

SPRING 2016

Invention

THE MAGAZINE OF THOMAS EDISON STATE UNIVERSITY



TAKING THE LEAD

Robert Budsock '07, '15

NEW MASTER OF SCIENCE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM | JANSSEN PHARMACEUTICALS FUNDS NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS

BREAKING THROUGH: TATIANA SOLOVIEVA, BSBA '12 | INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION: MICHAEL PASCIUTO, MAEDL '14

WATSON INSTITUTE HELPS TO SECURE FUNDING FOR NEW JERSEY'S COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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DEAR ALUMNI, STUDENTS AND FRIENDS,

Winston Churchill said, "There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction."

The alumni introduced in this issue of *Invention* weave a common thread of 'change' throughout each of their unique stories.

We are privileged to tell you the story of Robert 'Bob' Budsock '07, '15, president and CEO of Integrity House in Newark, N.J. Budsock gives us a look inside his 32-year career with the organization and how, with the help of education, he has been able to rise through the ranks to serve those who battle addiction and offer them the opportunity to make good on their second chance at life.

Also in this issue, we are proud to introduce Tatiana Solovieva '12, a credit analyst at TD Bank's Ramsey, N.J., branch. As a refugee who worked her way through the banking and financial services industries upon her arrival to the United States, Solovieva shares how her degree helped her land the job she always wanted.

We also meet Michael Pasciuto '14, assistant principal of Glen Rock High School in Glen Rock, N.J. Pasciuto shares his passion for education to help change the lives of the students he serves each day.

Finally, we are thrilled to share news and photos from across the University, including recent grant awards, the launch of the new MSIT program and public service initiatives that include The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Invention*.

Sincerely,

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

School of Applied Science and Technology Launches New Master of Science in Information Technology Program

Thomas Edison State University's School of Applied Science and Technology has launched a new Master of Science in Information Technology (MSIT) degree program. The MSIT is an online graduate program that prepares students with the expertise

completed in less than two years on a part-time basis. The MSIT provides a solid foundation for study in IT that enables students to develop focused, marketable skills that are most relevant to their careers and professional interests.



Dr. Rory Butler, assistant dean, School of Applied Science and Technology

"THE MSIT PROVIDES STUDENTS AND GRADUATES ALIKE A WAY TO EARN CAREER ADVANCEMENT AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OPPORTUNITIES IN THIS EVER-EVOLVING FIELD."

Dr. Rory Butler

and knowledge required for leadership roles in the field of information technology (IT).

The degree is a 36- to 39-credit program with six areas of study, designed to be

"The U.S. is behind when it comes to the number of high-level IT professionals it employs who have terminal degrees and the knowledge to maintain the nation's information technology grid," said Dr. Rory Butler, assistant dean, School of

Applied Science and Technology. "The MSIT provides students and graduates alike a way to earn career advancement and competitive advantage opportunities in this ever-evolving field."

To learn more about the MSIT program, visit www.tesu.edu/ast/msit.

Watson Institute Helps to Secure Funding for New Jersey's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) has recently approved an economic development strategy coordinated by The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State University, paving the way for future EDA grants that support regional economic and workforce development in New Jersey.

The plan, an urban-focused, comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) focusing on 19 municipalities, is the outgrowth of a long-running effort by the Watson Institute to support economic and community development in New Jersey with a particular focus on urban areas in need of revitalization. The Watson Institute recognized there was a need to engage in regional economic development planning through the membership of the New Jersey Urban Mayors' Association.

"This planning document is a roadmap to creating opportunities and jobs across a variety of sectors that will not only boost our economies, but truly

change our residents' quality of life," said Wilda Diaz, mayor of Perth Amboy and president of the New Jersey Urban Mayors' Association. "I am thankful to The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy for their forward thinking and pioneering capacity building for urban communities."

The approval of the plan is significant because it allows participating municipalities and their partners to compete for EDA funding opportunities related to economic and workforce development. Without an approved strategy, municipalities are not eligible for EDA funding. It is also one of only a few plans approved by the EDA that was

not developed by one local or county government entity, instead it was a multicounty and multimunicipal focused plan. It is also the first urban-focused CEDS in the state of New Jersey and the region.

"The approval of this document recognizes the importance of integrating standard economic development work with the long-term efforts of overcoming structural barriers to economic success," said Barbara George Johnson, executive director of the Watson Institute. "We are excited about the many innovative projects and economic initiatives that may now be realized through EDA's funding process. We are also grateful to everyone who participated in the development of this plan and welcome new partners to be a part of the implementation phase moving forward."

To view the plan, visit www.tesu.edu/watsoninstitute.

Watson Institute Partners with the City of Trenton To Accept President Obama's 'My Brother's Keeper' Challenge

The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State University has partnered with the city of Trenton to accept President Barack Obama's 'My Brother's Keeper' (MBK) Challenge. The initiative, 'Capital City My Brother's Keeper,' answers Obama's call to action for communities to devise sustainable solutions to inequality among young men of color.

