

FALL 2016

Invention

THE MAGAZINE OF THOMAS EDISON STATE UNIVERSITY

jetBlue GETA

Bonny Simi, left, president of JetBlue Ventures and founder of JetBlue Scholars with Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall, BA '16, first bachelor's degree program graduate from JetBlue Scholars.

takingOff

JetBlue Rethinks Degree Completion for its Crewmembers

UNIVERSITY SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN EQUIP PROGRAM | WATSON INSTITUTE'S URBAN AGRICULTURE EVENT PROMOTES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WATSON SCHOOL LAUNCHES NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS | UNIVERSITY UNVEILS GLEN CAIRN HALL

BORN TO LEAD: BRIAN HUGHES, AA '92, BA '00 | CRITICAL CARETAKER: JENNIFER DONOHUE, BSN '12

WHAT'S INSIDE

FALL 2016



1 President's Message

University News

- 2 > Thomas Edison State University Selected to Participate in EQUIP Program
- 3 > 2016 National Institute Focuses on Student and Institutional Success in PLA
- 3 > Watson Institute's Urban Agriculture Event Promotes Economic Development
- 3 > Watson School Launches New Graduate Certificate Programs
- 4 > University Unveils Glen Cairn Hall



Foundation News

- 6 > Spreading His Support: Michael Balka, BSAST '14
- 7 > University Receives \$125,000 in Grants from Investors Bank to Expand Patient Simulation Programs
- 7 > Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation Funds Educational Equipment for University's Accelerated Nursing Program



Cover Story

- 8 > Taking Off: JetBlue and Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall, BA '16

Alumni Profiles

- 12 > Born to Lead: Brian Hughes, AA '92, BA '00
- 14 > Critical Caretaker: Jennifer Donohue, BSN '12
- 16 > Class Notes



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DEAR ALUMNI, STUDENTS AND FRIENDS,

Wilbur Wright said, "It is possible to fly without motors, but not without knowledge and skill."

The alumni you'll meet in this issue of *Invention* each embody the sentiment in Wright's quote and continue the lifelong pursuit of furthering their knowledge and skills.

We are honored to highlight the story of our partnership with JetBlue Airways and its JetBlue Scholars Program. You will meet the first bachelor's degree graduate from the program, Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall, BA '16. After more than 20 years and a handful of career changes, Hawkins-Marshall shares her experiences in the program and what finishing her bachelor's degree means to her.

Also in this issue, we are excited to bring you the story of Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes, AA '92, BA '00, who is the son of former New Jersey Gov. Richard J. Hughes. Having carved his own path to political success, Hughes continues to showcase his unmatched leadership skills in serving the residents of Mercer County, N.J.

We also meet Jennifer Donohue, BSN '12, a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) nurse at Capital Health Medical Center who cares for the most vulnerable of patients at the most critical point in their lives.

Finally, we are thrilled to share news from across the University, including newly launched graduate certificate programs from our John S. Watson School of Public Service and Continuing Studies, recent grants generously awarded to our Foundation as well as the first look inside our newest campus building, Glen Cairn Hall.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Invention*.

Sincerely,

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

University Selected to Participate in EQUIP Program

Thomas Edison State University is one of eight institutions of higher education that has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education as a site for an experimental federal pilot program aimed at promoting, expanding and measuring college access, affordability and student outcomes.

The Educational Quality through Innovation Partnerships (EQUIP) program is designed to allow students, particularly low-income students, to access federal student aid for the first time to enroll in programs offered by nontraditional training providers, in partnership with colleges and universities.

"We are honored to serve as a site for the EQUIP program and work to expand access to higher education programs

and support an outcomes-based quality assurance process that focuses on student learning," said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison

Title IV student aid flexibility to partnerships between innovative postsecondary institutions and nontraditional providers.

"WE ARE HONORED TO SERVE AS A SITE FOR THE EQUIP PROGRAM AND WORK TO EXPAND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT AN OUTCOMES-BASED QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS THAT FOCUSES ON STUDENT LEARNING."

Dr. George A. Pruitt

State University, the only New Jersey institution selected for the program.

The University is partnering with *Study.com* and *Quality Matters* as a site for the EQUIP program, which will evaluate the effectiveness of granting

Through the program, the Department of Education seeks to learn about new alternative credit models and their costs, and educational and employment outcomes for students as well as explore new methods to measure quality.

