sent out to eligible students; so far 97 students have accepted membership. Students have until May 15, 2026, to join this term.
- Over the course of this year, Sigma Kappa Delta, the English Honor Society, took on a “Little Library Project.” Led by faculty advisors, Associate Professor of English Jayanti Tamm and Professor of English David Bordelon, Sigma Kappa Delta purchased the mailboxes that the Insite Art Club, under the advisement of Professor Nat Bard, then painted. Thanks to the help of the grounds team, the libraries were installed in their new homes on campus (in front of the Gateway Building and on the service road side of the Student Center). Professor Tamm said it best, “We are hoping this will keep students reading for years to come.”
- Athletics is proud to announce that three of OCC men's volleyball student-athletes were named to the 2026 All-Garden State Athletic Conference and All-Region 19 Teams upon regular season's end: sophomores Jimmy Baxes and Danny Brunke, and freshman Abran Arrojo.

Congratulations to the Ocean County College Men's Volleyball team, which captured both the Region 19 and 2026 East District A Championships in rapid succession, defeating some of the toughest teams on their level on their path to booking a trip to the national championship tournament.

The OCC Men's Volleyball team currently has a regular/postseason record of 14-3 and will next travel to the 2026 NJCAA Men's Volleyball National Championship, scheduled for April 23 to 25, 2026, at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois.

Student Clubs and Activities

- On Wednesday, April 22, 2026, the 4th annual Clubs for a Cause event will take place on the campus mall. This renaissance-themed event features student-led activities, educational Viking and Renaissance troupes, inflatable jousting and axe throwing, live animals from Heritage Ranch, music, costumes, and more. In addition, students will enjoy a croquet course that features information and resources to educate students on the important issue of food insecurity.

In addition to the 30 student clubs that helped plan and create activities for the event, many campus departments played a part in helping this year's Clubs for a Cause: Renaissance Faire come to life. Special thanks to the Purchasing and Facilities departments for ensuring everything needed will be available to step back in time and create a fun event for the campus community. And appreciation is expressed to individuals who have donated or will donate to the campus' Helping Hands Food Pantry.

- The NJ STARS Club, supervised by Ms. Jennifer Kipp, participated in Clean Ocean Action Beach Sweeps on Saturday, April 11, 2026.
- Dr. Christopher Ruth and Dr. Mark William Westmoreland, both College Lecturers in Philosophy, have re-envisioned the Philosophy Club after several years of successful growth. The new cohort of students, which meets weekly, will investigate the role of character ethics in leading “the good life.”
- The weekend of April 10, 2026, was an exciting time for 40 OCC students and staff as they headed to Boston for a fun, educational weekend. This trip was led by Student Life, the History Club, and the Literature Club and featured visits to the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum, the Bunker Hill Monument, the Freedom Trail, the Boston Aquarium, and Fenway Park. One of the highlights of the trip was a dinner dance cruise aboard a ship in Boston Harbor. Students and staff enjoyed getting to know each other while recapping the incredible highlights of Boston that they experienced together. Many thanks to the OCC Foundation for helping with the cost of this trip.
- Students from the Social Work program were invited to attend the (Spring) Social Work Advisory Committee meeting on March 25, 2026. Students participated in the committee discussions. College Lecturer II and Program Chair of the Social Work Program Anais Mompoin hosted the meeting and four students attended.
- On April 21, 2026, the Social Work Club partnered with the OCC Counseling Center to host the 2nd Annual "Take Back the Time" event in support of Sexual Violence Awareness Month. Support services from St. Francis Community Center were available to provide resources to attendees.
- On March 26, 2026, 141 OCC nursing students attended the 2026 New Jersey League for Nursing Convention in Atlantic City, along with OCC College Lecturers Viergina Bazile-Scott, MSN, RN; Danielle Pfeffer, MSN, RN; Susan Schneider, MSN, RN; and Sharon Scrofino, DNP, MSN, RN, CNE, CEN. The focus of the convention was “Bold Paths, Bright Futures: Empowering Nurses through Learning and Connections.” The convention provides students with opportunities to meet with peers and potential employers, as well as to attend continuing education sessions.
- Dr. Henry Jackson, College Lecturer II, Student Success Seminar, and Ms. Charlotte Langeveld, College Lecturer II in Cultural Anthropology, accompanied students to two sessions held on April 8 and 13, 2026, in collaboration with Rutgers University's Megapolitan Coastal Transformation Hub (MACH). The sessions were led by Ms. Moira Scheeler, MCRP, and Ms. Janine Barr.