Obama launched the initiative to address opportunity gaps faced by boys and men of color to ensure that all young people can reach their full potential. The action is meant to bring together leaders, organizations and people in communities across the country to work to improve the overall life outcomes of young people in America.

A citywide survey facilitated by the Watson Institute identified childhood literacy among third graders, chronic absenteeism and employability of young men aged 16-25, particularly those in re-entry, as the three overarching



At the 'Capital City My Brother's Keeper' Local Action Summit, pictured (from left to right) are Francis Blanco, chief of staff to Mayor Eric Jackson; Mayor Eric Jackson, city of Trenton; Barbara George Johnson, executive director, The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State University; Elijah Dixon, Isles, Inc.; Abiezel Raices, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; Kellie LeDet, regional administrator, U.S. Small Business Administration; and Tameka Montgomery, associate administrator, Office of Entrepreneurial Development, U.S. Small Business Administration.

problems facing Trenton's youth and are the focus of the initiative.

"This initiative is critically important to the future of Trenton," said Barbara George Johnson, executive director of the Watson Institute. "Based on the identification of the three critical areas of need in our community, we will be able to better serve and collaborate with

key stakeholders to promote success in combating these issues."

To become an MBK community, a municipality like Trenton lays the groundwork to launch a formal action plan.

This formal action plan is expected to be publicly announced by June 24.

Pruitt Named AIA New Jersey's 2015 Resident of the Year



Pictured (from left to right) are Donna Mikitan, Pella Windows & Doors representative; Justin A. Mihalik, AIA NJ president; Dr. George A. Pruitt; and Michael J. Hanrahan, AIA Service Awards Committee chair. Photo credit: David Hollander

Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State University, was honored by the American Institute of Architect's New Jersey chapter (AIANJ), as the organization's 2015 Resident of the Year.

Pruitt was honored at an awards gala in Florham Park, N.J. The AIANJ's Resident of the Year award is the only honor given by the Institute to a non-architect and recognizes winners for their long-time contribution to improving the environment and their communities.

"AIANJ is very excited and proud to present the Resident of the Year award to Dr. George Pruitt for his ongoing commitment to the revitalization of Trenton. Because of his efforts to restore several historic buildings in Trenton's downtown, the fabric of the downtown has been preserved," said Justin A. Mihalik, president, AIA New Jersey.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA), headquartered in Washington, D.C., represents 86,000 licensed architects and associated professionals. AIA New Jersey, based in Trenton, is the statewide chapter of the national AIA.

Dean Discusses Business and Banking in Interview with Vernon Hill II

Dr. Michael Williams, dean of the School of Business and Management at Thomas Edison State University, sat down with Vernon Hill II, founder and chairman of Metro Bank and former president and CEO of Commerce Bank, as part of the Camden County Regional Chamber of Commerce's 'Game Changer Series,' at Hotel ML, in Mount Laurel, N.J.

Here are some excerpts from Williams' discussion with Hill as part of the first interview in the series:

Q: The Commerce Bank business model reinvented banking. Can you take us back to how that model was developed?

A: The Commerce Bank story – and also Republic Bank now – is a success story. Commerce started as a company with nine people, one office and \$1.5 million in capital at a time when there were 24,000 separate banks in America and we were 24,001. We had no brand, we had no locations, we had no name – we had nothing. But because

convince their friends to switch. My book, *Fans Not Customers*, describes how we started Commerce in 1973. We took retail ideas about service and convenience and applied them to a business that needed change. The book is written about our experience as an example of how you can build your business and how you can build your career. Every great business has a very clear and defined business model that adds value for the consumer. I've learned after all these years that your business model is the most important.

"I BELIEVE THAT GREAT BRANDS ARE ABOUT BUILDING BUSINESS MODELS THAT BUILD FANS."

Vernon Hill II

of the efforts of you, your family and your friends, we built Commerce into the 18th largest bank in America. It was built on a simple business model providing unparalleled service and convenience. More recently, Metro Bank in London is the first new retail bank started from scratch since 1840. It is our model that we all built together recreated in Britain. Everything we did here works better in Britain. It's a tremendous success already. After our fifth year, we have 2,000 people working for us and a market value of more than \$2 billion. It is amazing to watch how what we learned to build in America work so well in Britain.

I believe that great brands are about building business models that build fans. There is no way to build a high-growth business without building fans. Apple is the current extreme example. Every Apple user is trying to

If you have the right business model, you have to build a culture to match your model. We all see so many businesses where the culture and model are opposed. At Commerce Bank, we learned to fanatically execute our business model.