2016 National Institute Focuses on Student and Institutional Success in PLA



The University presented its 29th annual National Institute on the Assessment of Adult Learning, which provided an intensive learning experience on the best practices in prior learning assessment (PLA) for professionals in education.

This year's theme, "Perspectives on PLA: Strategies for Student and Institutional Success" offered the opportunity for attendees to discuss the multiple perspectives that are now part of PLA. Through the use of case studies, round table discussions and interactive panels and sessions, attendees garnered a better understanding and ability to implement their own PLA programs. The event was held June 8-10 at the Sheraton Philadelphia Society Hill Hotel in Philadelphia, Pa.

"Our theme this year was intentionally directed to allow attendees to think about and consider ways to use PLA to benefit students, institutions and others," said Marc Singer, vice provost, Center for the Assessment of Learning at Thomas Edison State University,

and director of the National Institute. "A 'strategies for success' approach gave us all the opportunity to provide examples of 'win-win' techniques and tactics to formulate policies that are advantageous to all of our audiences."

Keynote presentations were made by Carol Ann Gittens, interim dean for the Graduate School of Education and Counseling Psychology, Santa Clara University; and Julian Alssid, chief workforce strategist, Southern New Hampshire University.

Thomas Edison State University established the National Institute in 1988 to provide an intensive learning experience for educators and professionals involved in the assessment of adult and experiential learning and to help ensure that PLA

is appropriately practiced. The annual event also helps educators learn the best practices related to the field and understand the importance of quality assurance and accreditation issues related to PLA.



Keynote speaker, Julian Alssid, presents, "PLA, CBE and Workforce Development."

Watson Institute's Urban Agriculture Event Promotes Economic Development

The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State University held its "2016 Urban Agriculture as an Economic Tool Conference" at the War Memorial in Trenton, N.J., attracting more than 200 attendees from across the northeast region.

The conference provided the opportunity for attendees to learn about innovative approaches and resources available to aid their communities and spur economic development. Presenters and exhibitors provided insight and information about the significance of urban agriculture in sustaining underserved communities and the economic feasibility of these endeavors.

"Using urban agriculture is a strategic way for many cities and local governments to address not only economic development, but to help cities combat crime and poverty, and foster health, workforce access and education," said Barbara George Johnson, executive

director of the Watson Institute. "Communities across the country are being increasingly recognized for their work in integrating agriculture into their planning and development process, which is a testament to the education and resources continually being made available."

Trenton's 'Capital City Farm,' which was highlighted at the conference, showcased the site as formerly abandoned and overgrown with weeds and debris. The space underwent remediation in 2015 and is projected to produce almost 9,000 pounds of harvest by this fall. Additionally, the site will provide job training, community engagement,



Keynote speaker and founder of the National Black Farmers Association, Dr. John W. Boyd Jr., (left) with Barbara George Johnson, executive director, The John S. Watson Institute of Public Policy of Thomas Edison State University (center), and his wife, Kara D. Boyd, president, Association of American Indian Farmers (right) at the conference.

educational opportunities and, most importantly, transformation of the space into a vibrant communal space.

To learn more about the work of the Watson Institute, visit www.tesu.edu/watson/institute.



Watson School Launches New Graduate Certificate Programs

The John S. Watson School of Public Service and Continuing Studies at Thomas Edison State University launched two new graduate certificate programs in Strategic Planning and Board Leadership for Nonprofits, and Fundraising and Development.

The graduate certificate in **Strategic Planning and Board Leadership for Nonprofits** examines the influence of successful strategic planning in employee recruitment and retention, program analysis and evaluation, and examines critical issues in nonprofit management and board leadership.

The **Fundraising and Development** graduate certificate provides a practical understanding of fundraising and the skills to implement best practices in development for nonprofits.

"These new graduate certificates will help to enhance the breadth and depth of understanding as we focus on aiding those in the nonprofit sector with enhancing their knowledge in these subject areas," said Ann Prime-Monaghan, assistant dean of the Watson School at the University. "Students in these programs will gain additional insight and skills in helping to further enhance planning, leadership and development in the communities where they live and work."

All of the School's graduate certificates are worth 12 credits, are in 12-week formats and offered completely online. To learn more about these and other programs offered by the Watson School, email watsonschool@tesu.edu or visit www.tesu.edu/watson.



Ann Prime-Monaghan, assistant dean of the John S. Watson School of Public Service and Continuing Studies.

University Unveils Glen Cairn Hall

Thomas Edison State University celebrated the opening of Glen Cairn Hall at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sept. 16, recognizing a new addition to Trenton's skyline and the transformation of a gateway to the city.

