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**MEMORANDUM**  
December 11, 1992

TO: Members, Board of Trustees  
FROM: George A. Pruitt   
SUBJ: President's Report to the Board of Trustees

**Assessment of Thomas Alva Edison**

As part of its 20th anniversary observance this year, Thomas Edison State College awarded Thomas Alva Edison an earned Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree with a specialization in Electrical Technology. The degree was conferred during the Commencement ceremonies on Sunday, October 25, 1992.

College staff teamed up with researchers at the Thomas Alva Edison Papers project of Rutgers, the State University, to assess the college-level learning which the legendary inventor acquired during his lifetime. The Edison Papers project is co-sponsored by Rutgers, The State University, the National Park Service, the New Jersey Historical Commission, and the Smithsonian Institute. Strong financial support has also come from the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and from nearly sixty private corporations and foundations, including those from Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Japan. Recently, Thomas Edison State College joined the project as an Institutional Associate.

Dr. Reese V. Jenkins, a nationally known scholar of the history of science, technology, and business of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, is the director and editor of the papers and professor of history at Rutgers. College staff worked with the Edison Papers staff to select the appropriate degree and area of specialization to be evaluated for Mr. Edison.

Dr. Paul B. Israel, Dr. Robert A. Rosenberg, and Dr. Reese V. Jenkins, senior scholars with the Edison Papers project, were selected to write the thirteen degree area descriptions and select the documentation to support the written narrative in the portfolio assessment process. The Thomas Edison faculty consultants who evaluated the portfolios included:

Ronald E. Kostar, Rider College  
Thomas Simonet, Rider College  
Joseph M. Gowaskie, Rider College  
Barbara K. McGoldrick, Union County College  
Marvin Barsky, Pennsylvania State University  
Daniel B. Cokewood, Kean College of New Jersey  
Preston R. Clement, Emeritus, Stevens Institute of Technology  
Jack L. Waintraub, Middlesex County College  
Thomas M. Handler, Middlesex County College  
William M. Brant, Rider College

Barry Sloan, great grandson of Thomas Alva Edison, attended the Commencement ceremonies to receive the diploma on behalf of the Edison family.

#### **Academic Symposium: Thomas Alva Edison**

As part of the College's 20th Anniversary celebration, an Academic Symposium on the Edison Papers project and on the academic review of Mr. Thomas Alva Edison for an earned baccalaureate degree was held at the College on Friday, October 23, 1992.

Dr. Paul Israel and Dr. Robert Rosenberg of the Edison Papers project, and Dr. Daniel Cokewood of Kean College of New Jersey, one of the consulting faculty who evaluated Mr. Edison's portfolios for the earned degree, were guest speakers.

Dr. Israel focused on the youth of "Al," as Thomas Edison was known. The young entrepreneur, who had very little formal schooling, was selling vegetables and running a newspaper for the railroad line out of Port Huron, Michigan, by his 15th birthday in 1862.

Dr. Rosenberg took the audience through Mr. Edison's creative adult life, during which the inventor amassed 1,093 patents from the federal government, the largest number ever issued to a single person. In addition to the light bulb, Thomas Edison also invented the phonograph, electrical power generation systems, and the transmitter portion of the phone, among others.

Dr. Cokewood detailed the process that was used in evaluating the 17 portfolios that made up Thomas Alva Edison's transcript [yes, he does have a transcript and a student number]. Cokewood explained that Edison was evaluated by the educational standards of his day, as if a college such as Thomas Edison State College existed at the time. The portfolios detailed the inventor's research and achievements, and earned him a Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree with a specialization in electrical technology.

There was a lively question and answer session. During the reception which followed, the 65 people who attended the presentation were able to chat informally with the speakers.

### **The 20th Anniversary Ball**

On the evening of October 24, over 250 of the College's alumni and friends, which included dignitaries from government, business and industry, and higher education from throughout the State and beyond, gathered together in celebration of Thomas Edison State College. Sponsored by the Foundation with strong support from the Board of Trustees, the 20th Anniversary Ball provided the forum for reunions on many levels. Former President Lorraine Matusak attended, and founding President James Douglas Brown sent greetings and best wishes. Former Trustees Alan Ferguson, Eleanor Spiegel, George Hanford, and Robert Taylor attended, along with former Vice Presidents Richard Hansen and Arnold Fletcher.

The theme "Two Decades of Dreams Fulfilled" was elegantly represented in decorations and displays which included a magnificent ice carving of the historic Kelsey Building clock, and in the program book which featured over 100 congratulatory ads by corporations, businesses, and other friends of the College. In all, the gala was a splendid success.