Approximately 50–60 students, faculty, and staff participated in the sessions. The sessions explored the social and cultural impacts of flooding through various topics, such as housing, insurance, and community risk, and included hands-on use of the NJ Flood Mapper tool. Connected to OCC's multi-week Trash to Treasure initiative, the experience strengthened students' understanding of climate challenges and community resilience while encouraging connections to their own communities.

- The Trash to Treasure Project at Ocean County College, coordinated by Ms. Charlotte Langeveld, College Lecturer II in Cultural Anthropology, has engaged up to 50 students in creating artwork from discarded materials that promotes sustainability and environmental stewardship.

I have been asked to serve as a judge at this event with other participants, Dr. Henry Jackson; Ms. Renate Pustiak, College Lecturer II, Humanities and Fine Arts; and Ms. Nicole Howard, Graphics Specialist. The participation of these individuals further underscores the College's institutional commitment to the initiative. The project will culminate in an exhibition and awards ceremony on Earth Day, April 22, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. The awards of up to \$2,500 for student teams and \$500 for individual students are made possible through the generous support of the OCC Foundation. The project highlights environmental justice by encouraging creative reuse and raising awareness of community responsibility and ecological action.

- On March 26, 2026, Mr. Lincoln Simmons, College Lecturer II in Biology, reported on the 4th Annual Environmental Sciences Technical Conference. The conference was jointly presented and sponsored by Ocean County College and Kean Ocean and was held in the Gateway Building. The conference was well attended with over 220 participants, 170 of whom were OCC students.

More than 30 corporate and institutional exhibitors attended the event. Students had the opportunity to network and learn about jobs in the environmental science field by speaking with companies and transfer institutions at exhibitor tables, and they explored related topics during the panel discussion and break-out presentations. Corporate exhibitors have reported that several connections were made with students that have resulted in student interviews for open jobs or internships. Many exhibitors will volunteer to be participants at next year's event.

The School of STEM would like to thank the event planning committee: Mr. Jim Nuccio of Westinghouse Nuclear; Dr. Brent Altemose, OCC Adjunct Assistant Professor of Science; Mr. Eric Antonelli, Assistant Professor of Science; Dr. Henry Jackson, OCC College Lecturer II in Student Success; Dr. John McElroy, College Lecturer; Ms. Nicole Garaffa, Academic Affairs Coordinator, STEM; Ms. Charlotte Langeveld; Mr. Lincoln Simmons, College Lecturer II in Biology; Dr. Omara Cardoza, Managing Assistant Director, Kean Ocean; the entire College Relations staff; OCC Facilities; and OCC IT for their tremendous contributions.

The School of STEM would also like to thank school leadership for their inspirational keynote messages: Dr. Joseph Youngblood II, Chancellor, Kean Global, Kean Ocean, and Strategic Global Initiative, Kean University; and Dr. Vandana Saini, Dean, OCC School of STEM.

- OCC's music students are entertaining patrons prior to events on campus to expose the audiences to the accomplishments of OCC's music students while granting important performance experiences to our music majors and graduates.
 - On March 21, 2026, OCC music major Owen McCarthy performed 60 minutes of Celtic music on viola in the lobby of the Grunin Center for the Arts prior to the afternoon and evening performances that day.
 - On April 9, 2026, OCC music majors Danielle Adolfsen and John Alarcon performed music for the Psi Beta Induction Ceremony. Psi Beta is a national honor society for students attending two-year colleges and studying psychology.

- On April 11, 2026, OCC music major Seth Nicolay performed works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Debussy in the lobby of the Grunin Center for the Arts prior to the musical performance by Nella, renowned singer.
- On April 12, 2026, OCC music major Seth Nicolay and OCC alumnus Luke Nokes performed works by Bach, Beethoven, Boismortier, Chopin, Debussy, and Grieg in the Grunin Center for the Arts lobby prior to the performance of Krakauer and Tagg's Good Vibes Explosion.