The building's completion marks the latest development of the site, located at the corner of West State and Calhoun streets, overlooking the Delaware River.

In 1850, Isaac Pearson, a retired Philadelphia merchant, chose the site and commissioned Philadelphia architect John Notman to design Glencairn, a country home large enough for three generations of his family and their servants. Notman had designed an addition to the New Jersey State House and other prominent buildings in Trenton and Princeton and would go on to become a founding member of the American Institute of Architects.

Years later, the mansion was demolished and the location was succeeded for an apartment complex, appropriately

named Glen Cairn Arms, which opened in 1926. The complex consisted of two H-shaped buildings and housed prominent city residents.

As the years passed, the buildings deteriorated and were eventually condemned. After sitting vacant for more than 20 years, the University acquired the property from the city in 2013, and promptly razed the apartment buildings and prepared the site for the new building.

Construction began in the spring of 2014 and was completed in the summer of 2016.

Glen Cairn Hall is a 34,360-square-foot building that is home to the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and includes new, state-of-the-art nursing



simulation laboratories, lecture halls, conference rooms and a testing center. The building also boasts a two-level, 44,828-square-foot parking garage that accommodates more than 90 vehicles as well as a green roof that creates an outdoor space for students and University events.

"The addition of Glen Cairn Hall to the University's campus is monumental," said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president. "It is a strong symbol of the growth, change and investment we are making in our institution, our students and the Capital City."

To view a time-lapse of Glen Cairn Hall's complete construction, visit <http://www.tesu.edu/gch-time-lapse>.



Glen Cairn Hall features a number of conference rooms to facilitate University events and meetings.



The Nursing Lounge on the second floor of the building features seating, charging stations and lockers, which gives nursing students a comfortable place to congregate, study and socialize.



The Glen Cairn Arms apartment complex iconic entryway was preserved, restored and built into the design of the new building, including a piece of history of the site inside the new structure.



The development of Glen Cairn Hall has transformed a key gateway to Trenton at W. State and Calhoun streets near Route 29.



Glen Cairn Hall's green roof, looking toward the back end of the building, helps to reduce the flow of rainwater and mitigate the urban heat island effect.



Housed atop the building's parking deck is a green roof that creates an outdoor space for students and University events.

The iconic entrance that once stood as the entryway to the former Glen Cairn Arms has been preserved and repurposed in Glen Cairn Hall, which also features a gallery space to display inventions, artifacts and memorabilia from Thomas Alva Edison donated to the Foundation by John and Eileen Martinson.



Dr. George A. Pruitt, president, presents Lynn Edwards with a portrait of her late husband, W. Cary Edwards, for whom the University's nursing school is named, at a portrait unveiling reception on Aug. 11 at Glen Cairn Hall. The portrait was painted by renowned portrait artist Ned Bittinger.



(from left) Brian T. Maloney, chair of the Thomas Edison State University Board of Trustees; Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State University; and Trenton Mayor Eric Jackson, cut the ribbon celebrating the opening of Glen Cairn Hall.



Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program students utilize state-of-the-art simulation lab equipment as well as a testing center as part of their curriculum.



Spreading His Support: Michael Balka, BSAST '14

Michael Balka makes it look easy.

Having relocated for each job he's held, Balka is the first to admit it was hard to earn his degree at a brick and mortar institution.

"The pattern of my career has been constant motion; I think I counted eight times where I've either moved for a job or to keep one," said Balka. "Attending a traditional school to finish a degree never worked for me because each time I'd get a class under my belt, I'd be faced with relocation."

Now settled into his career as an aircraft maintenance supervisor for United Parcel Service (UPS) Airlines in Louisville, Ky., Balka credits the University's longstanding partnership with UPS as the motivation he needed to complete his degree.

"UPS has maintained a relationship with Thomas Edison for many years and had our corporate training evaluated for credit," Balka explained. "My degree program, Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in Aviation Maintenance Technology, was fantastic because the quality of our training is all collegiate level; being awarded credit for previous professional training, including pilot and mechanics ratings, was a huge benefit."

Since earning his degree in 2014, Balka has begun work on his graduate degree in commercial aviation with Delta State University in Cleveland, Miss., though never losing sight of or appreciation for the opportunity and experience Thomas Edison afforded him.



