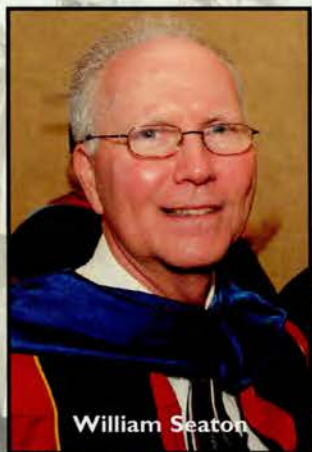




Staff Newsletter of Thomas Edison State College • October 2008



Sharon Smith



William Seaton

*"The daily commitment of our staff to making the Thomas Edison State College educational experience so positive is reflected in the faces of all the graduates during Commencement."*

- William J. Seaton  
Vice President and Provost

## College Lunch & Learn Focuses on Commencement

*The Power Behind the Pomp and Circumstance*

"It is a culmination."

"A showcase for the College."

"A precious opportunity for staff to meet students from around the globe, face-to-face."

Regardless of how Commencement is described, it is one of the best opportunities for the College to form a lasting impression on graduating students.

Does the College love Commencement? Yes indeed, and Registrar **Sharon Smith** along with Commencement captains officiated a pep rally of sorts during the September Lunch-N-Learn to count the ways.

From 'ADA' to 'VIP Seating', the imposing list of assignment categories confirmed the necessity for a College-wide commitment to provide the best experience possible for graduates the day of Commencement. Smith's visual presentation, which included moving quotes from grateful grads and photography of Commencements past, was augmented by presentations from team captains.

"It is the most important day of the year for us and there is a direct relationship between the success of this event and the growth of the College," said Smith, who is qualified to make such a statement. "This will be my 8th Commencement as registrar. I previously worked 17 years in the Office of the Registrar assisting with the event. My duties ranged from student cap and gown distributor to platform party team captain."

This year, 175 College staff and six mentors joined nearly 400 graduates from 28 U.S. states who converged on the N.J. State Museum, Kelsey Townhouses and the Soldiers and Sailors' War Memorial during the College's 36th Annual Commencement. "It was the highest attendance we have ever had



## College Staff Participate in Leadership Trenton



Leadership Trenton is a program of The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State College. Beginning in 2002, the vision of Leadership Trenton is based on the belief that a city's greatest resource is the quality and commitment of its civic leaders. The mission of Leadership Trenton is to identify, challenge and honor emerging leaders through a 10-month series of experiential seminars that provide information, increase knowledge and stimulate discussion on critical public policy issues that impact the city of Trenton and the region. There are more than 180 graduates and this year's Class of 2009 is the seventh cohort.

Pictured, left to right: **Juliette Punchello**, Class of 2008; **Linda Rosner**, Class of 2009; **Caroline Tompkins**, Class of 2007; **Sylvia Hamilton**, Class of 2006; and **Janet Eickhoff**, Class of 2009. Other staff fellows, past and present, not pictured include: **Heather Brooks** ('07), **Ana Berdecia** ('02), **Pamela Sims Jones** ('02), **Cathy Punchello-Cobos** ('08), **Sharon Smith** ('09), **Robin Walton** ('04) and **Dosiree Mims** ('08).

## Focus On

### A Rich History of Staff Recognition



Lutz in 1995 at Mastoris in Bordentown

In July 1989, a feisty employee of the month featured in *Inside Edison* listed her official title as "Goddess," and added that she was an "assistant to President of Academic Affairs Jerry Ice and unofficial director of College activities." We are happy to report that in the 19 years since, her flare has not dimmed. **Debbie Lutz** loved what the College was doing in those days for adult learners and continues to be awed. "My role today is providing comic relief," noted Lutz. "I love working at the College – it is such an incredibly cool place and being able to work with such great people is like winning the lottery."

In her current capacity, she assists Vice President and Provost **William J. Seaton** and his executive assistant. She acts as representative for her office in gathering information, preparing correspondence and works closely with academic offices to deliver the best possible service to our students. She continuously updates the College's current policies, procedures and degree requirements and ensures that the College is represented positively to internal and external constituencies.



Discussing the successful results of the virtual admissions fair are (l. to r.) **Dave Anderson**, assistant vice provost for Learner Support; **David Hoftiezer**, director of Admissions; **Garry Keel**, director of Advisement; **Caroline Tompkins**, admissions counselor.

