



Staff Newsletter of Thomas Edison State College • April 2011

Staff Evaluate the Evaluators

During the March Lunch and Learn

Ask any Thomas Edison State College alum what the standout moment was in their degree pursuit, and they usually have an immediate answer. Second to earning their diploma, receiving their initial Academic Program Evaluation is often a major turning point.

For prospective students, the overarching response is usually one of relief. They are relieved at discovering, once they review their Academic Program Evaluation, that many courses taken years before do not have to be retaken and that many of their college-level endeavors – whether it was credits from CLEP or DANTES testing, FEMA credits, military education and training,

licenses and certificates or credits from past college courses – were often recognized and counted toward their degree program.

During the March Lunch and Learn, evaluation staff in the Office of the Registrar deconstructed the transcript review process and explained the ways that the resulting Academic Program Evaluation serves as an important road map for applicants, defining which courses they have completed and what they will need to take in order to fulfill their degree requirements.

Learners Services staff **Donna Watson**, associate registrar and director of evaluations; **Kristin Lobasso**, senior evaluator; and **Mary Beth Lynch**, assistant director of evaluations, along with Learner Services representatives **Christine Carter**, **Rob Devine** and **Doray Burns**, described their respective areas' contribution to piecing together the process.



Learner Services staff hosted the College Lunch and Learn on March 23. Front row (from left to right): Doray Burns, Christine Carter and Kristin Lobasso; second row: Mary Beth Lynch and Donna Watson; and back row: Sharon Smith and Rob Devine.

“The Academic Evaluation is always a moment of clarity. It is the key that unlocks the door to a student’s academic pursuits...”

- Donna Watson
Associate Registrar and
Director of Evaluations

Once an evaluator receives an applicant’s transcript, they choose from among a number of tools to search for possible Thomas Edison State College course equivalents. Evaluators examine the College’s own institutional database in Datatel, auxiliary spreadsheets listing numerous course descriptions and possible equivalents, a physical library of catalogs from college and universities across the U.S., microfiche records and consult online recommendation sources such as the College Source and The American Council on Education’s (ACE) online

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Focus On: Maureen Flanagan Marcus

Maureen Flanagan Marcus recognizes a rare find when she sees it.

The confidential assistant to the vice president for Planning and Research, and former antique dealer, has a keen eye for items of enduring value. It is what attracted her originally to the College in 1988, and what drew her back in 2005.

"I've been with the College a total of 14 years; initially, working in academic affairs as assistant to Dean Dr. Ruth McKeefery; and later, as assistant to the Provost, Dr. Jerry Ice, with whom I worked in rolling out the College's first master's program – our Master of Science in Management (MSM)." Marcus left the College in 1997, taking a nine-year hiatus from academia in order to open her own antique store in Medford, N.J., and travel throughout the U.S., Europe, Australia and New Zealand.



Maureen Marcus
Confidential Assistant to the
Vice President for Planning and
Research

In 2005, she returned to the College as assistant to the vice president for Planning and Research **Dr. Penelope Brouwer**.

"What I love most about working at the College are our marvelous people and the diversity of the projects in which I'm involved. I feel as though I've been rewarded on many levels for my commitment to the College and its mission and feel that I broaden my portfolio of knowledge daily," she enthused. "I earned my degree here, and believe what we do for adult learners is of great importance."

According to Marcus, each workday brings many

opportunities for an entire range of activities. "As office manager, it is my responsibility to ensure the smooth operation of the division. I manage contracts with consultants, coordinate and participate in College-wide managerial retreats, seminars and professional development workshops." Marcus works closely with consulting firms that perform operational reviews for the College and handles the logistical and financial affairs of her division. She also collaborates with the vice presidents and Strategic Vision Plan goal leaders in moving the College toward one of its most important business objectives – its Strategic Vision Plan.

"Maureen is the consummate professional," said Brouwer. "She brings tremendous talent, organizing skills and extraordinary patience and wisdom to the College. She is the glue that holds the Division of Planning and Research together."