People have asked me, "What used to keep you awake at night in your last three or four years at Commerce?" Commerce was getting 21 million in-store customer visits a month. This was happening all over, in New York, in Queens, in Brooklyn. Not only did we have to serve those people, but we also had to turn them into fans. When something goes wrong, how do we turn those people into more of a fan after we solved the problem? So the whole Commerce story is built around those three ideas: a value-added model, a pervasive and reinforcing culture and fanatical execution.



Dr. Michael Williams, dean of the School of Business and Management

Q: What do businesses need to do to build fans?

A: If the objective of your business model is to build fans, you have to deliver a unique experience to them, and when something goes wrong you have to respond to make them even more of a fan. It's how you respond and how you treat them. We always say that every bank dispute is about \$112. In other words, you will get into a fight with a customer about some insignificant amount of money and they will fight with you about it. We knew that a customer was worth \$3,000. We decided that anything we did to make you a fan short of \$3,000, we should do. And our whole system was designed to make that happen.

We have an endless campaign to kill every stupid rule we can find. Every business has a bunch of stupid rules,



Vernon Hill II (left), with Dr. Michael Williams at the Camden County Chamber of Commerce's 'Game Changer Series' chat.

and you don't know why you have them. And just when we thought that we killed every stupid rule, we hire new people and they bring their stupid rules with them! You have to be so fanatical about this to keep the stupid rules out. As many of you know, my wife is fully involved in the building and



Vernon Hill II, founder and chairman of Metro Bank and former president and CEO of Commerce Bank pictured with wife Shirley and dog Duffy.

marketing of the bank. In Britain, she does all of the marketing and branding. They can't change anything – even as minute as a form letter – that doesn't go through brand approval. Why? Because I'll hire someone from Lloyd's Bank and they bring the Lloyd's form letter and they start using it. When you have a brand, you have to be fanatic about the brand. All of you remember the banks of the old days when they had the check counters and they had a pen anchored to the check counter. They've got to save that pen. The last year at Commerce, we gave away 28 million pens. Do we want to save the pen or do I want every household in New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia to have Commerce Bank pens?

Killing stupid rules is a never-ending quest for great companies.

You know we have this saying on both sides of the Atlantic called "dogs rule." The banks don't let you bring your dogs in. Of course there is no rule about it, so we turned that at Commerce and Metro into "dogs rule." You can bring your dog in, we know their names, and we give them a treat. Now we have taken it to where we microchip dogs at our branches in Britain. On certain weekends, you can adopt dogs in Britain in our stores. The customers take that to mean, if you love my dog you must love me. And if you think about what we did at Commerce, it's how we put the parts together. We learned to deliver a differentiated, value-added experience and unite the parts.

Q: You are a learning steward who has demonstrated a commitment to promoting fiscal literacy for children. What are your thoughts on this?

A: I've been called a lot things, but learning steward is a new one! With

"KILLING STUPID RULES IS A NEVER-ENDING QUEST FOR GREAT COMPANIES."

Vernon Hill II

Commerce and now with Republic, we go out and teach kids about 9 to 10 years old in a four week class about money. It's part of our idea to make each of our stores the local community bank. We are now doing this in Britain and will teach 20,000 to 30,000 kids this year. No one else has ever done it in Britain, and it is just another way of building our brand and building our community.

Q: Knowing what we know today about banking, has Commerce Bank's service model enabled entrepreneurship in the U.K.?

A: Everything we do in America works better in Britain. There are 7,000 banks in America. In Britain we were lucky enough to arrive with a new model at the right time and compete against five giant bank players who died 40 years ago but they forgot to tell them. Now, everybody knows this – the government, the press, the customers and the banks. The most reliable measure of how your business is doing is the net promoter score. What percentage of your clients will recommend you. This is the single most reliable measure that you will find. Our net promoter score in Britain is 79 percent. If you have a negative net promoter score, you should shut down immediately. Fortunately, a lot of former Commerce people came over to help us set up Metro. There was tremendous help from South Jersey people from Commerce that came over and got Metro off the ground. Also, I want everybody to look at the new Republic Bank – the glass cubes in Cherry Hill and Marlton. There are lots more coming. We've never built a building that is so transformative for a brand or a town. It's an interesting commentary on how the building is the face of our brand. You can imagine these old antique buildings next to our glass box right next door and how transformative they are.

Q: How do you hire?

A: When you have a growth business, you get to recruit people, you get to grow people and you get to advance

people. We try to recruit people whose personality matches our culture and model. If they don't smile during their first job interview, then they are out because if they don't smile then they are never going to smile. And then we give people the freedom to grow. I say to most people when they start with us, this company is going to grow fivefold, 10fold or 20fold. Either you grow with us or you're going to get a boss. And then we train them and over train them. In Britain, the diversity of people is amazing. At Metro in London, we just celebrated our fifth year. In five years, we've grown more than 100 percent compounded – from zero to 2,000 people. Now, that is not supposed to happen in the banking business. This is the fastest growing bank in the western world – ever. That's how extreme this is. We have to recruit people, we have to train them and we have to manage them. One of my real concerns as we grew so dramatically at Commerce, was being able to deliver the same experience in South Jersey and in Queens in New York. What we learned was to take the small town, small bank feel of banking, where you know the people, and work directly with your customers, and grow it on a large scale.