Michael Balka, BSAST '14 (Photo courtesy of UPS)

overwhelmingly positive experience I had, I give back to the institution; I see the value from a first-person

donors like him to use payroll deduction to support the University. The program allows donors to choose their gift amount, the frequency, and the ability to change and alter their gift at any time. The automatic deduction from an account of any donor's choosing enables supporters to work their contribution into a personal budget.

"When considering giving back to the University, put yourself in the shoes of someone who just needs a little nudge to get back," Balka explained, "Every gift matters; it certainly did for me."

To learn more, visit www.tesufoundation.org/recurringgift.

perspective and want to ensure that future students are given the same chance that I was granted."

Balka participates in the Foundation's Recurring Gift Program, which enables

"THOMAS EDISON GAVE ME A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO COMPLETE A LONG OVERDUE DEGREE PROGRAM, AND I BELIEVE THAT THEIR MISSION AND PRIMARY FOCUS ON ADULT EDUCATION IS, SIMPLY STATED, ESSENTIAL."

Michael Balka

"Thomas Edison gave me a real opportunity to complete a long overdue degree program, and I believe that their mission and primary focus on adult education is, simply stated, essential," he began. "Because of this and the

University Receives \$125,000 in Grants from Investors Bank to Expand Patient Simulation Programs

State-of-the-art patient simulation programs for nursing students at the University will be expanded, thanks in part to \$125,000 in grants from the Investors Bank Foundation, in partnership with the Roma Bank Community Foundation. The support will ensure that students can interact in clinical decision-making and intervention scenarios while causing no risk to real patients.

"The Virtual Clinical Simulation (VCS) program gives us the ability to integrate simulated clinical scenarios into students' online curriculum," said Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing at the University. "The funding also supports our onground nursing simulation lab, which is the technological centerpiece of the Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program."

According to Marshall, both technologies continue to enhance students' diagnostic and clinical

reasoning abilities while actively engaging them in a risk-free, interactive learning environment.

"Investors Bank is thrilled to help Thomas Edison State University in its expansion of an innovative, online Virtual Clinical Simulation program as well as the nursing simulation lab, which is instrumental when a nursing student is preparing to enter the field," said Linda Martin, senior market manager of Investors Bank.

The funding from Investors Bank was given in installments over a period of three years to the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing; the final installment of \$35,000 was granted in June. The School applied for the grant from the Investors Bank Foundation and the Roma Bank Community Foundation, both of which support nonprofit organizations that enrich the diverse communities served by Investors Bank.

"This grant from Investors Bank ensures we can offer the most advanced



Thomas Edison State University W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing Dean Dr. Filomela Marshall (far right) accepts two grants totaling \$35,000 from Investors Bank to help fund the University's Virtual Clinical Simulation program. Joining Marshall are, from left, John Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison State University; Linda Martin, senior market manager for Investors Bank and Peggi Shader-Gother, Investors Bank assistant vice president and Robbinsville branch manager. (Photo courtesy of Donna Connor)

technological platforms to support nursing education, which ultimately benefits the entire community," said John Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison State University.

Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation Funds Educational Equipment for University's Accelerated Nursing Program

The Thomas Edison State University Foundation has received a grant from Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation (NPC) in support of the innovative teaching of effective medication administration in the nursing simulation laboratory as part of the University's Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program (Accelerated Program) curriculum.

The grant will assist with funding the purchase of an integrated, advanced medication dispensing system, which will model the drug cabinet configurations and features used in most healthcare settings. The cabinet will be fully modular and play an important role in teaching comprehensive medication delivery and storage. Yearly, the cabinet will support the instruction of an average of 30 nursing students per cohort.

"The role of the nurse in medication preparation and administration is especially challenging in the current healthcare delivery system," said Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing at the University. "The acquisition of an automated medication dispensing system for our simulation lab is invaluable in building the skills and competencies of our nursing students."



School educators will integrate this innovative system into appropriate courses throughout the Accelerated Program curriculum. They will also create challenging healthcare scenarios that will help students develop and

perform state-of-the-art medication administration practices in a safe and controlled environment without fear of doing harm to real patients.

With approximately 8-10 nursing students administering medications at the same time, it is essential that students be organized and proficient in the use of this integrated system. By using this equipment in the simulation lab, it will increase competence and confidence.

Since 2012, the University's partnership with NPC has impacted the institution's students through its additional support of the initial development of the nursing simulation laboratory and the Virtual Clinical Simulation program as well as the development and launch of the Military and Veteran Portal (MVP).