### **News Coverage**

Beginning in August, the Office of Communications and College Relations began contacting national news media, including syndicated talk shows and wire services about the upcoming earned degree for Thomas Alva Edison. While there were impediments, the information gathered for media outlets was communicated through multiple mailings, telephone calls, fax alerts and personal visits. The result was media coverage which has been reported throughout the nation and which in all likelihood extended around the world. Admissions Services reports that its voice mail was "overflowing" with inquiries for days after Commencement as a result of the publicity received.

### **Annual PONSI Sponsors Meeting**

The Annual PONSI Sponsors meeting was the most effective in recent memory. To reach more decision-makers and to help shape the agenda for partnership development, James Ratigan, PONSI Director, significantly elevated the issues addressed, broadened the participation and increased the visibility of the program. Renamed as the Corporate/Higher Education Colloquium, the meeting featured more than 46 speakers, including five college presidents and five corporate vice-presidents. More than 130 educators from corporations and higher education participated. The Colloquium was co-sponsored by the Showboat Casino and the American Council on Education. Achievement was carried on CNN, ABC radio and television, National Public Radio and most major newspapers throughout the United States.

### **Academic Center Occupied**

I am delighted to announce that on October 17 the College occupied its brand new academic center at 167-169 Hanover Street. The center provides appropriate facilities, testing rooms, counseling offices and even provides for a future nursing lab to meet the needs of our students and the staff of the College's Division of Academic Affairs. The two-story facility totals over 24,000 square feet and provides office space for 70 employees of the Academic Affairs Division.

### **Kuser Mansion**

As a result of on-going discussions on additional facility needs, I am also pleased to announce that the Kuser Mansion has been approved by the General Services Administration for the College's use. It is expected that before the fiscal year is out, the College will be moving several offices including Admissions, TOPS, Personnel, DIAL and Corporate Programs from the National State Bank Building to this historic facility.

### **Portfolio Workshops**

Beginning with the fall of 1993, the Office of Testing and Assessment will be offering two different kinds of portfolio workshops. The first is much like what is offered now, except that it will be by request only. Member institutions of the Statewide Testing and Assessment Center (STAC), small companies, religious organizations and other groups may request an on-site portfolio workshop for Thomas Edison students interested in portfolio assessment.

The second type of workshop is what the College has referred to in the past as the Narrative Clinic. This newly-revised offering is for enrolled students who have already begun the prior learning assessment process and are working with a portfolio advisor. The Narrative Clinic concentrates on developing the special skills used in writing a high quality portfolio narrative. Registration for the Narrative Clinics will be by referral.

### **The National Institute**

The National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning this past June was a tremendous success. The international group of participants experienced many useful and challenging sessions, and were able to partake of the concurrent electronic conference which had been prearranged via the CALL Network. The following is a sampling of comments made by participants:

"This was one of the most useful and well-directed [institutes] I've attended. The exchange of ideas both in and out of the sessions will greatly help me to improve our university's [PLA] program."

"I feel I've learned a lot at the Institute and now have a clearer idea of how to proceed at my institution. I definitely have a better understanding of Prior Learning Assessment and I feel better equipped to get the answers I need as I encounter obstacles along the way."

"In general, my interest in Prior Learning Assessment grows stronger. I would recommend the Institute to my peers as a worthwhile experience and an opportunity to learn and grow."

"I have had the opportunity to meet and hear those individuals who have been part of the Prior Learning Assessment movement since its inception."

"All in all, a great conference. As someone said, thank God for Thomas Edison!!"

The next Institute will be held June 12-15, 1993.

#### **Staff Items**

Dr. Debra Dagavarian, Director of Testing and Assessment, has been invited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools to participate on an accreditation team next spring for The American College in Bryn Mawr, PA.

A previously published article by Dr. Dagavarian will be included in a new book which is a collection of "the best of" research articles published by the Society for American Baseball Research. Her article is titled "The Runner Wore Skirts," and is about one of the real-life stars of the All American Girls Professional Baseball League (as were depicted in the recent movie **A League of Their Own**).

Celeste Wynn, Senior Portfolio Advisor, gave a workshop titled "Identifying Your Learning Style" at the Center for Urban Theological Studies in Philadelphia, PA, on August 27.