Student Support Services and Activities

- The Ocean County College Foundation generously awarded 149 students Early College Grants to assist in the educational costs of taking Early College classes during high school for Spring 2026.
- The Student Enrollment Building had 1,835 visits in the month of March. This is an increase of 16% over March 2025. The most utilized services were Enrollment Services (the HUB), with almost 1,000 visits, followed by Academic Advising with 363 visits, and Financial Aid with 119 visits.
- The HUB team made almost 4,000 outgoing calls in the month of March, including campaign calls for those eligible for Summer Pell, calls to students with a Spring balance still, and calls to students who just submitted applications. The team also fielded over 1,750 incoming calls during the same time frame.
- In collaboration with the Recruitment Team, College Pathways Advisor Lauren Simon planned and executed six Express Enrollment Days throughout the month of April. These events, designed for each Ocean County High School participating in the College Pathways Program, provide students the opportunity to tour campus, meet with Academic Advisors, register for Fall courses, and enjoy lunch in the Student Center with Enrollment Services personnel.
- The Student Success Team made almost 4,000 outgoing calls in the month of March. This is an increase of almost 1,500 calls from the prior year during the same time frame.
- The Student Success Team worked on re-enrolling stop-out students who had not yet reenrolled during the month of March. They also focused on non-degree seeking students for Summer. The team continues to reach out to students with low course averages (1,735 students in Spring, thus far) and those with faculty alerts.
- The Student Success Team visited Dr. Henry Jackson's STSC class on April 6, 2026. to run the Game of Life; during this experience, students have to budget money appropriately and gain fiscal awareness.
- From March 14 through April 10, 2026, Advising served a total of 613 students, including 468 walk-in advising sessions and 145 virtual advising appointments.
- Advising has completed the following in support of the Areas of Study implementation:
 - Creation of first-semester curriculum tracks for each Concentration under the Areas of Study (plans slated for completion in Summer 2026)
 - Execution of training for the Advising and Hub staff in preparation for new student advising and high school express enrollment events
 - Creation of advisor resources to support new student advising

- Creation of Advisor Update for all campus advisors, including Areas of Study information for current students
- Advising is conducting outreach for students in programs that will no longer be supported starting in Fall 2026. The goal of this outreach is to assess the students' goals and determine the best path for the students to complete their course of study and transfer successfully.
- Transfer Coordinator Amy Nadybal contacted all Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Management (HRTM) students (both currently and previously enrolled) to discuss academic pathways following the discontinuation of the program. Of the 14 students enrolled in HRTM for the Spring term, 10 students have either changed their major or pursued alternative transfer opportunities.
- The OCC Transfer Team has been working closely with Stockton for a 2+2 pathway for Hospitality programs. The Stockton Hospitality chair is planning a visit to OCC's campus sometime this Spring.
- Associate Director of Advising Michele Connolly has reached out to seven students enrolled in the Artificial Intelligence Certificate and A.A.S programs to discuss next steps and recommend a change to the Cybersecurity program. Ms. Connolly has also connected with seven students in the Cybersecurity program to advise them on course sequences for completion in order to avoid delays due to limited course offerings.
- NJ STARS Coordinator Jennifer Kipp reports NJ STARS enrollment for the Spring 2026 semester is 238, up 6 from Spring 2025 (2.5% increase).
- Ms. Laura Wills, Director of Transfer Services and Articulation, and Ms. Amy Nadybal, Transfer Services Coordinator, in collaboration with the Stockton Assistant Director of Admissions, hosted a Stockton 3+1 information session on April 8, 2026. The session was attended by seven students both in-person and virtually.
- The Stockton 3+1 program will launch its second cohort in Fall 2026 with approximately 13 students. The OCC Transfer Team conducted outreach in accounting courses during the Fall semester to promote the program and worked closely with the School of Business and Social Sciences to support course scheduling and program alignment.
- During the month of February, Financial Aid hosted weekly after-hours workshops to ensure everyone had the support they needed to navigate the FAFSA. These sessions resulted in many successfully completed applications. Helping these individuals move forward with their education is a meaningful win for our community.

