




# THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

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## MEMORANDUM September 12, 1997

**TO:** Members, Board of Trustees

**FROM:** George A. Pruitt 

**SUBJECT:** President's Report to the Board of Trustees

### Middle States Association - Periodic Review Report

As you are aware, in early June the College filed its five-year Periodic Review Report (PRR) with the Middle States Association (MSA) in compliance with the accreditation process. In late July we received reports from financial and external reviewers assigned to perform a peer analysis of the College's Periodic Review Report. These reports were very complimentary and contained no significant concerns regarding either the fiscal or the academic condition of Thomas Edison State College.

James T. Hill of the University of Maryland at Baltimore provided a fiscal critique and made four comments; three applauded the institution's financial management practices, and one cited a slight concern over the level of cash book balance maintained by the College.

Dr. Mildred Garcia, Associate Vice Provost at Arizona State University - West and Robert Goldschmidt, Dean of Students at Touro College, performed the comprehensive external review. In their report Garcia and Goldschmidt gave high praise to the College's PRR and the College-wide process used to develop it, and applauded the College for its progress. I quote, "As Thomas Edison State College marks its 25th anniversary, the PRR highlights the myriad ways that the institution has established itself as the international leader in distance education and educating the adult learner."

Drs. Garcia and Goldschmidt made four recommendations related to enrollment growth, library access, learning outcomes, and diversity of the student body in the Master of Science in Management program. The College responded to each of these recommendations and the comment made by James Hill in a letter sent to Jean Avnet Morse, Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

MSA will formally act on our PRR at a December meeting and will issue an accreditation decision that ranges from full acceptance of the report, reaffirmation of accreditation without condition, to issuance of a show cause decision. Based on the input from the reviewers we hope and expect to be at the most positive end of the spectrum.

### **United States Department of Education Title IV Review**

The United States Department of Education conducted a program review of Title IV Federal student assistance programs offered at Thomas Edison State College during the week of August 4, 1997. The site visit encompassed an examination of the College's administration of and eligibility for the Title IV programs and involved extensive review of academic student services, financial aid policies and procedures, registrarial records, and fiscal administration and records with a special focus on the academic years 1995-1996 and 1996-1997.

At the exit interview, the Department of Education representative indicated that the College was deemed eligible for student aid, that the financial aid and registrarial records were in order, and that the College appeared to satisfy the federal regulations as they relate to Title IV student assistance. At his exit interview, he stated his concern was that our current accounting system seemed cumbersome, and that there were "unclear audit trails." He was informed that the College is currently in the process of obtaining a new accounting and student data base system, which will streamline the entire accounting process and produce a system capable of providing a clear audit trail. The installation of the new system will address these concerns.

The Department of Education will submit a written summary of findings approximately 60 days after the files have been reviewed and the representative's questions concerning them have been answered. Once the report is received, the College will have an opportunity to correct any errors of fact and to respond to the report.

### **Center for Distance & Independent Adult Learning (DIAL)**

**Course Registration.** Preliminary DIAL course equivalent enrollments for the Fall 1997 semester are looking strong, and may for the first time surpass the 2,000 course equivalent enrollments mark. This increase will keep DIAL on an upward trend in course registrations, with early estimates of approximately 5% growth over last Fall (1996) and more than 18% over the Summer 1997 semester.

**Examinations.** July figures for Thomas Edison College Examination Program (TECEP) administrations were 208 compared to 202 last year, a 3% increase, while Defense Activity for Nontraditional Educational Support (DANTES) administrations rose by 12% from 57 to 64. Overall, there was a 5% increase in the number of examinations administered. Additionally, DIAL is now tracking the number of registrations that use the DIAL Registration Bulletin as compared with the existing examination flyer. For the first month of such tracking, the DIAL Bulletin accounted for 21% of the 189 registrations. This is a very good beginning.

**New Courses.** Five new Guided Study courses are being offered in the Fall 1997 semester: C++ Programming; Nutrition; Language in Social Contexts; Introduction to World Regional Geography; and Introduction to Chinese History and Culture.

Four new courses are in development: Finance and Accounting for Managers (MSM); Precalculus; Principles of Marketing Management; and Literature of the Americas. Five courses are undergoing significant revision this summer: Seminar in Management and Organizational Leadership I (MSM); Organizational Research (MSM); American History I and II; and Age of the Enlightenment. Three Contract Learning courses are being converted to Guided Study courses: Business Finance; Business Policy; and Introduction to Operations Management.