Q: Commitment to banking is your life's work? Why?

A: Everyone is better at something than everyone else. If you are lucky enough to find out what you are the best at and you can match that up with your business or your vocation, you have a chance of being a star. Great chefs taste the food differently than we do. Great musicians hear the music differently than we do. I was very lucky to be pretty good at the banking business and looked at it from a different point of view, and I had this combination of talents that were new in the banking business. I talk to students on both sides of the Atlantic about this all time. I tell them to go find your unique talent, where you can add value and that can match up what you want to do in life, and you can be a star.

Janssen Pharmaceuticals Funds Nursing Scholarships For University's Students

Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has awarded the Thomas Edison State University Foundation a grant to fund scholarships for two Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) Program students for the year 2015 - 2016.

"Nurses are vital to the health of our community, and programs like this are critically important in helping to address the projected nursing shortage," said Peg Forrestel, director of Community Affairs at Janssen Pharmaceuticals. This is the fourth consecutive year that Janssen has funded scholarships for the University's nursing students.

Scholarship recipients Michele Porchiazio, of Toms River, N.J., and Mercy Nnebe, of Ewing, N.J., appreciate all the support they can get. Given the rigorous nature of the program, self-funding can present a challenge.

"My hope has always been to inspire my children," said Porchiazio. "Having four children is demanding, but with the help of this scholarship I will be able to focus on my education and dream of becoming a nurse. I want to motivate my children and set an example for them to pursue their own higher education dreams."



Accelerated BSN students Mercy Nnebe (left) and Michele Porchiazio are the recipients of this year's nursing scholarships, funded by Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

The scholarships, established in 2012, are awarded based on academic performance and demonstrated financial need. Students who have been selected have met specific eligibility requirements, including superior academic performance and New Jersey state residency.

Students enrolled in the program are encouraged to avoid employment due to the rigorous nature of the 12-month curriculum. Their potential eligibility for Pell grants and other federal financial aid is limited because students already hold a baccalaureate degree in another discipline. With a 2015-2016 class size that is the largest since the program's inception in 2011, the financial need of this year's cohort is the greatest to date.

To find out more about the Janssen Pharmaceuticals scholarship, visit www.tesu.edu/tuition/Janssen-Pharmaceuticals-Scholarship.cfm.

Applebee's Restaurants Selects Operation College Promise to Receive Grant

Operation College Promise, Thomas Edison State University's national policy, research and education program that supports the transition and postsecondary advancement of U.S. veterans, is one of 10 organizations that was selected to receive a \$2,500 grant from Applebee's Restaurants, LLC as part of the company's renowned 'Thank You Movement' honoring veterans and active-duty military members and their families.

Four years ago, Applebee's created the 'Thank You Movement' to help people express their thanks to the brave

individuals who selflessly defend the nation. To date, the movement has sent nearly 8.5 million messages of thanks to veterans and service members.

This year, Applebee's donated \$2,500 to 10 worthy organizations that help veterans and active-duty military personnel and their families.

Thomas Edison State University is the largest provider of collegiate programs for active-duty service members and veterans in New Jersey and has been creating degree programs for the U.S. military for more than 40 years.

Established in 2008, Operation College Promise prepares transitioning veterans to access higher education while supporting campuses as they develop initiatives to optimize veteran student success. The program's signature professional development program - the Certificate for Veterans' Service Providers (CVSP) - has been used at institutions and nonprofits nationwide to train more than 600 professionals in meeting the unique needs of veterans through action and understanding.



PNC Foundation Grant Helps to Support University's Virtual Clinical Simulation Program



The Thomas Edison State University Foundation was awarded a \$5,794 grant by the PNC Foundation in support of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing's Virtual Clinical Simulation Program (VCS). This is the third year in a row PNC Foundation has supported the program. The grant supports the expansion of the state-of-the-science platform and plays a critical role in the curriculum for students enrolled in the Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program as well as nursing bachelor's and master's programs.



Screen shot of a virtual patient describing her symptoms in a Virtual Clinical Simulation course.

develop optimal critical-thinking, clinical-judgement, communication skills, and teamwork abilities in this

said Linda Bowden, PNC Bank New Jersey regional president. "Extending our support for the VCS program reflects our commitment to advancing the university's higher education mission and to strengthening the communities where we live and work."

The expansion of the University's VCS Program will help to meet consistently demanding and evolving healthcare needs to allow for the School's students to provide the best possible care to thousands of patients whom they will serve throughout their nursing careers.