Financial Aid continues to support OCC's military-affiliated students on a daily basis. While the team provides assistance every day, six hours a week are dedicated specifically to the Veterans and Military Resources Center to help these students navigate their financial aid and veteran benefits.

- In March 2026, the Counseling Center continued to serve as a cornerstone of student success, facilitating 306 clinical appointments and outreach engagements. The Center's efforts this month focused on three areas: expanding specialized clinical care, proactive suicide prevention, and fostering a culture of safety and belonging.
- On March 19, 2026, the Counseling Center hosted two Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) trainings for Suicide Prevention: The Clinical Workshop for community mental health providers, and

the Non-Clinical Workshop that empowered students, faculty, and staff with life-saving strategies to support at-risk individuals while respecting personal autonomy.

- The Counseling Center partnered with RWJBarnabas Health and distributed "Vibe Check" kits on March 26, 2026. These kits provide students with practical tools, including Naloxone and drink-testing strips to prevent overdose and promote personal safety, reinforcing OCC's commitment to student well-being. The kits also include a combination whistle and flashlight keychain, a first aid kit, and a reusable drink cover.
- Additional Counseling events in March focused on making mental health support approachable and visible:
 - On March 25, 2026, Counseling partnered with Minding Your Mind to host a speaker who shared a powerful story of recovery. This event was instrumental in reducing the stigma associated with mental health struggles and encouraging early help-seeking behavior.
 - The "Pups and Positivity" event on March 11, 2026, provided students with an opportunity to relax with trained therapy dogs. These moments of "micro-wellness" reduce stress and integrate self-care into our students' lives.
 - Graduate interns maintain a high-visibility presence through tabling events at the Library throughout the month. These efforts ensure that every student knows consistent support is accessible and no student should suffer in silence.
- In recognition of Autism Acceptance Month, Disability Services hosted a live screening of BEING MICHELLE on April 15, 2026. This award-winning documentary tells the story of a Deaf woman with autism who survived incarceration and now uses art as a tool for healing and advocacy. The film highlights the disproportionate impact of incarceration on Deaf and disabled individuals, as well as the barriers they encounter in Higher Education in Prison (HEP) programs.
- Disability Services has continued to actively support both students and the campus community, serving 87 students (current and prospective) since the last report. Staff provide services through both in-person and virtual appointments to ensure accessibility and flexibility. In addition to direct student support, the office has engaged the broader campus community by hosting events and collaborating across departments to promote disability and mental health awareness, while connecting students to essential resources.
- On April 27, 2026, Disability Services is partnering with the Counseling Center to host a wellness event open to all students, offering opportunities for social connection and mindfulness activities.

Student Outreach

- On March 30, 2026, the CTE Connect and Explore event was held on the Toms River campus, and 20 students participated. The event provided students with the opportunity to engage with professionals in the field of social work and gain valuable insight into potential career pathways.

A featured speaker was Mr. Miguel Williams, an experienced social work professional whose career spans psychiatric hospitals and clinical practice, with a focus on understanding the intersecting identities of clients. He has also served as an adjunct professor, teaching the Social Work in Healthcare Settings course at OCC. Students also heard from Ms. Gwendolyn Wilson of O.C.E.A.N Inc.'s Head Start program, who has extensive experience supervising social work student interns.

Through these presentations, students gain real-world perspectives on the profession, including career expectations, workplace experiences, and the skills needed to succeed in the field.