## College Goes Global and Attracts More Than 100 Prospective Students to Virtual Admissions Fair

Thomas Edison State College has long been a leader in leveraging technology to serve adult learners. Aiming this expertise toward prospective students, the College recently facilitated an online admissions information session which attracted participants from as far away as Zambia, South Africa.

Contracting with WebEx Communications, Inc., a company specializing in Web conferencing and collaboration, the College's Office of Learner Support hosted the inaugural Virtual Admissions Fair in August. According to **David Hoftiezer**, director of Admissions, "This exciting initiative goes beyond the walls of the College in reach-

ing a large group of people and leverages technology to assist the prospective students in higher education choices. Because of its success, Thomas Edison State College will continue to host virtual admissions fairs throughout the year."

The Office of Learner Support staff stationed themselves in the Kelsey Townhouse computer lab on the evening of Aug. 20, to facilitate the hour-long Webinar, which enabled the kind of interaction usually associated with face-to-face presentations. Similar to standard admissions fairs held throughout the year, this Web-based seminar provided prospective students with a convenient way to learn more about the admissions process. Questions were fielded on an array of topics such as earning credits through Prior Learning Assessment, areas of study, degree choices and financial aid.

## College Goes Global

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According to one prospective student who had already researched the College prior to joining the session, "Any remaining questions I had were answered. Outside of the information you presented, the Webinar provided a better idea of the personality of the institution. It went a long way in reassuring me that finishing my degree with Thomas Edison State College would be the right choice."



The Sixth Annual School Supply Drive was a huge success; the College was able to provide school supplies and backpacks to more than 100 children in the surrounding neighborhood. Pictured from the left are **Kay Laughlin**, **Susan Fischer**, **Cheryl Dienes**, **Michelle Robinson**, coordinator of the School Supply Drive, and **Laura Brenner-Scotti**. Robinson would like to thank all participants in this endeavor.

## Congratulations

**Cynthia Strain**, assistant dean, Heavin School of Arts and Sciences, and her husband, William, welcomed son Evan William McKinley Strain on Aug. 19, 2008. Evan, who weighed 6 pounds, 15 ounces, and was 19 3/4 inches, joins big sister Maegan.

**Melissa Maszczak**, confidential assistant, Office of the President, and her husband, Ross, are the proud parents of a son. Patrick Maszczak was born on Sept. 25, 2008, and weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces.

## Staff Activities

**Dr. Penelope Brouwer**, vice president for Planning and Research, and Richard Keeling and Eric Engstrom from Keeling and Associates, delivered a presentation, "A Curricular Approach to Strategic Plan Implementation: The Thomas Edison State College Experience," at the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) International Conference held in Montreal, Canada. **Marie Power-Barnes**, associate vice president for Marketing, contributed significantly to the proposal process and the ensuing presentation.



Dr. Ann Marie Senior

**Dr. Ann Marie Senior**, director of Institutional Research and Outcomes Assessment, and **Ying Jiang**, senior research analyst, attended the NEAIR Summer Drive-In Workshops at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pa. The day's topics included: Basic Regression for Institutional Research Applications; Survey Design; and IPEDS Peer Analysis System. Senior and Jiang also participated in a two-day Assessment Institute at Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, N.J. The institute brought together institutional research professionals and Educational Testing Service staff to address issues related to the theme: Measuring Success — Making Assessment Data Work for Your Institution.

**Dr. Joseph C. Santora**, dean, School of Business and Management, co-authored a refereed article entitled "Founders, leaders, and organizational life cycles: The choice is easy — Learn or fail!" in *Development and Learning Organizations: An International Journal*. He also co-authored and presented two refereed papers at the 8th International Conference for the International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) and the EMES European Research Network, July 9-12, 2008, in Barcelona, Spain: "Leadership succession: What we know and what we need to know;" and "Transformational leadership, culture, and innovation in non-profit and private sector companies: When things aren't what they appear to be!" Santora and **William J. Seaton**, vice president and provost, co-authored two research briefs in the May 2008 issue of *Academy of Management Perspectives*: "Age discrimination: Alive and well in the workplace?" and "The weakest link: Can inferior members raise the bar in work group?"