The learning software will be integrated with already existing avatars, creating numerous clinical scenarios, particularly in the treatment of diabetes and cardiac care. Three avatars have already been integrated into the Advanced Pharmacology, Advanced Pathology and Advanced Health Assessment courses.

"We are grateful to the PNC Foundation for their continued support of our VCS Program and their recognition of the value of the ever-evolving technology that is available to nursing students," said Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing.

"PNC IS COMMITTED TO HELPING TO ENSURE THE HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS GIVEN THE GROWING NEED FOR WELLNESS SERVICES IN OUR COMMUNITIES."

Linda Bowden, PNC Bank New Jersey regional president

The VCS Program makes use of 3-D avatars (digital patient representations), which create different scenarios that mimic healthcare settings, in order to help students learn and practice clinical decision-making skills. Students will

highly interactive and controlled environment at no risk to real patients.

"PNC is committed to helping to ensure the high quality education of healthcare professionals given the growing need for wellness services in our communities,"

Watson Institute's N.J. Cultural Competency and English Language Learners Summer Institute Receives Ongoing Support

More early childhood educators are creating classrooms that celebrate the diversity of their students thanks to a Thomas Edison State University program and ongoing support from local organizations. The New Jersey Cultural Competency and English Language Learners Summer Institute (ELL) launched in 2007 trains and mentors early childhood educators from across the state.

Support for the program was provided by a grant from The Nicholson Foundation and funding from TD Charitable Foundation and Thomas Edison State University.

"We are immensely grateful for the support we receive," said Ana I. Berdecia, director of the Watson Institute's Center for the Positive Development of Urban Children. "The funding continues to expand our program and mentor teachers who work with the state's diverse population of children." ELL has trained and mentored 228 early childhood educators working in 101 classrooms throughout New Jersey.



Teacher Maritza Barahona of the La Casa de Pedro Early Childhood Center in Newark, N.J., reads to her 4- and 5-year-old students about favored modes of transportation in other countries.



TAKING

Helping Individuals Make

THE

Good On Their Second Chance

Robert 'Bob' Budsock

BSHS '07, MSM '15

LEAD

When Robert 'Bob' Budsock joined Integrity House, a substance abuse rehabilitation facility for nonviolent offenders 32 years ago, his mission was to help others reclaim their lives. He never dreamed that in the process, his organization would attract the personal attention of a U.S. president.

"When President Obama visited our agency last year, I had a chance to meet with him privately and it was probably the biggest event of my life and definitely of my professional career," said Budsock, the president and CEO of Integrity House. "It was pretty amazing to meet with a president who was obviously impressed with the work that we were doing. I was thrilled."

When Budsock joined Integrity House in 1984 as a counselor intern, the Newark, N.J.-based organization had 30 employees and served 200 patients a year. Today, the organization employs 300 staff members with the capacity to aid more than 2,400 adult and adolescent patients in rehabilitation and rebuilding their lives each year.

Budsock knew when he stepped through the doors of Integrity House that helping others was in his wheelhouse. A large part of his motivation was to help these individuals become productive members of society.

As time went on, Budsock earned increasing levels of responsibility realizing along the way that he needed to earn the appropriate credentials if he wanted to grow along with the organization.

In the early 90s, while he was still a program director at Integrity House's Secaucus location, he enrolled at Rutgers University, Newark campus to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in social work.

"While at Rutgers-Newark, I accumulated about 40 credits. However, I had two teenaged daughters at the time and life began to get in the way. I needed more balance in my life," Budsock explained.

"I WANT TO USE MY EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION TO HELP MENTOR THE LEADERS OF THE FUTURE AND TO WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS WHO WANT TO TAKE ON A BIGGER ROLE IN ORGANIZATIONS, LIKE OURS, AND ALLOW THEM TO LEARN FROM MY EXPERIENCE."

Robert Budsock '07, '15

His break from education lasted for the next five years until he identified Thomas Edison as being a viable option to complete his degree.

He began by taking online courses, until speaking with an academic advisor piqued his interest in credit-by-examination options that fit his degree program, which, for Budsock, included CLEP® and TECEP® exams.

"These exams were affordable and I was able to study independently. Transitioning from my experience at Rutgers to Thomas Edison required much more discipline. You are working independently and have deadlines to meet. I really had self-discipline and was tenacious about obtaining my degree," Budsock said.

By the time Budsock approached the final requirements for his degree, he had been promoted to senior director with Integrity House. In 2007, Budsock earned his Bachelor of Science in Human Services degree.

"After I completed my bachelor's degree I felt like I reached the summit, this goal that I started many years ago at Rutgers, and I thought that I was done," Budsock explained. "At the same time, I was being presented with more opportunities, and I was moving from a senior director role into some responsibilities that had to do with the overall management of the agency."

Budsock again earned another promotion, this time as chief operating officer. He decided that if he was going to be supervising those who are directors of key departments within the

organization that he needed to take his education another step further.