- On March 31, 2026, 70 students from the Ocean County Vocational Technical School (OCVTS) Pre-Nursing Program visited OCC's School of Nursing and Health Sciences. Ms. Linda Simmons MSN, RN, CEN CNE, CHSE, Director of the Skills and Simulation Center, and Mr. John Preusse, MM, Academic Affairs Technician, provided students with an overview of the Nursing program and an introduction to the simulation labs where they practiced various skills. An Escape Room, "Its Springtime, not Falltime," focused on assessing a patient's risk for falling. The visit also included a video that discussed the various areas available for Registered Nurses to practice.
- On Friday, April 17, 2026, NYC ballet concert master Arturo Delmoni and composer/pianist Nina Siniakova presented a program of music for violin and piano in OCC's newly renovated Bosendorfer recital room. Following the performance, Maestro Delmoni gave a masterclass to OCC violin student, John Alarcon, as well as three Toms River high school violin students.
- On April 22, 2026, the Recruitment Team, alongside the Achievement Center, hosted the 2nd ESL Information Session. Prospective students learned about various ESL and scholarship opportunities at the College and were able to take the Accuplacer placement test and register for Summer or Fall terms.
- On Saturday, March 28, 2026, Ms. Lauren Simon, Enrollment Services Advisor, attended the Girl Scouts STEM Fair alongside faculty and staff from the STEM department. During the event, they engaged with K–12 Girl Scouts to discuss post-secondary planning and career pathways in STEM fields.
- On March 31, 2026, Multilingual Language Navigator Carolina Newman presented at "Dragon Destinations: Roadmap to the Future" at Brick Township High School. She was joined by Ms. Noelle Staufenberger, Healthcare Career Coordinator, SCC5 Grant, to discuss post-secondary planning and scholarship opportunities with students across all grade levels.
- The Recruitment Team partnered with the Hispanic Heritage Club at Toms River high schools to host the 2nd Annual Post-Secondary Planning Conference on April 17, 2026, welcoming approximately 140 students to campus. The conference featured six workshops in collaboration with campus departments, including Vision Boards and Time Management (Student Success Team), College 101 (College Pathways Advisor), FAFSA 101 (Financial Aid), Professional Email Writing (Career Services), and Professional Headshots. The event supported students in navigating the college process and mapping out their post-high school plans.
- On April 21 and 22, 2026, Ms. Lauren Simon will host the Lakewood Career Workshop, presenting to sophomores at Lakewood High School. The sessions will discuss various career pathways, corresponding degree programs, and include a personality and career assessment to help students explore potential career directions.
- The Student Success team released a new podcast for their series, Coffee with the Coaches, on March 25, 2026. During the first two months on Spotify, the coaches have gained an additional 17 followers.
- The Counseling Center is pleased to announce the successful launch of a new community collaboration with St. Francis Counseling Services. This initiative ensures our students have access to high-tier, specialized support without leaving campus.

The program was initiated utilizing grant funds from the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. A licensed clinician from St. Francis is on site at the OCC Counseling Center every Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This partnership brings advanced expertise in sexual violence, grief counseling, perinatal mental health, and trauma recovery directly to our students through the end of 2026. By integrating external specialists, the Counseling Center is expanding its scope of practice and ensuring that students with complex trauma receive immediate, expert-level intervention without being added to long wait lists in the community.

- Ms. Jamie Prioli, Director of Access and Disability Services, conducted community outreach at the Community Services Transition Fair at Toms River High School North on April 15, 2026. She also participated in the 9th Annual Autism Resources Fair held at the Ocean County Library, Toms River Branch, on April 18, 2026. In addition, Ms. Prioli continues to engage with key community partners, including:
 - April 8, 2026 – Ocean County Core Advisory Group – Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities
 - April 13, 2026 – Ocean County Mental Health Board meeting
 - April 14, 2026 – Ocean County Workforce Development Board – Individuals with Disabilities
 - April 16, 2026 – Ocean County Commission for Individuals with Disabilities.
- On April 10, 2026, staff from Disability Services attended the monthly meeting and presentation hosted by NJ AHEAD. The session featured a presentation and community discussion responding to Rose Horowitch’s December 2, 2025, article, “Accommodation Nation,” published in The Atlantic. Members of the OCC campus community were invited to attend this engaging virtual discussion, which was led by:
 - Martina Svyantek, Ph.D., Digital Accessibility Specialist, University of Virginia Library, President, Virginia AHEAD
 - Chris Parthemos, Ph.D. BCBA, Director, University of Virginia Student Disability Access Center, President-Elect, Virginia AHEAD
 - Jane E. Jarrow, Ph.D., founder and President of Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS); former Executive Director of AHEAD

