

SPRING 2004

Invention

THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE NEWS MAGAZINE



Honor Roll of Donors

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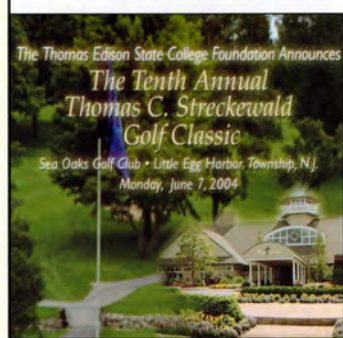
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College News



Honor Roll of Donors



Alumni & Foundation News

Invention is published by
Thomas Edison State College

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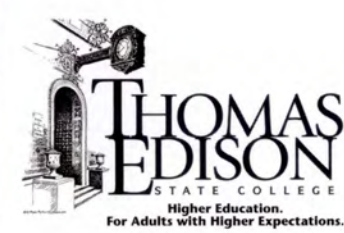
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A Message from the President



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We would also like to express our thanks for the efforts of the Thomas Edison State College Foundation. Under the leadership of board Chairman John Neary, the College's endowment grew from \$1.7 million to more than \$2 million. We are well on our way toward meeting our goal of \$4 million by 2005, thanks to all who have worked diligently on our behalf and who have shared our vision.

In this issue of *Invention* we have profiled several alumni who have contributed to our annual fund. Just as each individual had a unique reason for choosing Thomas Edison State College for degree completion, each of these individuals also had unique reasons for giving. We appreciate their willingness to share their personal stories and thoughts on supporting the College. We owe each our thanks.

The growth we've experienced at the College this year has been remarkable. Our enrollment surpassed the 10,000 mark for the first time ever. Our Distance & Independent Adult Learning (DIAL) staff continues to develop new course offerings. The College is recognized as a national leader in providing educational opportunities to more than 3,500 active duty military service personnel through programs such as eArmyU and Navy College. And we are also pleased to announce (see page 3) the approval of our third graduate degree program.

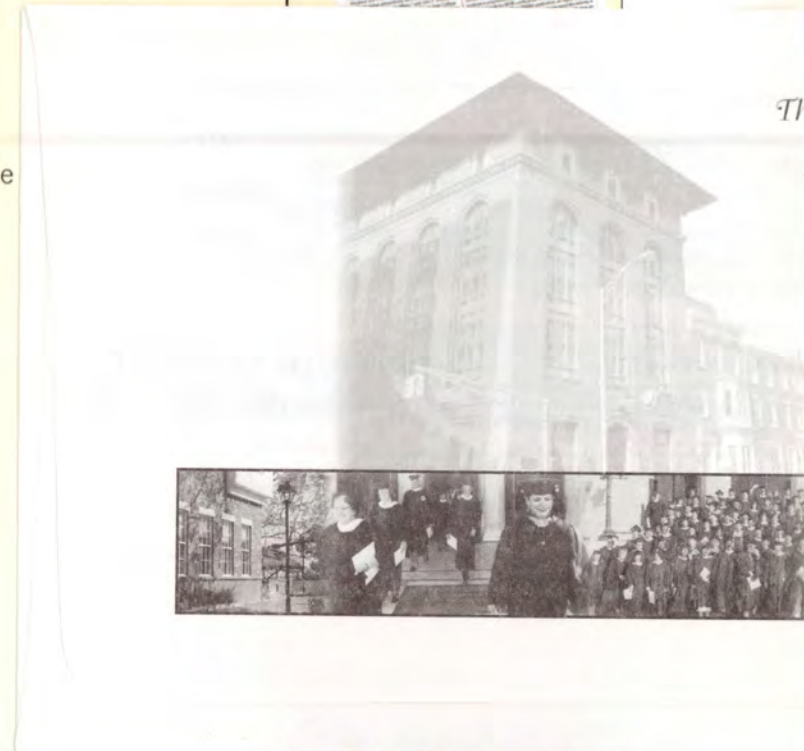
On behalf of the staff at Thomas Edison State College I thank you for your support. Your generosity has helped touch the lives of many adults who seek to achieve their goals through the educational programs offered at the College. Please enjoy this issue of *Invention*—with our thanks.

