

Capital Campus

FEBRUARY 2018

Merodie A. Hancock Selected as President of TESU

The institution's Board of Trustees unanimously elected **Merodie A. Hancock, PhD**, the fourth president of Thomas Edison State University at a special board meeting in December. She will take office on March 5, 2018.

"Thomas Edison State University is such a respected pillar among adult-serving institutions in the United States and has been at the forefront of offering degree pathways for busy, working adults since its inception in 1972," said Hancock, who currently serves as president of SUNY Empire State College in New York. "I hold dear this mission and am honored to take on the presidency of such a pivotal University."

University Board Chair Brian T. Maloney said Hancock's record of accomplishment and commitment to innovation and excellence made her an ideal choice to lead Thomas Edison State University.

"We are honored and excited to have Dr. Hancock as our new president. She has the experience, expertise and vision to lead Thomas Edison in today's challenging marketplace," said Maloney, who chaired the University's presidential search committee. "Dr. Hancock has dedicated her distinguished career to expanding access to higher education for adults, including active military service members and veterans, and is a national leader in meeting the unique needs of nontraditional students."

Hancock has served as president of SUNY Empire State College since 2013. She is responsible for the overall operation of the institution's 35 locations throughout New

York, the worldwide Center for Distance Learning and eight international sites and oversees the teaching and learning of the college's 20,000 students as well as the employment of 1,700 faculty and staff and active engagement with 70,000 alumni.

Prior to joining SUNY Empire State College, Hancock served as vice president at Central Michigan University Global Campus where she was responsible for delivering academic programs at the university's remote campuses, military and community college locations, and online programs. During her tenure at Central Michigan, Hancock served on several strategic committees and oversaw tuition pricing and discounting strategies, compliance with accreditation and licensure regulations, partnerships with community colleges and increased diversity recruitment. She has also held teaching and administrative leadership positions at the University of Maryland University College and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Dr. George A. Pruitt, who will officially leave office after serving as Thomas Edison's president for 35 years, praised the board's selection for the institution's new president.

"I am delighted that Merodie Hancock will be the next president of our University,"



Merodie A. Hancock, PhD, to serve as fourth president of Thomas Edison State University.

said Pruitt. "She is a tested executive, an experienced educator and a visionary leader who has spent her career in our academic space and understands how technology can remove barriers in higher education to meet the needs of adults. Her passion for serving members of our military and veterans will also serve the Thomas Edison State University community well."

Hancock holds a PhD in urban services and education administration from Old Dominion University, an MBA from Claremont Graduate University and a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Scripps College.

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Focus On: Craig Smith

Craig Smith is passionate about his position at Thomas Edison State University. The director of Veteran Affairs in Office of Military and Veteran Education discovered early on that it takes dedication and commitment to do anything well.

"The youngest of nine in my family, I learned my work ethic while growing up on a small dairy farm in upstate New York," said Smith, who retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2012. "And I've always been passionate about higher education, so the opportunity to assist fellow veterans, and military service members and their families was a perfect fit for me."

Smith's position at TESU gives him many opportunities to do just that.

His duties include assisting new military-connected students with setting up their VA educational benefits and helping them with transcripts and academic advising, and understanding their Academic Evaluation.

"Our office informs students about the University's VA policies regarding academic engagement and satisfactory academic progress (SAP), and then monitors academic engagement and SAP and intervenes as necessary to ensure students remain on track toward graduation," he explained. "We also guide students who are dealing with extenuating circumstances

and process VA enrollment certifications to ensure timely payment of benefits to students and timely payment of tuition to the University."

Prior to his military service, Smith worked as an on-air radio disc jockey in Syracuse, N.Y., for four years, including two years at the Syracuse University campus radio station, following high school. Before joining TESU in October 2013, Smith served as an aerospace science instructor for the Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) program at Vineland High School in Vineland, N.J. He is a member of the New Jersey Association of Veteran's Program Administrators (NJAVPA) and the Council of College and Military Educators (CCME).