He researched his options and found that Thomas Edison fit the mold – again.

"Thomas Edison came out on top based upon the fact that my previous experience was positive. It was also affordable and the online format met my requirements at the time. At this



point, I had a high-level position at the organization, which was very demanding and I needed to be able to pursue the degree based upon my own schedule, where it really did not impact my employment," said Budsock.

As Budsock was pursuing his master's degree, he explains, he took classes that not only increased his knowledge but allowed him to apply what he was learning each day directly to his work.

"Most of the work was very relevant to what I was doing in my job and completing the courses really gave me a lot of ideas and knowledge of how to do my job better. It could not have been a more valuable experience to be working and pursuing my degree at the same time," Budsock said.

During his time as a graduate student, Budsock remained on his path toward degree completion and, in January 2011, was appointed by Integrity House's Board of Trustees as president and CEO of the organization after the founder's retirement.

In June 2015, Budsock completed his Master of Science in Management degree and feels he has much to show for it.

"I want to use my experience and education to help mentor the leaders of the future and to work with individuals who want to take on a bigger role in organizations, like ours, and allow them to learn from my experience," said Budsock.

During Obama's visit to Integrity House, he touted the agency as serving, "...as a model for the good work being done sporadically around the nation."

Budsock lives in northern New Jersey with his wife, Trish, and has three daughters.

BREAKING

THROUGH

❖ Tatiana Solovieva, BSBA '12

Diligence. Tatiana Solovieva knows all about it. After all, she arrived in this country as a refugee and worked her way from clerk to credit analyst in the banking industry.

"My family moved to the U.S. from Russia in 1994 to join relatives already living here," said the 2012 Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) degree program graduate. "We were granted refugee status since my mother was of Jewish descent. Our receiving agency, the New York Association for New Americans, enrolled us in free secretarial courses, where we were able to develop administrative office skills and join the workforce."

A series of clerical positions that followed introduced Solovieva to the inner workings of the business world in her adopted country. Later, after working as an English language instructor, she decided to apply her skills to the accounting and finance fields. She eventually found a position in mortgage processing, where there was plenty of opportunity to put her analytical skills to good use, but little chance for a promotion. The position, however, introduced her to the field of banking.

"Around 2000, new employment opportunities were emerging everywhere," said Solovieva. "I was offered a position in the Commercial Loans Servicing Department of Hudson United Bank (now TD Bank). While working there, I happened to see a flyer for the Center for Financial Training - Atlantic & Central States (CFTACS) and thought it would be a great opportunity to learn more facets of the banking

industry while earning equivalent college credits."

In an industry that strongly favors a combination of on-the-job training and related course work for advancement, Solovieva was on a positive track. She leveraged her workplace training and CFTACS classes to achieve a succession of promotions, most recently serving as a credit analyst in TD Bank's Ramsey, N.J., branch.

"In 2004, I was offered a position servicing community loans and our team had a host of responsibilities encompassing small business banking, Small Business Administration (SBA) loans, loan facilitation and documentation. It was a great opportunity to expand my knowledge of the industry while earning CFTACS course credits."

When TD Bank acquired Hudson United, Solovieva noted that many choice positions began to open up. "That is when I decided to compose a letter for my supervisors outlining '10 Reasons Why You Have to Accept Me for a Credit Analyst Position.'" The treatise summarized Solovieva's skill set, career experience and the industry course credits she was accruing. The tactic proved successful and she was selected for the position.

According to Solovieva, fellow credit analysts and managers have a portfolio

of commercial real estate loans with the objective to prepare thorough annual reviews, risk rate them, collect required documentation relating to the loan in a timely fashion and monitor the portfolio performance along the way. All the while, they must effectively communicate with the borrowers and loan officers involved.

"It is important to catch any problems and resolve them early in order to avoid the loan going into a default situation," she said. "In addition, we are responsible for writing up new loans that require an in-depth knowledge of banking industry rules, markets and borrower profiles."

In 2005, Solovieva finished her banking courses and enrolled in Thomas Edison where she said all of her CFTACS credits were applied to her BSBA degree in financial institutions management program requirements.

"By the time I banked my credit, I was only required to take one online course, but I have great memories of my exchanges with fellow students and instructors as well as happy memories that will always be with me. Earning my degree gave me a sense of personal accomplishment and a closure for my years of hard work. I finished what I started, became more knowledgeable about my job and have the satisfaction of being able to say that I am a college graduate in the finance industry."

Solovieva currently works in the Commercial Real Estate Group for TD Bank in Ramsey. Off the clock, she enjoys reading and hiking.



"I FINISHED WHAT I STARTED, BECAME MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT MY JOB AND HAVE THE SATISFACTION OF BEING ABLE TO SAY THAT I AM A COLLEGE GRADUATE IN THE FINANCE INDUSTRY."