Sincerely,

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

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Alumni & Foundation News

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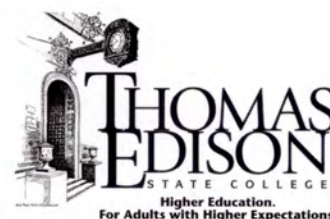
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A Message from the President



Dear Alumni, Students and Friends,

This is the time that we at Thomas Edison State College pause to recognize and thank those individuals who have given us their financial support during the past year. The College has experienced significant growth, and we attribute much of our success to the generous contributions from the many individuals, corporations and employees of the College who have answered the call to support our mission of providing high-quality, flexible educational opportunities to adult students.

We would also like to express our thanks for the efforts of the Thomas Edison State College Foundation. Under the leadership of board Chairman John Neary, the College's endowment grew from \$1.7 million to more than \$2 million. We are well on our way toward meeting our goal of \$4 million by 2005, thanks to all who have worked diligently on our behalf and who have shared our vision.

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Sincerely,

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

COLLEGE NEWS



LINDA J. STRATING APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI AFFAIRS

Linda J. Strating of Yardley, Pa., has been appointed director of Alumni Affairs at Thomas Edison State College.

Strating is responsible for the planning and implementation of the overall alumni program. She also serves as the liaison between the College and the Thomas Edison State College Alumni Association.

In announcing the appointment, Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of the College, said, "Linda brings a wealth of experience in higher education to Thomas Edison State College. Her program development expertise and demonstrated leadership abilities will benefit the alumni of the College and strengthen our relationships in new ways."

Strating brings a distinguished record of accomplishment in both higher education and the private sector to the position. She was previously the director of Community Partnerships and director of Program Development for the Academic Services Group at Peterson's, part of the Thomson Corporation, in Princeton, N.J. Prior to that, she worked for Kiplinger Washington Editors in Washington, D.C., as manager of partnership development and as association strategist for the publisher of that organization. Strating also served as director of Advising and as corporate liaison for the entrepreneurial adult advising company The Learningforce, Inc., also in Washington. She was the director of Admissions and associate dean of the college at Towson University in Towson, Md., for 14 years. Strating holds an MEd in college student development from The Johns Hopkins University in Maryland and a BS in sociology from Towson University.

"Linda brings extraordinary abilities, experience and energy to the Office of Alumni Affairs," said John P. Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison State College. "We are looking forward to her contributions to the College community."

Strating has engaged in numerous volunteer positions throughout her career including those of advocate for persons with disabilities, board member of her home church in Arlington, Va., and as marketing and development consultant for the Lower Merion Society for the Fine Arts in Pennsylvania. She also served as a White House volunteer during the second Clinton administration.

THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE Announces NEW MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The Graduate School at Thomas Edison State College has launched a new master's degree program. Approved Feb. 23, 2004, by the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, course work for the new Master of Science in Human Resources Management (MSHRM) will begin in April 2004.

The degree program, developed at the request of human resources practitioners, serves human resources professionals who wish to become strategic partners in their organizations. The MSHRM program uses a cohort model and is designed to position human resources professionals as leaders within their organizations. The program provides practitioners with technical human resources skills in staffing, providing professional development, managing organizational culture and measuring and rewarding performance. Skills in assessing and using research and best-practice standards from the human resources field to improve their practice are integrated.

"The MSHRM degree is the College's response to the demand for graduate-level training made by the human resources industry," said Sonja A. Eveslage, PhD, dean of the Graduate School. "Our research indicated that the demand for these credentials is increasing, broad-based knowledge in the industry is highly desirable and working professionals in the field needed a high-quality degree option that can be completed while they continue to work."

The degree program was developed in consultation with members of the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM), a national human resources professional association with more than 17,000 members in the United States. Leading the development team for the MSHRM degree was Dr. Alan Fazzari, vice president of Human Resources at Wheelock Industries in Long Branch, N.J. Fazzari holds an EdD from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University; and an MA in psychology/communication sciences from Montclair State University. He has worked with the College on graduate programs since 1996.

The MSHRM program is a distance learning program, delivered via the Internet. Students are expected to travel to Trenton, N.J., for two weekend residencies. The degree program requires 21 semester hours of core courses, 12 semester hours of elective courses and a three-hour Capstone Project. Professionals who hold the Senior Professional Human Resources Manager (SPHR) certification will earn 3 semester hours for their designation. The certification preparation course will be offered for graduate credit.