JetBlue takingOff

JetBlue Rethinks Degree Completion for its Crewmembers

Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall, BA '16

When JetBlue decided to take a fresh approach to employer-sponsored education, the airline began to think outside the box about how to best serve its people.

The result:

JetBlue Scholars, an innovative program that enables JetBlue crewmembers the opportunity to earn a degree from Thomas Edison State University, with the airline covering most of the cost.

JetBlue takingOff

"Our crewmembers asked for help earning degrees and we knew we could take a big step beyond tuition reimbursement," recalled Bonny Simi, president of JetBlue Ventures and founder of JetBlue Scholars. "We rethought the employer's role in investing in education. Utilizing the alternative credit model to unbundle the higher education process, we've eliminated some of the complexity."

Thomas Edison State University worked with JetBlue to create alternative credit pathways to several of its degree programs that use credit-by-exam programs, open courses, online courses evaluated by the American Council on Education and select JetBlue training programs and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certifications evaluated by the University.

"I WAS ABLE TO COMPLETE ALL OF MY STUDIES ON MY OWN TIME, IN MY OWN SPACE. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO FINISH MY DEGREE IF I NEEDED TO TRAVEL TO A TRADITIONAL INSTITUTION."

Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall

"We are honored to partner with JetBlue to help its crewmembers complete their degrees and achieve their personal and professional goals," said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State University. "JetBlue Scholars is an innovative program that leverages the core competencies of our University - delivering flexible, high-quality, collegiate programs to self-directed adults and assessing college-level knowledge that has been acquired outside the traditional classroom. We are very excited about our role in the launch of this unique and important partnership."

The program goes well beyond standard tuition reimbursement and provides a success coach to help crewmembers map a pathway to a bachelor's degree in aviation, liberal studies, information technology or business administration from Thomas Edison State University.

This includes reviewing their professional and educational background, including transcripts

from previous college courses, professional and military training, including FAA certifications, and other expertise that is equivalent to college-level knowledge.

JetBlue covers most of the cost of the program for participants. As part of the initial launch, more than 100 JetBlue Scholars participants have already applied to Thomas Edison State University. The program's first graduation ceremony took place Sept. 15 and more than 50 crewmembers will receive their degrees in 2016.

Among them is Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall, a JetBlue dispatcher who is the program's first bachelor's degree program graduate. She completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies in June.

"It actually dawned on me when I started getting my transcripts, that I had a lot of credits," said Hawkins-Marshall, a veteran of the U.S. Army Reserves. "I had never seen my military transcript either, so I was surprised to see how close I was to getting my bachelor's degree."

Simi said one of the biggest advantages of the program is the removal of traditional roadblocks, such as classrooms and physical textbooks that often come with earning a college degree. A larger focus is put on a cohesive curriculum of self-paced online courses, which works around the needs of crewmembers who are managing their careers and family responsibilities.

"The JetBlue Scholars program was very convenient for me," said Hawkins-Marshall. "I was able to complete all of my studies on my own time, in my own space. It would have been nearly impossible for me to finish my degree if I needed to travel to a traditional institution."

Hawkins-Marshall noted that she found motivation from both her success coach and her four children, who provided the encouragement she needed.

"I had a coach that would not allow me to quit. She just kept telling me, 'you are going to finish this.' So it became my motivation, it kept me going," she said. "It gave me the energy, the strength and just the drive for me to finally complete my degree that I started almost 20 years ago."



Bonny Simi, president of JetBlue Ventures and founder of JetBlue Scholars, addresses Scholars graduates at the JetBlue graduation held in Orlando on Sept. 15. (Photo courtesy of JetBlue)



Graduate Jenna Richards shakes hands with Thomas Edison State University Provost and Vice President, William Seaton, as she receives her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree diploma. (Photo courtesy of JetBlue)



"THIS PROGRAM WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST THINGS THAT I HAVE BEEN THROUGH...SOMETIMES I CAN'T BELIEVE I'VE ACTUALLY COMPLETED IT BECAUSE IT'S BEEN SO LONG. THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT WAS PERSONAL. IF YOU'RE EVEN CONSIDERING FINISHING YOUR DEGREE, I WOULD SAY DO IT."

Roxanne Hawkins-Marshall



Roughly 50 JetBlue Scholars, pictured, completed their degrees with the University within the first year of the program's launch. (Photo courtesy of JetBlue)

Working with a success coach, JetBlue Scholars complete their degree requirements through the use of various learning technology platforms, including *Sophia.com*, *StraighterLine.com* and *Study.com*, which have been evaluated and recommended for credit by the American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service.