Marcus, who earned a BA degree from the College in 1992, resides in Marlton, N.J. She is one of eight children and looks forward to the time she gets to spend with her siblings. She has two daughters and five grandchildren. Her daughter, Yvette, and son-in-law, Joe, live in New Jersey with their two children, Layla and Gavin. Her daughter, Chris, and son-in-law, John, live in Michigan with their three children, Kyle, Felicia and Sierra.

In her spare time, Marcus enjoys reading, scouting flea markets, travelling and attending theater performances. She currently serves as an educational partner to the Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals Connective.

College Staff Will Paddle for the Cause in June

For its third straight year, Thomas Edison State College dragon boat team will "paddle" to support local women and families affected by breast cancer.

The College's team proudly competed in the past two Paddle For Pink (PFP) Annual Community Dragon Boat Festivals at Mercer County Park in West Windsor. This year's event is expected to attract 50 to 60 teams.

PFP is supported by area residents and businesses, and is hosted by the Machestic Dragons, New Jersey's first breast cancer survivor dragon boat team, now in their 10th season. Past PFP festivals have raised more than \$30,000, which are donated to support local women and families affected by breast cancer. Three

employees are members of this nonprofit organization; **Christine Carter**, **Lori Lewis** and **Terry Coleman**. This year's festival will be Sunday, June 5, 2011. No experience is necessary, equipment is provided and registration is now open. Those interested in participating can

contact Christine Carter at ccarter@tesc.edu. If you are interested in supporting the Machestic Dragons by donating a silent auction item, please contact Coleman, their team president, at tcoleman@tesc.edu. Event photos can be found on www.eactionphotos.com/events.



Staff, family and friends who participated in the 2010 Annual Community Dragon Boat Race.

Institutional Lunch and Learns Keep Staff Updated

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resources registry, to search for matches. "Though our evaluators sometimes wrestle with the ambiguity involved in processing incoming academic records; for the applicant, receiving the resulting evaluation is always a moment of clarity. It is the key that unlocks the door to their academic pursuit," noted Watson.

In Lynch's view, it takes a tremendous amount of skill and patience on the part of evaluators in aggregating, assessing and fitting the pieces into a final product. Incoming transcripts give rise to a review process that can run the gamut in complexity. "One evaluation can be compared to a 100-piece jigsaw puzzle of a house; another evaluation can be more like a 2,000-piece jigsaw puzzle of an Oreo cookie," she said.

In 2010, 12 primary evaluators shouldered the task of processing 20,500 evaluations, up from 18,000 evaluations in 2007.

"I was very pleased to see so many colleagues attend this Lunch and Learn hosted by the evaluation staff," said **Sharon Smith**, registrar. "This was a great opportunity for our team to highlight their professional expertise and their student-centered focus."

Staff are urged to watch for announcements on future Lunch and Learns organized by the Office of Human Resources. ■

Congratulations

Ying Jiang, senior research analyst, Office of Institutional Research & Outcomes Assessment, and her husband, Doug Meng, are the proud parents of a baby girl, Rachelle, who was born on Wednesday, March 2. Rachelle weighed 7 pounds, 12 ounces.

Staff Activities



Louise Riley

Dr. Susan McMullen O'Brien, dean; **Louise Riley** assistant dean and director of Distance Learning; and **Lisa Whitfield-Harris**, diversity coordinator, were invited by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Grants Resource Center to participate in the Proposal Development Workshop for university grants administrators on Feb. 24 – 26 in Washington, D.C., The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing staff shared their experiences of applying for grants, along with Janis Young, lead nurse consultant, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), via the Web from the College in the presentation, "A Journey Through Grant Writing," on Feb. 25.

Maureen Marcus, confidential assistant to the Vice President of Planning and Research; **Robin Walton**, director, Office of Community Affairs & Government Relations; **Kristin Gonzalez**, confidential assistant to the Director of Office of Community Affairs & Government Relations; **Nia Abuwl**, associate director, Academic Advising, Office of Learner Services; and **Sylvia Hamilton**, associate vice president, Enrollment Management & Strategic Partnerships, attended the New Jersey Women in Higher Education American Council on Education (ACE) Network Woman of Color in Higher Education Conference at Brookdale Community College. The conference theme focused on "Moving from Aspirations to Action: Achieving Your Fullest Potential."