**Interactive Television Classroom Initiative.** The College continues to be active in the Interactive Television (ITV) project, sponsored by Bell Atlantic, which includes Thomas Edison State College, Rutgers, The State University and Steven's Institute of Technology. Thomas Edison provides centralized registration for all students participating in courses offered by all three Colleges, and DIAL acts as the liaison for centralized textbook ordering for all courses offered as part of the cooperative program. For the Fall 1997 semester, the College is offering Marriage & the Family, and College Composition I to students participating in the program.

**New Faculty Mentors.** New faculty mentors assigned to courses since May include:

Louise Mayo, BA History/Political Science, City College of New York; MA Russian/European History, Cornell University; Ph.D. American History, City College of New York; Present Affiliation: Morris County College; Subject: American History I and II

Susan Ko, BA University of Washington; MA Yale University; Ph.D. Yale University; Present Affiliation: California State University; Subjects: Asian Studies I and Introduction to Chinese History and Culture

Juan Jimenez, BA Spanish & Education, Seton Hall University; MA Bilingual Education, Seton Hall University; MA Counseling & Psychology, St. Peter's College, Present Affiliation: Hudson County Community College; Subject: Introduction to Psychology

U. Samuel Vukcevic, BS Education, Pennsylvania State University; MA Education, Temple University; Present Affiliation: Mercer County Community College; Subject: Introduction to Sociology

Godwin Ohiwerei, BA Sociology, Dillard University; MA Social Science, Southern University; Ph.D. Sociology, Louisiana State University; Present Affiliation: Jersey City State College; Subject: Dealing with Diversity

Celeste Gipson, MA Social Work, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey; Subjects: The Adult Years and Social Gerontology

Ronald Long; BA Economics, Bethany College; BS Business Administration, Spring Garden College; MA Business, College of New Jersey; MS Marketing, St. Joseph's University; JD Law, Widner University School of Law; Subject: Business Law, Organizational Changes

### **Marketing Overview**

In an attempt to meet the enrollment goal of 12,500 by the year 2002, the College has embarked on a major marketing initiative focused in Academic Affairs and supported by the entire College community. The key objectives are:

- to foster and develop client streams which offer promise of enrollment;  
  
to map degree pathways for constituent groups that have a credit base from which to build;
- to foster partnerships with constituent groups that will be mutually beneficial;
- to expand the use of technology to support programs and services that extend outreach initiatives; and
- to enhance the reputation of the College for innovative, educational leadership.

This effort is organized around three predominant market segments: **client streams** that represent population or affinity groups which encompass common characteristics such as the military and senior citizens; **constituent groups** with specific educational needs such as police, pilots, and childcare workers; and **partners**, representative groups or organizations with a constituent population, such as Pathways partners, Zaidner Institute and AT&T.

While the endeavor to increase enrollment is shared responsibility across the College, the associate deans are playing a significant role in supporting these market segments. Their expertise and ability to address the needs of specific populations is key. Reports on the progress of this initiative will be made regularly.

### **Corporate College Programs**

The new fiscal year begins with a new name for PONSI, several promising new corporate or expanded corporate relationships, and the launching of Senior College. The American Council on Education (ACE) has changed the name of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (PONSI). The program is now called the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service.

**Promising New Corporate Initiatives.** Several new initiatives show promise for expanding the College in new ways:

Catholic University of Peru and Thomas Edison State College have reached a partnership agreement that commits the two institutions to finding mutually beneficial ways to work together. The agreement resulted from the initiative of Daniel Negron, Jr., assistant director of corporate-higher education programs. Mr. Negron visited Catholic University while he was traveling in Peru, then invited officials to visit the College. The official agreement provides the foundation for examining shared programming including distance learning opportunities.

A series of inquiries and ACE College Credit Recommendation reviews are leading to developing a relationship with several related educational institutions. These relationships are expected to result in additional ACE evaluations and increased enrollments. The Zaidner Institute, which is located in Israel, has been a sponsor of ACE Credit Recommendations for five years. They sponsored a review of additional courses during FY 1997. According to their records, at least 100 of their graduates are also graduates of Thomas Edison State College.

In addition to enrolling students, Zaidner personnel have referred other, affiliated schools for a review of their courses. Beth Jacob, a Toronto affiliate of Zaidner, sponsored a review of their courses in May 1997. The positive working relationships with these two organizations are paving the way for partnerships with similar organizations. Discussions are underway with another New Jersey-based institution, Beth Medrash Govoha in Ocean County. This school serves a small group of men who wish to pursue their college degrees within their own setting.

Several new or renewed relationships with corporations are taking shape. The Bristol Myers Squibb relationship seems to be expanding in variety. Two decision-makers from the training division have indicated interest in applying for the Master of Science in Management degree program. An on-site presentation of the College's Master of Science in Management degree program has been scheduled, and the company is also giving consideration to sponsoring an ACE credit recommendation review.