#### **Review of Degree Programs**

Dr. Barbara Losty, Coordinator of the Human Services degrees, is chairing the committee to review the Human Services degrees during FY 1993. Dr. Samone Jolly, Coordinator of the Liberal Arts degrees, is chairing the committee to review the Liberal Arts degrees. Both committees are using the American Council on Education's publication, Principles of Good Practice for Alternative and External Degree Programs for Adults as a review guide. The committees will review the degree requirements, the recommended courses for the specializations in the baccalaureate degrees and the options in the associate degrees. In addition, the committees will review services to students and methods of earning credit for completing the degree.

The committee for the Human Services degrees includes the following consulting faculty members: Dr. Beverly Dunston, Rutgers University; Dr. Harry Hoitsma, Montclair State College; Dr. Thomas Millard, Montclair State College; Dr. Joseph Sanborn, Rowan College of New Jersey; and Dr. John Visceglia, Cumberland County College (Emeritus).

The committee for the Liberal Arts degrees includes the following consulting faculty members: Dr. Fredric Goldstein, Trenton State College; Dr. Joseph Gowaskie, Rider College; Dr. Dominick Iorio, Rider College; Dr. Lawrence Knapp, Essex County College; and Ms. Mary Ann Whittemore, McGuire Air Force Base.

### **Nuclear Engineering Technology**

Lt. James McGraff, a recent Thomas Edison graduate, arranged for an all expense paid trip to the Navy Nuclear Power School in Orlando, Florida and the Florida Power and Light Company in Port St. Lucie, Florida. Mr. Louis Martini, Admissions Representative, and Dr. Susan Friedman, Coordinator of the Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degrees, visited both sites in September. They presented the college programs to 60 Navy personnel and instructors and to 195 prospective students. In addition, Dr. Friedman worked with five currently enrolled students. At Florida Power and Light, Mr. Martini and Dr. Friedman met with 70 prospective students.

Dr. Susan Friedman also visited the Newport News Naval Base, the Norfolk Naval Air Station, the Norfolk Navy Base, and the Hampton University Continuing Education Office in September. Hampton University delivers classroom-based courses in Nuclear Engineering Technology for students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology program at Thomas Edison. Dr. Friedman met with 60 potential students, with Navy Educational Officers, and with the staff at Hampton University.

### **Statewide Testing and Assessment Center (STAC)**

The Fall meeting of the Statewide Testing and Assessment Center, hosted by Montclair State College, focused on financial aid for adult students. Dr. Richard Lynde, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at Montclair State College, gave the welcome and spoke concerning the importance of the cooperation among New Jersey colleges. The panel on financial aid for adult students included: Carl Buck, University Director of Financial Assistance & Scholarships, Rutgers, The State University; Francine Andrea, University Director, Office of Financial Assistance, Drew University; and Sheila T. Attias, Director of Financial Aid, Passaic County Community College. Forty four individuals from 28 New Jersey colleges attended the meeting, which was chaired by Dr. Ruth M. McKeefery, Dean of Thomas Edison and Director of the Statewide Testing and Assessment Center.

### **Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES)**

Thomas Edison has had a "Memorandum of Understanding" since 1983 with DANTES wherein DANTES agrees to support educational efforts for military servicemembers. In return, the College agrees to provide educational opportunities and degree programs for military servicemembers. A recent effort by DANTES has been to provide regional workshops to assist education service officers with information on degree completion, emphasizing colleges with external degree programs.

At the request of DANTES, Dr. Ruth M. McKeefery, Dean of the College, has attended the workshops to present sessions on access for adult students, methods of earning credits, the CALL Network, and techniques of program planning. Dr. McKeefery has made presentations at DANTES regional workshops and will also be a presenter at the workshop in Atlanta, Georgia in December, and in Denver, Colorado in September of 1993.

### **Articulation Agreement**

An Articulation Agreement was completed with Raritan Valley Community College for their program in Legal Assisting.

### **Multicultural Paper**

The Middle States Association Visiting Team, during the accreditation visit in March 1992, included among its suggestions for the work of the Office of Test Development and Research, a recommendation that the work of evaluating subgroup equity in the TECEP program, begun with the 1990 paper by Dr. Tom Donlon and Ms. Emily Carone, "Patterns of Participation by Age and Gender in a Credit-by-Examination Program," be extended to a consideration of groups defined by race and/or ethnic group. The office responded by projecting a companion paper, and by submitting a proposal that this be presented at the annual meeting of the Northeast Educational Research Association, as the 1990 paper had been.