John Thurber

John P. Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs, moderated a panel discussion at the 2011 Mercer County Economic Summit on March 16 at Mercer County Community College in West Windsor. The topic was "The Digital Connection: The Race to Succeed in the Internet Age."

Jennifer M. Montone, assistant director of Purchasing, Office of Administrative Services, had an article published in the winter 2011 issue of the *International Leadership Journal*, a refereed, quarterly online journal published by Thomas Edison State College. The article, "Closing the Achievement Gap: A Leadership Challenge for an Eastern Seaboard School District," was co-authored with Arleen Theresa Dodd.



Drew Hopkins

Drew Hopkins, chief information officer, Office of Management Information Systems, has been appointed to the Public Sector Technical Exchange Board for Cisco Systems, Inc. based in San Jose, Calif. Members of this board are selected based on their understanding of how technology impacts education or government entities and the unique perspective they bring to the group. Hopkins' expertise in the use of information systems to promulgate distance learning for adult learners is expected to help Cisco understand this market and its demographics. Hopkins began working for Thomas Edison State College in 1977.

In 2010, Cisco Systems, Inc. was ranked number 58 on the Fortune 500 list, making it the 58th largest company in the United States based on revenue. The company manufactures and supports Internet protocol (IP)-based networking and other products related to the communications and information technology industry.

Welcome New Staff



Alisa Douglas has been appointed program assistant in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. Douglas is located on the 3rd floor of the Townhouses and may be reached at extension 3330.



Kimberley Fawkes has been appointed admissions counselor in the Office of Admissions. Fawkes is located on the 1st floor of the Canal Banks Building and may be reached at extension 3022.



Vanessa Meredith has been appointed academic program advisor in the Office of Learner Services. Meredith is located on the 2nd floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 3442.

Staff Ambassadors

The **Office of Human Resources** announced its new Ambassador Program earlier this year. This program has been designed for newly hired staff at Thomas Edison State College and the New Jersey State Library to foster engagement and inclusion into our communities.

The newly hired employee will be matched with an experienced member of our staff to serve as the employee's ambassador.

Look for a feature article about the program in the June issue of *Capital Campus*.

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing Hosts Sixth Annual Distinguished Lectureship

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing sponsored its Sixth Annual Distinguished Lectureship on Diversity in Nursing on March 18. The nationally-recognized event focused on mentoring opportunities for minority nurse leaders to guide future minority nurse educators in their career. Also discussed was the significance of increasing the number and diversity of nurses, nurse leaders and educators to meet the national changing demographic landscape. "Twenty-five percent of the students currently enrolled in our undergraduate nursing program are minorities," said **Lisa Whitfield-Harris**, MSN, MBA, RN, diversity coordinator in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. "Since many will develop into nurse leaders and educators, the resulting impact on their respective communities becomes exponential."

The School's Online Minority Nurse Educator Program has engendered significant changes in the delivery of higher education since its inception six years ago and has educated many talented minority nurse educators from a range of cultural and demographic backgrounds.

Beverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN, CEO, National League for Nurses in New York, was the keynote speaker.

The lectureship is supported in part by a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration.



W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing Sixth Annual Distinguished Lectureship participants included (first row from left to right): Beverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN, CEO, National League for Nurses, New York, N.Y.; **Susan M. O'Brien**, EdD, RN, dean, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing; Minerva Guttman, EdD, RN, NP, director and associate professor, Henry P. Becton School of Nursing & Allied Health, Fairleigh Dickinson University; and **Lisa Whitfield-Harris**, MSN, MBA, RN, diversity coordinator, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. Second row from left to right: Kenya Beard, PhD, RN, assistant professor, Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, New York, N.Y.; **Louise Riley**, MS, RN, BC, assistant dean for Distance Learning, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing; Prisca Anuforo, MSN, RN, assistant professor, Essex County College, Newark, N.J.; Seon Lewis-Holman, MSN, RN, director, Education and Clinical Development, Visiting Nurse Service of New York; and Olufunke (Lola) L. Oyedele, MSN, RN, assistant professor, Essex County College, Newark, N.J.



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.