## Commencement Lunch & Learn

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— everything went smoothly and the weather was really on our side," reflected Smith.

The attention to detail seemed to pay off — Bachelor of Arts recipient Katrina Klettke Straker of Palmyra, N.J., noted, "the support given me in the last year by the advisors, mentors and students of Thomas Edison State College has been invaluable. The College's commitment to working professionals in obtaining a higher degree is unmatched and deeply appreciated!" The College awarded 2,494 degrees in 2008 and has awarded more than 32,000 degrees since it began providing flexible, high-quality, collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults in 1972.



Office of the Registrar staff **Regina Roberts** (left), technical assistant III, and **Linda Battle**, senior clerk typist, celebrate their Associate in Art degrees.

## State of the College

During the State of the College address at the New Jersey State Museum Auditorium on Sept. 16, the **Office of Administrative Services** was recognized not only for dealing with exceptional challenges during the Kelsey Renovation, but also for the challenges the staff meets on a daily basis.

**Dr. Susan O'Brien**, dean of the School of Nursing, who earned the 2008 C.A.R.E.S. Award for excellence in Education by the New Jersey



State Nurses Association, and **Norma Blake**, New Jersey State Librarian, who was named 2008 Librarian of the Year by the national publication, *Library Journal*, were also recognized at the event.



## New Staff



**Alison Sansom-Livolsi** has been appointed program assistant for the Office of Alumni Affairs. Sansom-Livolsi is located on the 5th floor of the Kelsey Building and may be reached at extension 2089.



**Valerie Preston** has been appointed program assistant for the Office of Military Education. Preston is located on the 2nd floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 2207.

## Brightest Lights



**Olga Napoleon**, secretarial assistant III, Office of Administrative Services, was honored as the "Brightest Lights" employee. Napoleon was recognized by the committee recently with the acknowledgement that her "pleasant attitude and willingness to go above and beyond the duties of her job, make her a Bright Light at Thomas Edison State College."

## School of Professional and Continuing Studies Earns "Excellence in New Programming" Award

The School of Professional and Continuing Studies recently received the UCEA (University Continuing Education Association) Mid-Atlantic Region's Excellence in New Programming Award for a customized training program it has developed. The School was honored at UCEA's awards dinner and ceremony at the annual conference on Oct. 5.



**Barbara Eklund**

The School created the award-winning training program for PROCEED, Inc.: The National Center for Training, Support and Technical Assistance. PROCEED is a capacity-building organization based in Elizabeth, N.J., and funded in part through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The School developed and delivered a blended human resources (HR) overview course for 21 professionals who direct HIV/AIDS-prevention education programs throughout the country. The pilot project included program directors who possessed considerable counseling education and experience, but little or no human resources training. The course was introduced in a two-day onsite program, which was followed by a customized online component that placed the program directors in online modules for additional training and support. Program directors facing similar HR issues in agencies around the country formed a community of learners to develop their HR skills. PROCEED has contracted with the School for a second cohort later this year. In addition to recognition by UCEA, the program has drawn the attention of the CDC in Atlanta, whose program director has called the partnership with Thomas Edison State College "groundbreaking" and "pioneering."

"In very large measure, the success of the program is due to the leadership and tireless efforts of Assistant Dean **Barbara Eklund**, who organized, developed and delivered the program," said **Dr. David Grossman**, vice provost and dean of the School of Professional and Continuing Studies.

## Is Your Outlook Profile Up to Date?

Did you know you can request an update of your Microsoft Office Outlook E-Mail profile? According to Associate Director of MIS **Seth Aronson**, "to correct outdated personal information in Outlook, simply submit a Help Desk ticket and select from the following dropdowns: Department: 'MIS'; Topic: 'E-mail/Outlook' and Sub Topic: 'Update Global Address Book.' You can request a change to your title, department, office location or phone number. The information will be confirmed with the Office of Human Resources before being finalized." Check your current information by opening your MS Office E-mail, click on the address book icon and choose your name. Once your name is highlighted, right click and select "Properties." You should see a window similar to the one pictured to the right. Confirm that all the fields are correct. If they are not, submit a Help Desk to have the information revised.

Capital Campus is produced by the Office of Communications at Thomas Edison State College. To submit a story idea for the newsletter or for more information, please contact Linda Soltis at extension 2065.