Community Outreach

- The Grunin Center hosted the Phi Theta Kappa Induction Ceremony on April 16, 2026, as well as the Welcoming Kick-Off for the Enrollment Services Department's Hispanic Heritage Club Conference on April 17, 2026.
- Mr. Arturo Delmoni and Ms. Nina Siniakova, violinist and pianist, respectively, performed on April 17, 2026, as part of the Afternoon Recital Series to a sold-out Bösendorfer Room.
- The Spring season continued with four performances that highlight the mission of the Grunin Center, including Brass Queens, a female-led brass band in celebration of Women’s History Month (March 28, 2026); Nella, a trio blending Venezuelan folk roots with modern production elements (April 11, 2026); and *Krakauer and Tagg’s Good Vibes Explosion* (April 12, 2026), described as a “multi-generational, high-octane group of collaborators from very different backgrounds, hailing from the USA, Canada, Iran, and South Africa.”

- The Novins Planetarium hosted well-attended daytime shows during the K-12 Spring break, including two busy live sky talks with 60 and 85 students in attendance.
- A NASA FOCUS Family Science night was held at Lakewood Middle School on April 15, 2026, welcoming families to learn about remote sensing applications in space. The event had 50 registered children, equating to nearly 200 total attendees.
- On April 18, 2026, The Brit Pack entertained audiences with music from a range of British artists spanning multiple decades.
- On April 19, 2026, The Duprees, an American musical group of doo-wop style, performed to a sold-out house, presented through renter presenter, Lightning Entertainment.
- In collaboration with the Ocean County College Foundation, Ms. Margaret Atwood will grace the OCC Grunin Center Mainstage on April 23, 2026. Ms. Atwood is the author of more than fifty books of fiction, poetry, and critical essays, with works published in over 40 languages and 45 countries. Her 1985 novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, was adapted into a 15-time Emmy Award-winning TV series; and its sequel, *The Testaments*, won the 2019 Booker Prize. Her other notable works include *The Blind Assassin*, *Alias Grace*, *Oryx and Crake*, *The Robber Bride*, *Cat's Eye*, and her memoir, *Book of Lives*. She is the recipient of numerous international honors, including the German Peace Prize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Franz Kafka International Literary Prize, and the PEN Center USA Lifetime Achievement Award.
- The Helping Hands staff and volunteers went on three road trips this month. First, they stopped by the food drive led by the HopeWin Foundation to thank them for supporting OCC's campus Food Pantry and to bring back the many donations that were collected. Next, the volunteers helped out at the weekly Friday Pop the Trunk event at the Presbyterian Church of Toms River by assisting with unpacking boxes of food and then distributing it to community members. Finally, Pantry volunteers had the opportunity to assist the staff at the JBJ Soul Kitchen for a weekly lunch service. They worked as servers and bussers while learning about the mission of JBJ Soul Kitchen and the B.E.A.T. Center.
- On April 8, 2026, the Governmental Affairs Institute sponsored a discussion titled, "Impacts of Sea-Level Rise on Jersey Shore Communities and Businesses." Led by Dr. Kevin Dooley, Chair of the Political Science Department at Monmouth University, the session examined how changes to our oceans have resulted in increased sea levels and flood tendencies. Dr. Dooley explored how coastal communities have been affected as well as possible governmental and community responses. Students had the opportunity to participate in the discussion as well as a question-and-answer session. This particular event was facilitated by Mr. Jason Ghibesi, College Lecturer II of Political Science and History and Coordinator for the Governmental Affairs Institute.
- On February 21, 2026, Ms. Pam Goldsmith, College Lecturer II in Health/Health Management, and a group of students enrolled in the program, traveled to Kean University to participate in Camp Abilities, a sports camp for visually impaired individuals. Students had the opportunity to engage with the athletes and assist in teaching tennis, basketball, and goalball activities. Goalball is a Paralympic team sport designed specifically for athletes with visual impairments.
- On March 26, 2026, the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) center was visited by Mr. Dell Jones, the center's IRS representative, to conduct a primary audit. The center passed the audit with a score of 100%. Mr. Jones reported positive remarks of the facility, the volunteer's diligence, and the pleasant experiences reported by the clients with whom he interacted.

Ms. Trish Archimbaud continues to serve as the program's Site Coordinator at OCC. Since the end of March, the volunteers have processed 188 tax returns and were fully booked with 109 appointments scheduled through April 15, 2026, with expectations to exceed the 234 completed 2024 tax returns that were filed last year.