JetBlue is also developing new courses internally that utilize open source material from providers such as *Saylor.org* and *OpenStaxCollege.org*, which will prepare crewmembers to earn credit through college-

level exams provided by the College Board and Thomas Edison State University. Capstone courses are taken with the University before the degree is awarded.

"This program was one of the greatest things that I have been through," Hawkins-Marshall said. "Sometimes I can't believe I've actually completed it because it's been so long. This accomplishment was personal. If you're even considering finishing your degree, I would say do it."

Born to Lead

❖ Brian Hughes, AA '92, BA '00

Brian Hughes was born to lead.

The son of former New Jersey Gov. and Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard J. Hughes, the younger Hughes has carved his own path to political success, with his father to serve as his inspiration.

"I knew I wanted to get involved in politics when I ran for Congress in 1992," Hughes began. "My father, and many other family members involved in the political arena, offered me advice when I first got started. Most of the advice was, 'Don't run for office.'"

Hughes ignored that advice and it's certainly proven fruitful.

"I ALWAYS HAD FINISHING MY COLLEGE DEGREE IN THE BACK OF MY MIND," HUGHES EXPLAINED. "ALTHOUGH I LOST THE RACE, IT BECAME A CONCERN OF MINE DURING THE CAMPAIGN THAT I DIDN'T HOLD A BACHELOR'S DEGREE. IT WASN'T A REQUIREMENT, BUT I FIGURED IF I WAS EVER GOING TO RUN FOR OFFICE AGAIN I WOULD MAKE IT MY MISSION TO EARN A BACHELOR'S DEGREE."

Brian Hughes

He has served and run for numerous positions at all levels of government, including as deputy executive director of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, as a Mercer County freeholder, which included a term as freeholder president and a run for Congress.

It was during his congressional race in 1992 that Hughes vowed he would make college credentials part of his resume.

"I always had finishing my college degree in the back of my mind," Hughes explained. "Although I lost the race, it became a concern of mine during the campaign that I didn't hold a bachelor's degree. It wasn't a requirement, but I figured if I was ever going to run for office again I would make it my mission to earn a bachelor's degree. That's when I began to focus on trying to figure out how I was going to finish my degree."

While working at the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Hughes heard about Thomas Edison and determined the fit was right.

"I transferred in most of my credits; I probably went to most colleges on the east coast at one point or another. I had credits from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; Cornell University School of Hotel Administration; and Mercer County Community College. I also took advantage of the life experience I had acquired over the years having worked for the Governor's Council," said Hughes.

Coupling his transfer credits with online courses at Thomas Edison,

Hughes earned his Associate in Arts degree in Liberal Studies in 1992, followed closely by his Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Sciences/History in 2000.

Since 2004, Hughes has been serving the residents of Mercer County as county executive.

Re-elected to his fourth consecutive term in November 2015, Hughes says he is honored to be able to serve the residents of New Jersey's capital county. The role of county executive is somewhat unique, with only five counties in New Jersey and select others throughout the U.S. that call for one.

"While my day is never the same, I can always count on meeting with members of my cabinet to evaluate and discuss issues. I also have a lot of interaction with our treasurer as well as our human services department," Hughes said. "The stimulus is getting to go to work

and having something different to do every day."

In the more than 12 years that Hughes has held this role, he marks increasing educational opportunity as his most gratifying accomplishment.

"Having a hand in expanding the Trenton campus of Mercer County Community College as well as offering more majors than it ever has before has been such a proud accomplishment for me," he explained. "Our concentration and the access to education we've provided residents cannot be understated."

Additionally, Hughes has also spearheaded the formation of the Mercer County Partnership for Educational Attainment, highlighted in his 2016 State of the County address. The effort will focus on developing strategies to increase the share of the workforce with a college degree or its equivalent by one percent, or about 2,500 people, over the next five years.

Mercer County's involvement in preserving vast amounts of open space is another triumph Hughes points to with pride.

"We now have about 20 percent of Mercer County's open space protected from development," he said.

Hughes also recognized the five colleges and universities in the county that have helped to keep residents employed as another reason to be content.

In his downtime, Hughes finds joy in spending time with his family. "I spend a lot of my time watching my son compete in rowing regattas, and we have recently embarked on his college search, which has occupied a good amount of time."

A longtime resident of Princeton, N.J., Hughes shares his love of the community with his wife, Pamela, and son Sullivan.