Tatiana Solovieva, BSBA '12

MAEdL

Inspiring the Next Generation

Michael Pasciuto, MAEdL '14

Inspired by his teachers and coaches, and motivated by his work with youth, Michael Pasciuto made the logical career choice: educator.

"My favorite teachers were always my history teachers as well as my football and track coaches," Pasciuto recalled. "To this day I have remained close with them. They were my inspiration. Outside

In addition, along with the principal, I handle management issues surrounding discipline, buildings and grounds, and logistics as well as serving as an instructional coach."

"I ENJOY LEARNING AT MY OWN PACE, AT MY CONVENIENCE, AND NEVER FELT THAT I HAD TO ATTEND A CLASS IN ORDER TO DO SO. FOR THIS REASON, THE UNIVERSITY WAS PERFECT FOR ME."

Michael Pasciuto, MAEdL '14

of high school, I worked with younger kids through recreational programs and local pools. Education seemed to fit my personality and goals as I knew that I wanted to work with kids."

Pasciuto, assistant principal of Glen Rock High School in Bergen County, N.J., has achieved that aspiration at many levels. Prior to joining the staff at Glen Rock, Pasciuto served as the supervisor of Social Studies (K-12) for the Cresskill School District. He also taught social studies classes for grades 7 through 12 and was the head coach of the cross country and track and field teams. His position comes with an array of duties that take him away from the classroom, but still allows for the guidance of young minds.

"I do a little bit of everything," Pasciuto explained. "At Glen Rock we do not have department supervisors, so much of what I did in my former role remains.

The educator is quick to note that it was his Thomas Edison education that helped him advance in the profession.

"My Thomas Edison degree enhanced my career from a practical standpoint because the degree led to two certifications, which allowed me to advance," Pasciuto said. "The leadership and law courses provided insight and a 'pathway.' As a teacher, coach and supervisor, I adapted and evolved as I learned from the different courses and interacted with professors and colleagues. In terms of my appointment at Glen Rock, I was able to apply what I learned because I needed to. This combined experience readied me for my new role and all of my experiences led to my appointment."

Pasciuto, who recommends Thomas Edison's graduate degree to colleagues, detailed why the program worked so well for him.

"For someone like me, a multiseason coach with a growing family, Thomas Edison was absolutely perfect," he noted. "I enjoy learning at my own pace at my convenience and never felt that I had to attend a class in order to do so. For this reason, it was perfect for me. The mentors and all of the support staff were very helpful, insightful and easy to work with."

In addition to his Thomas Edison degree, Pasciuto holds a Master of Education (MEd) in curriculum and instruction from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a BA in history from Dickinson College.

For Pasciuto, his postgraduate experiences were both practical and pertinent.

"The MEd and Thomas Edison's MAEdL programs made me a better teacher and coach because they were applicable and relevant," he explained. "For both graduate programs, I was teaching and coaching, so I was able to try new things and apply what I was learning."

Although his position no longer allows him to actively coach his student athletes, Pasciuto noted that he is there to "help the kids and coaches in any way that I can." When asked what it is like when Glen Rock competes against his former school, Cresskill High, Pasciuto replied, "It's odd. I am very close to my former athletes, so seeing them now as a fan of the opposition is hard."

Pasciuto, who lives in Packanack Lake in Wayne, N.J., with his wife and two children, ages 6 and 3, hasn't had to leave coaching behind completely. "Now that I can, I coach my kids and spend as much time as possible with my family."

James Alaggio

BSAST '11

James Alaggio resides in Hawaii and serves as a 767 pilot for Hawaiian Airlines. He is a professional aviator specializing in aviation education, technological innovation and inspirational expeditions. Alaggio noted that he is one of the few pilots in the world to have mastered airplane, helicopter, glider, paraglider and human flight using wingsuits.

Keith Benson

BA '03

Keith Benson released his new book, *The Power and the Glory: The Racial History of America and How to Fix It*. The book highlights how anyone can motivate youth through challenging situations.

Russ Carfagno

ASAST '97

Russ Carfagno was promoted to the director of Channel Support and Operations at Johnson Controls in York, Pa. Carfagno is in the process of completing his PhD in organizational leadership at Eastern University in St. Davids, Pa. He recently completed the comprehensive exam phase of the process and will be moving into the dissertation phase later this year.

Barbara Dan

BA '86

Barbara Dan released her 12th historical novel, *Home Is Where the Heart Is*. The novel celebrates the important role women played in settling the west.

Madjiguene Fall

BA '10, BSBA '10

Madjiguene Fall is an adjunct professor in the Education Department at Rowan University. She also serves as a world cultures, Spanish and ESL instructor. Additionally, Fall is the owner and lead instructor of Language for Work, an occupational language and cultural diversity training company.