"I am honored to serve those who have sacrificed so much for the freedom we enjoy," said Smith. "And I take great pleasure in working with such a dedicated group of professionals within the Office of Military and Veteran Education and the University. I really feel like I can make a difference and have a positive impact on the experience for our students and fellow staff."

Smith holds a Bachelor of Science degree in workforce education and development from Southern Illinois University (SIU) at Carbondale and an MBA from Centenary College in Shreveport, La. Like many of



Craig Smith, director of Veteran Affairs, Office of Military and Veteran Education

TESU's military students, Smith had to work education into his busy schedule during his service. He attended the SIU program while stationed at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and the Centenary program while stationed in Louisiana.

Smith resides in Mickleton, N.J., with his wife, Gina, and their two daughters, Isabella and Grace. He also has two adult children from a previous marriage, Craig Jr. and Katie, who live in Levittown, Pa.

When he is off the clock, Smith enjoys spending time with his family, and, hearkening back to his upstate New York roots, he is an avid Syracuse University sports fan, especially basketball and football.

Holiday Party



Getting into the spirit at the Thomas Edison State University Holiday Party at Rho in Trenton are (from the left) **Maureen Woodruff, Heather Brooks, Randi Miller** and **Tom Phillips**.

To view more photos of the Holiday Party, please visit the Communications folder on the staff portal.

AFT Holiday Charity Event



The annual Thomas Edison State University AFT Local 4277 Holiday Charity Event chose to support the Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHS of NJ) again this year. The University and New Jersey State Library-wide gift drive fulfilled the wishes of more than 60 CHS of NJ children. Pictured from the left are committee members who made this possible included **Jaclyn Joworisak, Li-yun Young, Ken Lightfoot, Katie Brommer, Susan Fischer, Leslie Mooney** and Chair **Kristen Lacaille**. Committee members not picture are **Annie Born** and **Monica Meehan**. In addition to all the gifts pictured in the photo, the drive also raised \$650 in cash donation for the children of CHS.

Staff Activities

Juliette Punchello, senior director of Admissions and Enrollment Services, presented at the Middle States Association of Collegiate Registrars and Officers of Admission in Atlantic City in November. Her session focused on, "Evolving Admissions & Enrollment Services into a Virtual One-Stop Center." Attendees represented institutions including the University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers University, Wilmington University and Baruch College CUNY.



Juliette Punchello

Bob Herbst, executive director, and **Steve Garwood**, director of Transformational Learning, Office of Continuing and Professional Studies (CPS), attended the Conference on Management and Executive Development (CMED) at the University of Texas, Austin, and participated in the Adaptive Strategic Execution Program offered by Duke Corporate Education. In addition to his attendance, Herbst was a member of the 2017 CMED Conference Advisory Board.



Bob Herbst

Dr. Phyllis Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing, has been re-elected as New Jersey State Nurses Association Region 4 treasurer for a two-year term.



Steve Garwood

Maureen Clark-Gallagher, assistant dean/director of Distance Learning, W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing, has been elected as New Jersey State Nurses Association Region 4 president-elect. The term of office will be for two years. Subsequently, the term as president will follow from Jan. 1, 2020, until Dec. 31, 2021.



Dr. Phyllis Marshall

Vanessa Meredith, director, Integrated Recruitment, attended the Middle States Association of College Registrars and Officers of Admissions (MSACROA) annual conference at the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City, N.J., in November. She presented "Inter-Departmental Collaboration for Maximum Recruiting: 2017 Update," and co-presented a FERPA Roundtable with Susan Hamilton, assistant vice chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs, at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.



Maureen Clark-Gallagher

Maggie Ciocco, nursing program advisor, W. Carry Edwards School of Nursing, has won an American Journal of Nursing (AJN) Book of the Year Award in the Professional Issues Category for her book, "Fast Facts on Combating Nurse Bullying, Incivility and Workplace Violence." The list of winners was published in the January issue of AJN.