An initial contact has been made with Ingersoll Rand, which is an international conglomerate based in North Jersey. Initial conversations indicate interest in disseminating information to Ingersoll Rand locations across the country.

Five presentations have been made to Liposome employees who are being downsized out of their jobs. The presentations have been arranged with the assistance of Goodrich and Sherwood Associate, Inc. They are an outplacement firm that also is working with some other major clients and is amenable to a long-term relationship.

Abington Memorial Hospital in Abington, Pennsylvania has requested information about degree opportunities for their employees, as well as the process for sponsoring an ACE evaluation.

**Senior College Launched.** Senior College is a new initiative designed to bring information about Thomas Edison State College to the growing population of active seniors. The concept has been launched in a number of ways.

Owners, community service liaisons or program directors at eight adult communities in Ocean and Monmouth counties were contacted in July to seek their advice and consent. The president of one real estate development firm declared senior college, "Absolutely a good idea." He said that developers around the country are interested in being close to colleges, but Thomas Edison is bringing college close to the resident. A representative of a second company invited us to think about adult communities as a "hotbed of active adults" in which the education market is "just exploding." Residents are age 48 or over and are physically and mentally active.

The new opportunity has been publicized by a mailing to 3,000 computer owners over the age of 55 in Ocean and Monmouth counties. Advertisements have been placed in two newsletters dedicated to seniors and two proposals have been sent to make presentations at adult communities. Contact has been made with American Express to discuss providing publicity on senior college in their "senior express" publication.

### **Communications & College Relations**

The College was highlighted in a major cover story in *U.S. 1* on July 30 featuring two Thomas Edison students. The cover page's banner headline of "Live and Learn" and its pictures of three adult students (two of whom are enrolled at the College) has generated additional interest in the College.

College Communications & College Relations staff have continued to assist the New Jersey State Library with its publicity, creating a broadcast fax listing which dispatches library news to national library media at the push of a button. Other media coverage included stories on Senior College and new degree programs (including in the on-line edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*).

**Advertising:** The College's advertising program was outsourced to The Gillespie Organization for the quarter, with "Don't Turn Your Life Upside Down" ads running on Sundays and in education supplements in *The Star-Ledger*, *The (Trenton) Times*, *Asbury Park Press*, *Courier-Post* and *The Record*. Coordinated commercials also ran on WABC, WKXW and WOR on a regular schedule this summer. As usual, a positive response was received to our ad in *The Army Times* in July, which reaches military in the Army, Air

Force and National Guard internationally. Targeted advertising also ran in the national American Society for Training and Development magazine and *Wall Street Journal* Internet Edition.

**Publications:** The first quarter of FY 1998 saw a high volume of work in publications, marketing collateral, advertisements, student services materials and development pieces. There were 52 projects in all, including: SIGNALS; Test Description and DANTES Description Books; and the Senior College marketing brochure.

**25th Anniversary:** The history book was designed as a *pro bono* service by The Gillespie Organization. It is currently printing, with a partial delivery due prior to the Gala. The Foundation Gala and Commencement, featuring a "reunion" of the College's first class of graduates, also will carry a 25th anniversary theme.

**Projects:** Preliminary work was completed on new material for the College's recruitment video. Completion of the video is scheduled during the second quarter, FY 1998. Video footage also is being used to create Public Service Announcements for radio and television and for video streaming on the College's Web site.

The College also continued to work with Executive Forum producers on the production of a customized version of the TV panel, featuring Edwin Newman.

The College received a registered trademark for its TECEP® program. Last year, the College received registered trademarks for the CALL® Network and the On-Line Computer Classroom®.

## **Development**

**Silver Anniversary Gala:** Tickets sales are underway for the 25th Anniversary Gala to be held on September 20 at the Forsgate Country Club in Jamesburg. Before invitations were mailed (week of August 4), the development office had commitments for 267 tickets, which included 23 corporate tables. The invitations were printed *pro bono* by the Parker Communications Group. The gala ad journal has generated revenue of \$16,750. Due to the generous contribution of the cost of the printing of the journal by the Sarnoff Corporation, this ad journal amount is entirely income. As of August 30, 1997 the total revenue generated by ticket reservations, contributions and the ad journal is \$88,645. The Gala Committee has been meeting frequently to work on this event, and an Honorary Gala Committee has been formed to help expand the College contacts for this special anniversary gala.

**Walk of Honor:** As of August 30, 1997, 138 bricks had been purchased, generating a revenue of \$17,250. Due to an extension of time in the building project, the Office of Development has extended the sale date to April 1, 1998.

**Campaign 2001:** The Development Committee of the Foundation Board continued to identify and solicit key prospects for "Campaign 2001." The Development Committee met in mid-August to move the campaign agenda forward.