"I TRANSFERRED IN MOST OF MY CREDITS; I PROBABLY WENT TO MOST COLLEGES ON THE EAST COAST AT ONE POINT OR ANOTHER. I HAD CREDITS FROM RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY; CORNELL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION; AND MERCER COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE. I ALSO TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE LIFE EXPERIENCE I HAD ACQUIRED OVER THE YEARS HAVING WORKED FOR THE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL."

Brian Hughes

Critical Caretaker

Jennifer Donohue, BSN '12

Jennifer Donohue's client base is the crux of her career. The most vulnerable of her patients are often the toughest to assess.

"Our patients can't communicate to me what they're feeling. Those days are the most difficult for me; the days I feel helpless," said Donohue, a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) nurse at Capital Health Medical Center in Hopewell, N.J., and 2012 graduate of the University's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.

Most sustaining, however, are the days when her patients make their way from the intensive care unit into the arms of their parents, who've waited tirelessly

"When I first began college, I aimlessly rambled between majors. I honestly didn't know what to do. Nursing for me encompasses all that I was looking for: diversity in daily activities; the ability to help others; and the education and empowerment of patients and families," she said.

After nursing school, Donohue worked in both a residential pediatric long-term care facility and an acute pediatric rehab, focusing her area of care on those that involved children.

With assistance from Capital Health's Department of Clinical Education, Donohue was offered tuition assistance to return to school and earn her bachelor's degree. "Capital Health was monumental in assisting me with applying and registering for courses with Thomas Edison," she said.

Donohue credits the flexibility of virtual attendance through her online courses as being one of the major assets that aided her throughout her journey.

"The online format allowed me the flexibility of being a full-time nurse as well as a full-time mom. When I was attending classes I worked night shift. My kids watched me for three years at the computer saying, 'I am doing my homework,'" Donohue explained.

All the while, her work as a NICU nurse involves taking on the role of both a clinician and an educator.

"There isn't a chapter in pregnancy books about the NICU," said Donohue. "It's usually just a small paragraph that mentions we exist; no one thinks that they will ever need to come to our unit. Educating parents on what is going on with their baby, what our plan of care is, milestones their baby needs to meet before discharge as well as empowering them to be a participant in their baby's care is part of our everyday job."

It's that same education Donohue reinforces to parents, that she happily reflects on when she thinks about why she started her own journey in the first place.

"I walked at graduation so my children could see me graduate, so they could see that the hard work I put in had a reward. That no matter how old you are, your dream is always possible and attainable, and to never give up."

Donohue lives in eastern Pennsylvania with her husband and children. When schedules allow, the family can be found at amusement parks or participating in activities ranging from waterfall rappelling and zip lining to indoor rock climbing.

"THE ONLINE FORMAT ALLOWED ME THE FLEXIBILITY OF BEING A FULL-TIME NURSE AS WELL AS A FULL-TIME MOM. WHEN I WAS ATTENDING CLASSES I WORKED NIGHT SHIFT. MY KIDS WATCHED ME FOR THREE YEARS AT THE COMPUTER SAYING, 'I AM DOING MY HOMEWORK.'"

Jennifer Donohue

for the day they can take them home.

"The healthcare team, including the parents, have often traveled a tumultuous road together. Our patients can stay anywhere from 48 hours to more than 100 days depending on what their gestation was at birth. Being part of the team that insures that these parents have their baby to take home and love is so satisfying," said Donohue.

Like many, Donohue was the first in her family to attend college.

"I floundered in my first college choice. I chose a big university and truly got lost in the system. I spent four years there and left without a degree," she explained.

From there, Donohue applied to a hospital-based nursing school, which encompassed all that she was looking for in a career.

There she was tasked with caring for post-premature infants who had tracheostomy tubes and were on ventilators due to respiratory complications from prematurity. The infants and children were cared for until they were off respiratory support and were discharged.

In 1998, Donohue applied for a job with the NICU at Capital Health where she has worked ever since.

Along the way, she was made aware of the push for all RNs to acquire their BSN degree by 2020, to remain in compliance with Magnet standards set forth by the American Nurses' Credentialing Center (ANCC), an affiliate of the American Nurses Association. This credential is awarded to hospitals that successfully satisfy a set of criteria designed to measure the strength and quality of their nursing.