Lonnie Harrell

AAS '14, BA '14

Lonnie Harrell was promoted to principal - technical security architect with AT&T. As part of his new position, Harrell oversees the organization's mobile apps for Android devices.



David Jollon

BA '13

David Jollon was named assistant women's basketball coach at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Conn. Jollon brings nine years of college basketball coaching experience to the position, having previously served as an assistant coach for the Molloy College Lions in Rockville Centre, N.Y. He led the team to its first playoff experience in three years and played a key role in women's basketball recruitment at the institution.

Benjamin Lawless

BA '03

Benjamin Lawless was recently selected on a competitive board to represent the U.S. Marine Corps as a Department of Defense (DOD) fellow partnering with FedEx Express this summer in Memphis, Tenn.

Ronald Lee

BSAST '15

Ronald Lee was named senior health physicist at Savannah River Nuclear Solution's Tritium Facility at the U.S. Department of Energy's Savannah River site near Aiken, S.C., in December.



Patricia Looper

BA '90

Patricia Looper published her second book, *Dear Budd: Wit and Wisdom From a Man With MS Who Never Gave Up*. The book is most inspiring for those who are disabled and those who care for loved ones in similar circumstances. It is written for Looper's late father, Budd.

Melody Allen McBeth

BA '08

Melody Allen McBeth was recognized as the 2015 Volunteer of the Year by the Association of Advancement Services Professionals (AASP) during its annual conference held in Chicago, Ill. The award is presented annually to a current member of the organization who has made a significant difference and mirrors the commitment to success in the association's professional ranks. McBeth has been in fundraising for more than 20 years and founded Highland Fundraising Solutions, LLC in 2010 to assist nonprofit organizations in maximizing data operations.



Dr. Robert McGee

AA '80, BA '82, ASM '83, BSBA '83

Dr. Robert McGee has had various novels he has authored translated into foreign languages. His novel, *Justifiable Homicide: A Political Thriller* will be translated into German, Spanish and Italian, and *The TSA vs. the People and Annie and the Senator* will both be translated into Italian.

George Puia

BSBA '83

George Puia was named to the *Oxford Journal's* Global Top 50 Business Professors. Puia is an educator at Saginaw Valley State University in University Center, Mich.

Matthew Quirk

BA '04

Matthew Quirk became a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) by passing exam #480, "Programming in HTML5 with Javascript and CSS3." Quirk is a software engineer II for Harte Hanks and, since 2002, has held various computer-programming positions for companies in the Philadelphia, Pa., area.

Michael Rakauckas

AAS '12, BSHS '13, MSM '15

Michael Rakauckas has been promoted to chief master sergeant and is a member of the New Jersey Air National Guard, 108th Wing, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. With more than 23 years of military service in the U.S. Air Force and the Air National Guard, he was selected as the 108th Wing Mission Support Group superintendent. As the senior enlisted leader of more than 475 personnel, Rakauckas is responsible for advising the group commander and staff on mission effectiveness, professional development, military readiness, training, utilization, health, morale and welfare of the enlisted force.



Mary Beth Ray-Simone

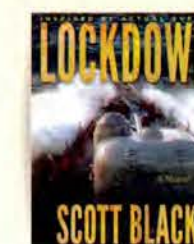
BSHS '04, BSN '13

Mary Beth Ray-Simone was named senior vice president of Patient Care Services and chief nursing officer of East Orange General Hospital in East Orange, N.J.

Scott Schwarz

BA '15

Scott Schwarz, under the pen name Scott Black, published a new novel, *Lockdown*. The book is inspired by actual events while Schwarz was serving in the U.S. Navy aboard the USS Miller in 1985.



Setsuko Tsuchiya

AA '10, BA '12

Setsuko Tsuchiya was awarded fellow status in the American Association of Integrative Medicine (AAIM). Fellow status is the AAIM's highest honor and is awarded to those individuals whose knowledge, skill, education, training and experience in their healthcare specialty has exceeded the stringent requirements of other levels of membership of AAIM.



Noah Woodruff

BSBA '14

Noah Woodruff successfully completed International Paper's Manufacturing Management Associate program while based in Connecticut and has joined the production team at Crawfordsville Container in Indiana. Woodruff is the process improvement manager responsible for total quality management and continuous improvement projects.

Keep us posted!

Send your news to invention@tesu.edu
BE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR FIRST AND LAST NAME,
YOUR ADDRESS, YOUR PREFERRED PHONE, THE YEAR(S) YOU
GRADUATED AND WHAT DEGREE(S) YOU EARNED.

Updates can also be sent to:
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\$150,000
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to support Educational Technology
and Innovative Support for Learning

2016 Looking Ahead

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**THOMAS EDISON
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22nd Annual
 Thomas C. Streckewald
 Golf Classic

May 9, 2016




**THOMAS EDISON
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Nursing Education Center



Opening Spring 2016

25th Anniversary

Grande Ball



October 8, 2016