Working with the Director of Institutional Research and with the Associate Director for Management Information Systems (MIS), the data files for test-takers and for the general student population were examined and appropriate tables defined. The paper is conceptualized as a comparison of access to and use of testing opportunity as well as a comparison of success rates in performance. The paper proceeds from an interpretive framework that considers group differences to reflect differences in the life experiences of the groups.



### **ParTEST Software Evaluation**

The possible applications of computers in the TECEP test development processes are continually reviewed. Current attention is focused on the development of "item banks," collections of actual and possible test questions that are organized by and accessible through computers. A visit to Miami-Dade Community College in June identified the ParTEST program as the leading candidate for consideration as the test development/test assembly software for the office. Contact has been made within New Jersey with three institutional users of the package: Rutgers, The State University, County College of Morris, and Public Service Electric and Gas. The Rutgers University application was explored with Dr. Jean Arnold of that institution, who is a faculty consultant at Thomas Edison. Dr. Gloria Lombardi of the County College of Morris was visited, and her application reviewed. A similar visit is projected to the PSE&G facility in Salem, New Jersey. When completed, this item-banking program should greatly reduce preparation and research time in test development and/or revision.

### **Standard Setting Workshop**

A major recommendation of the Middle States Association Visiting Team was that the procedures for standard setting for TECEP examinations be reviewed, and recent developments in measurement technique be formally adapted and adopted by the program.

On October 2, 1992, a faculty workshop was devoted to the topic of standard-setting. Attending faculty were presented with the necessity for and the rationale for proposed new procedures, and were invited to work through draft exercises in materials assessment. The faculty were from diverse fields, but a cross section of material from the actual TECEP examination Introduction to the History of Film was considered sufficiently general that the participants could form useful judgments. This was demonstrated by the concurrence between faculty judgments and actual item analysis data.

Further work is projected in the development of standard-setting operations and their implementation in the work of committees.

### **DANTES Initiative**

In recent years, the Test Description Book has contained descriptive material concerning the DANTES program. The material is essentially abstracted from DANTES descriptions available in the public domain, and reformatted. The placement of this material, and the procedures for its preparation are being reviewed. To this end, Dean McKeefery was asked to identify a person at DANTES with whom to discuss the changes. Dr. Jeff Cropsey was contacted, and an initial DANTES understanding worked out. Further contact with the Educational Testing Service contract performing group is planned. Essentially, the goal is to see if TECEP can provide more information to students while reducing the work required of office staff in reformatting.



### **Examination Revisions**

Faculty consultants were asked to provide review and revision in the following examinations: Organizational Behavior, Introduction to Data Processing, and Written Expression II. As a result, new material was introduced in all three of the examinations. Work continues on these and other examinations.

### **Guided Study Courses**

In the fall of 1992 the course equivalent enrollments totaled 1211. This is a 17% increase over fall, 1991.

Eight new courses were introduced in the fall 1992 semester:

- College Composition I
- College Composition II
- Western Art History
- Survey of Chemistry
- American History I
- History of Women and the Family
- Analysis and Interpretation of Literature
- Abnormal Psychology

Seven new faculty consultants joined the Center for Directed Independent Adult Learning (DIAL) staff. The new consultants are:

- Hamideh Ramjerdi-Shirazi, Statistics - Kean College of New Jersey
- Dale Irvin, Ethics - New York Theological Seminary
- Philip Dumas, Chemistry - Trenton State College
- Frank Esposito, American History - Kean College of New Jersey
- Sherry Rosen, History of Women - Rutgers, the State University
- Bob Lorenzi, Analysis and Interpretation of Literature - Camden County College
- Walter Whalen, Computers & Society - Brookdale Community College

### **Satellite Programs**

The College continues to seek out new course offerings for the Guided Study program. One rich resource is from telecourses being offered via satellite. The following programs have been taped off the satellite since August 1, 1992:

Sociology of Rural Communities	13 sixty-minute programs
Western Art History	9 one-hour programs
Contact	12 thirty-minute programs
Let's Get Acquainted	30 thirty-minute programs
French in Action	26 thirty-minute programs
Pacific Century	10 sixty-minute programs
Destinos	26 thirty-minute programs
In Italiano	26 thirty-minute programs
Mechanical Universe	26 thirty-minute programs
Destinos II	26 thirty-minute programs
Out of the Past	8 sixty-minute programs

Syllabi and other print materials are prepared for each potential course which is then reviewed and classified by an appropriate Academic Council committee before being submitted for consideration by the Council as a whole. If approved, each course must then go through the licensure process before being made available to students.