"I WALKED AT GRADUATION SO MY CHILDREN COULD SEE ME GRADUATE, SO THEY COULD SEE THAT THE HARD WORK I PUT IN HAD A REWARD. THAT NO MATTER HOW OLD YOU ARE, YOUR DREAM IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE AND ATTAINABLE, AND TO NEVER GIVE UP."

Jennifer Donohue

❖ **Enrique Acosta Gonzalez** BA '15

Enrique Acosta Gonzalez has been hired by Sonobi, an ad technology development company, as executive assistant of professional development, corporate directives and recognition programs.



❖ **Tonya Garcia** BA '06

Tonya Garcia, who currently serves as the Long Branch Public Library director, has been honored as the 2016 New Jersey Librarian of the Year at the New Jersey Library Association's annual conference in Atlantic City, N.J.



❖ **Michael T. Geraghty** BA '09

Michael T. Geraghty was named the first director of the New Jersey Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Cell (NJCCIC).

❖ **Sean Griffin** BSAST '11

Sean Griffin has been selected as director for incident management integration policy as part of the National Security Council Staff for The White House. In this position, Griffin is responsible for coordinating national response policy for the president and senior cabinet officials.

❖ **Harrold Henck** BA '06

Harrold Henck, a senior chief petty officer in the U.S. Navy, recently became the proud father of a baby boy. Henck and wife Michelle are currently stationed in the Washington, D.C., metro area. New son, Henry, weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces. Henck also received the 2015-2016 Master Chief Petty Officer Delbert Black Leadership Award for his outstanding work in the Legal Counsel's Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel.

❖ **Scott R. Leitstein** BA '11

Scott R. Leitstein earned his Master of Science degree in computer science with a specialization in interactive intelligence from the Georgia Institute of Technology in May.

❖ **Graham Mainwaring** BA '14

Graham Mainwaring was accepted into Georgia Tech's online Master of Science degree in computer science program.

❖ **Seth Millican** BA '09

Seth Millican has been appointed to the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission by Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal. Millican is the executive director of the Georgia Transportation Alliance.



❖ **Nathanael Milne** BA '12

Nathanael Milne graduated from Westminster Seminary California in Escondido, Calif., with a Master of Arts degree in historical theology.

❖ **David Orozco** AAS '14, BS '14

David Orozco has started a position as a technical recruiter with Google, Inc.



❖ **Juanita A. Petty** BSBA '96

Juanita A. Petty is one of six recipients statewide of the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials' (NJASBO) 2016 Distinguished Service Award recognizing her long-term exemplary service as former Wayne Township Public School business administrator/board secretary.



❖ **Diane Riley** BSBS '12

Diane Riley was recognized by the New Jersey State Assembly for her work in the fight against poverty. Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttie presented the honor on the floor of the Assembly, recognizing Riley and two other anti-poverty advocates. Huttie said, "These honorees live and breathe this challenge each and every day and have made a marked difference in the lives of families throughout New Jersey. For that, they deserve to be honored during this year's Women's History Month." In addition to her position at the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, Riley also serves on the board of the Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey.



❖ **Isaac Rothermel** BA '15

Isaac Rothermel began a position with Investment Real Estate, a development, investment and brokerage company of self-storage facilities. Rothermel holds a Pennsylvania real estate license and is also working toward earning the Certified Commercial Investment Manager (CCIM) designation.



❖ **Nicholas Schmit** BSAST '13

Nicholas Schmit graduated from the University of California, Irvine, with a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree and has since been accepted into the Endeavor Leadership Program at Cymer, a leadership development program, based in San Diego, Calif.



❖ **Iris N. Smith** MSAST '14

Iris N. Smith (formerly Arrington) has graduated from Widener University School of Law, Wilmington, Del., with a Master of Jurisprudence degree in Global Compliance Law. She married Brandon S. Smith on Aug. 14. Smith also began a new position with PRA Health Sciences as a global regulatory affairs associate.



❖ **John A. Sowers** BSBA '10

John A. Sowers has been named chair of the San Diego Leadership Board of the American Lung Association in California. Sowers currently serves as vice president of electric distribution for San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E).

❖ **Jon Wiegand** ASPSS '04, BA '05

Jon Wiegand has been promoted to sergeant with the Wildwood Crest Police Department in Wildwood Crest, N.J. Wiegand has been an officer with the department for 16 years, currently assigned as the detective sergeant in the Detective Bureau. He is also in the U.S. Navy Reserve, recently promoted to the rank of master-at-arms senior chief petty officer (E-8). As part of his promotion with the police department, he will now oversee the Investigations Unit.



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