To celebrate the efforts of the center's volunteers, a luncheon is planned for April 29, 2026. At that time, certificates of appreciation will be presented to the volunteers.

- On March 27, 2026, OCC violin faculty member Dr. Ji in Yang performed an evening recital with French pianist Audrey Abela as part of an outreach campaign to music students in the public school system. The recital featured works by Bartok, Da Falla, Debussy, Korngold, and Gershwin, among other composers.
- On March 27, 2026, Mr. Nat Bard, Instructor of Humanities, and Mr. Brian Gilmore, College Lecturer II in Humanities and Fine Arts, presented OCC's visual arts and music programs to a group of 25 teachers and supervisors, as well as several students, from Ocean County public schools. Arranged by Mr. Thomas Gialanella, Education Partnerships Associate, the event featured a one-hour presentation of these vital programs, a one-hour student panel featuring four OCC art majors and four OCC music majors who discussed their experiences in the program, as well as a tour of the respective music and art facilities. The music tour ended with musical performances given by each of the four students.
- On March 28, 2026, Ms. Kileen (Ana) Wilson, College Lecturer II in Mathematics, represented Ocean County College at STEM Fest, an event hosted by the Girl Scouts of the Jersey Shore. The event was held at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, New Jersey. The objective of STEM Fest is to bring 20 women or companies to host interactive tables, giving girls the chance to explore careers, ask questions, and be inspired by women who are making an impact in science, technology, engineering, and math. Ms. Wilson facilitated an interactive math-based activity for the Girl Scout community.
- Ms. Saundra Piscitelli, Instructor of Humanities, Interpreter Training Program (ITP), and Ms. Jessica Ansbach, ITP Alumna, are both nationally certified sign language interpreters. On April 23, 2026, they will provide pro bono interpreting services for the moderated discussion with Margaret Atwood, speaker at the Grunin Center for the Arts.

Grants

- The Missouri CAN Poverty Simulation was held again on April 10, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the Larson Student Center. In addition to student attendees, representatives from the Division of Welfare attended, as well as two Ocean County College Board of Trustees members.
- Since September, the FIPSE Basic Needs Grant has awarded over \$100,000 in direct student assistance in the form of gift cards, housing assistance, utility payments, emergency medical assistance, and more.

Security

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 March 21, 2026, through April 16, 2026.



Board of Trustees

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Displaced Homemakers Act was signed into law by Governor Brendan Byrne in 1979; and

WHEREAS, the Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County, funded by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division on Women, has been at Ocean County College since 2007; and

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

WHEREAS, the Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County significantly impacted the lives of over 600 Ocean County women by helping them reach their full potential, gain self-confidence, and enhance their employability;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the month of May 2026 be proclaimed as Displaced Homemakers Awareness Month at Ocean County College; and

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

Adopted: April 23, 2026

DiAnne C. Gove
Secretary



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, May is designated as National Nurses Month by the American Nurses Association; and

WHEREAS, nurses in the United States constitute our nation’s largest health care profession; and

WHEREAS, the American Nurses Association is celebrating its 130th anniversary as the voice for nurses in the country; and

WHEREAS, professional nursing is an indispensable component of the safety and quality of care of hospitalized and non-hospitalized patients; and

WHEREAS, the demand for nursing services will be greater than ever because of the aging of the American population, the emerging health challenges, and the continuing development of life-sustaining technologies; and

WHEREAS, the American Nurses Association has declared May 6 to May 12 as National Nurses Week, with the theme “The Power of Nurses” in appreciation for their extensive impact and their contributions to the health and well-being of our communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees declares May 6 to 12, 2026, as Nurses Week at Ocean County College in recognition of the Power of Nurses to enrich our lives and the world we live in, and to specifically acknowledge and celebrate the OCC School of Nursing and Health Sciences for its continued excellence in preparing our students to become outstanding nurses who will care for all of us.

Adopted: April 23, 2026

DiAnne C. Gove
Secretary

REQUIRED REPORTING STATISTICS

Board of Trustees Meeting: Thurs, April 23, 2026

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 3/21/26 – 4/16/26.

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