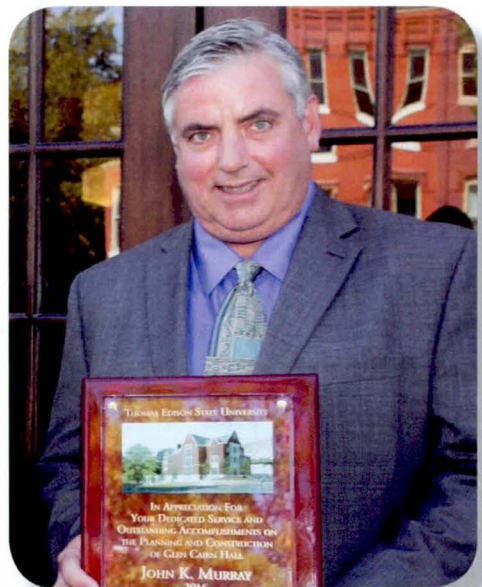


Vanessa Meredith



Maggie Ciocco

University Mourns the Loss of John K. Murray



Thomas Edison State University mourns the loss of **John K. Murray**, facilities manager, Office of Facilities and Operations, who died on Dec. 13, 2017, at his home. He was 56. A resident of Stockton, N.J., Murray joined the University in 2013.

Murray was a master carpenter who had knowledge of all trades and a hands-on approach to managing and supervising complex projects. He was hired to assist during the facility construction and renovation projects, which included the demolition of the Glen Cairn Arms buildings and the construction of George A. Pruitt Hall, the renovation of the Center for Learning and Technology, and the renovation of the Kelsey Complex.

Murray was one of the staff of the Office of Facilities and Operations to receive an award in recognition of his management of the construction of Pruitt Hall.

Welcome *New Staff*



Vicki Brzoza has been appointed undergraduate nursing program advisor in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. Brzoza is located on the third floor of Pruitt Hall and may be reached at extension 3267.



Carol Emmi has been appointed graduate nursing program advisor in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. Emmi is located on the third floor of Pruitt Hall and may be reached at extension 3253.

OCP Training Focused on Serving Veterans

More than 40 veterans' service professionals from across the country participated in the Certificate for Veterans' Service Providers (CVSP) program in Florham Park, N.J., Nov 29-Dec. 1. The program, designed by New Jersey-based Operation College Promise (OCP), educates and empowers veterans' service providers in their support of veterans as they reintegrate back to civilian life, particularly to the nation's colleges and universities.

"Higher education plays a critical role helping service members to prepare for careers as they return home and transition to civilian life," said **Dr. George A. Pruitt**, president of Thomas Edison State University, home to the largest military and veteran student population in New Jersey. "New Jersey's senior public institutions of higher education look forward to continuing our service to those who defend and serve our country and are proud to support the Certificate for Veterans' Service Providers (CVSP) program."

The signature CVSP program is the only nationally-disseminated certificate program designed specifically for higher education professionals. To date, more than 700 professionals from 40 states, representing more than 100,000 military-affiliated students have been certified.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Kimberly Morton, senior graduate admissions counselor, Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services, her husband, Marquice, and big brother, Aiden, welcomed baby Raya Morton on Nov. 24, 2017.

Kay Howard, senior admissions and enrollment services specialist, Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services, and her husband, Dwayne, are the proud parents of Austin Jackson Howard, who was born on Dec. 26, 2017. Austin Jackson joins big brothers, Carter and Davis.

Loretta Perkins-Robinson, senior graduate admissions counselor, Office of Admissions and Enrollment Services, and her husband, Alfonso M. Robinson, welcomed Alfonso M. Robinson Jr. on Jan. 6, 2018.

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

Hancock Selected as President *(Continued)*

Additionally, she has a certificate from the Institute of Educational Management from Harvard University, a certificate from the University Professional Continuing Education Association Leadership Academy at New York University, a certificate in Process Design and Implementation: Reengineering and Change Management from Michael Hammer and Company and a certificate in Nonprofit Board Leadership from the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy.

"I offer my thanks to President Pruitt for his years of service and leadership of TESU and to the Board of Trustees, whose passion for the University and its mission is so apparent," said Hancock. "I look forward to joining the Thomas Edison team as we build on a great foundation, continuing to serve the adult student with innovation and excellence."