### **Alumni Affairs**

The Alumni Association will hold its annual board meeting the morning of the day of commencement. A new slate of officers will be voted upon for the upcoming year and the Association will present awards for Outstanding Service to the Alumni Association and Outstanding Professional Achievement.

The president of the Alumni Association, Paul A. Hays, will participate in the Lambda Tau Chapter National Honor Society Induction Ceremony. The College will honor the first group of approximately 20 graduates into the National Honor Society.

The Alumni Association's Ninth Annual PHT (Putting Him/Her Through) Banquet will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Princeton immediately following commencement. Approximately 350 alumni, staff, graduates, family and friends are expected to attend.

### **Watson Institute for Public Policy**

**New Jersey Urban Mayor's Association Partnership:** During the New Jersey Urban Mayors Association's recent overnight retreat, several member mayors suggested that as leaders of the state's urban communities, members of this organization should be at the forefront of the discussion surrounding urban issues during the election season. As a result, the New Jersey Urban Mayor's Association began plans for a Fall Issues Forum with New Jersey's Gubernatorial candidates. Mayor Leonard Kiczek of Bayonne has agreed to host a planning meeting for all member mayors at the Bayonne Municipal Building in early September to develop the format for this important event.

The Institute recently began work on a survey to determine the cost of solid waste disposal for urban municipalities across the state and to assess the potential impact of proposals that would revise current practices in this area. Responses to this important survey are expected in the early fall. The results of this survey will be distributed to each member mayor and will provide essential information to all urban municipalities.

**Trenton Office of Policy Studies (TOPS):** The Institute, through its TOPS partnership, recently led a delegation to Chicago, Illinois, to study the reform efforts of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The delegation, comprising the Mayor's Chief of Staff, two members of the Trenton Board of Education, the Chairperson of the Trenton PTA/PTO Liaison Committee and a reporter from the Trenton Times newspaper, met with key leaders of the CPS and gathered valuable information that will aid Mayor Palmer and the Trenton School District in their efforts to provide a quality education system in the City.



**Trenton Economic Development Corporation:** The Watson Institute for Public Policy in its role as the Trenton Office of Policy Studies has begun a series of focus groups, planning sessions and research projects around the creation of the Trenton Economic Development Corporation and similar economic development corporations around the country.

**Trenton's Healthier Community Summit:** The Watson Institute has partnered with the Trenton Chapter, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, St. Francis Hospital, and the Trenton YMCA to facilitate the Trenton Healthier Community Summit. The purpose of this summit is to identify and implement strategies to build a healthier community. Based on its other work on community development initiatives, the Watson Institute developed a database of over forty community based organizations in the region as potential community partners for this summit. It is expected that this partnership will expand to include the Henry J. Austin Health Center, Mercer and Helene Fuld Medical Centers and the City of Trenton.

**Center for the Urban Environment (CUE):** CUE has made significant progress in helping two national environmental organizations become more involved in New Jersey's urban centers. The Trust for Public Land has asked CUE to work with its State-wide Advisory Council as it expands its urban playground program. The Sierra Club has asked CUE to work with them on a new initiative to involve community leaders in brownfields issues at the legislative level. CUE will also help to design a conference on the subject.

Local non-profits continue to take advantage of Center for the Urban Environment's services. The Newark Environmental Coalition was assisted with preparation of a grant proposal that was submitted to the U.S. Dept. Of Energy and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. Funding would support environmental planning at the neighborhood level in four of Newark's Enterprise neighborhoods. CUE continues to advise the Newark Environmental Coalition on organizational and programmatic development issues.

#### **Postreporting: Test Description and DANTES Books**

At the March 1997 Board of Trustees meeting, the College was granted a bid waiver to publish Test Description and DANTES Books and to purchase a one-year supply of 1,000 copies of each book at an estimated cost of \$14,800. As a result of continuing to use newsprint and other cost-saving printing techniques, the actual cost was \$8,694. The job delivered on Aug. 15, 1997. The contract was awarded to XYAN, the lowest bidder who met our specifications.

**Resignations**

The following people have resigned from the College:

Nicholas Muscente	-	DIAL
Nadine Shapiro	-	Office of the Registrar
Danita Bell	-	Corporate and Enrollment Services
Maureen Marcus	-	Office of the Vice President and Provost
Jack Phillips	-	Registrar
Gerri Collins	-	Office of the President
Daniel McFadden	-	Public Affairs
James Miller	-	Administrative Services

The following people have resigned from the New Jersey State Library:

Marie Guadagno	-	State Government Information Services
Susannah Orenstein	-	Division Management

GAP/lme