"Offering credit for SPHR certifications is a unique feature of this degree program," said Eveslage. "These SMHM certifications are highly sought after in the human resources field and we have incorporated this training as part of our curriculum. Students who have already received certification are eligible for 3 graduate credits and students completing the program will not only have their MSHRM degree but will have the certification as well."

The MSHRM degree program follows an 11-week semester schedule. Students can complete their degree in as little as 18 months. For more information, contact the Graduate School at (609) 984-1168 or via e-mail at graduateschool@tesc.edu.

Message from the Chair



Dear Family and Friends of
Thomas Edison State College:

It is with great pleasure that we present the 2003 Honor Roll of Donors. To those of you who contributed financial resources in support of the College's work, we offer our heartfelt thanks. As always, we welcome those who are new to the Honor Roll and invite those who may not have yet made a donation to be a part of this most generous group. Your financial support is a vote of confidence in the outstanding educational opportunities that the College provides to adult learners.

I would like to share with you a snapshot of the students we serve and the growth we have experienced thanks in part to your generosity. Of the more than 10,000 Thomas Edison State College students currently enrolled in a master's, baccalaureate or associates degree program, more than 3,500 students are active-duty soldiers in the U. S. Army and are enrolled through the eArmyU (Army University Access Online) program. Your support will help ensure their continued success as well as the success of our other students who are from all 50 states and more than 80 countries around the world.

The College's total enrollment has increased more than 22 percent in the past two years and new enrollments have increased more than 31 percent during that same time period. If you have visited the campus recently you would have noticed that the Thomas Edison State College of today is far different from when it was founded in 1972. The campus in downtown Trenton is equipped with state-of-the-art technology that enables the College to develop online courses of the highest quality and academic rigor. A fully-staffed Information Center provides adults with access to all of the resources they need to enroll and pursue a degree at Thomas Edison State College. These resources would not be available without your support.

The College's endowment continues to grow. Endowment funds are critical in that they provide income to help fund future program development and to bridge the gap between shortfalls in state funding. These funds help to ensure that adult learners continue to have access to a flexible, affordable, high-quality educational experience.

Again, we express our special thanks to you, the family and friends of Thomas Edison State College, and we look forward to your continued support in 2004.

Sincerely,

John P. Neary, Chair
Thomas Edison State College Foundation



THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

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JOYCE STECHER



Joyce and Robert Stecher

Joyce Stecher had tried to complete her college education. She had attended four different colleges in four different states and found her classes "boring." Then, during a trip at a local shopping mall, she discovered Thomas Edison State College.

"I happened to stop by an informational display and when I spoke with the representative at the table, I learned that I nearly had enough credits to earn my associate degree," said the 76-year-old retired chemist.

Stecher was employed at Warner-Alcott, now known as Warner-Lambert, as a chemist. She said she knew that if she wanted to move up the career ladder, she would have to have the academic credentials. She enrolled at the College and soon received her AA degree in 1979. Shortly afterward, she received a promotion, transferring to the corporation's Parke-Davis division to begin work as a regulatory affairs associate.

"The classes were perfect for me," said Stecher. "The program was so right for me. It was tough but well worth it."

Boosted by the feeling of accomplishment and knowing that she could rise even higher with a baccalaureate degree, Stecher continued her studies at Thomas Edison State College and completed her BA degree in 1982. "As soon as I got my bachelor's degree, I was immediately promoted and then received another promotion shortly afterward," said Stecher. She retired in 1986 having attained the rank of manager at the corporation.

"I owe a debt of gratitude to the College," said Stecher, who said that she and her husband Robert were able to retire comfortably due, in large part, to the generous severance package that was offered to managers. "I would not have been able to retire at age 55 without the education I received at Thomas Edison State College."

Both of the Stechers feel strongly that their comfortable retirement circumstances are a direct result of a Thomas Edison State College education. Since the couple has no heirs, they have made the College the beneficiary in their wills. "We both feel that we wanted our estate to go to a place where it would do the most good," said Stecher. "We would not be sitting here if it weren't for Thomas Edison State College."

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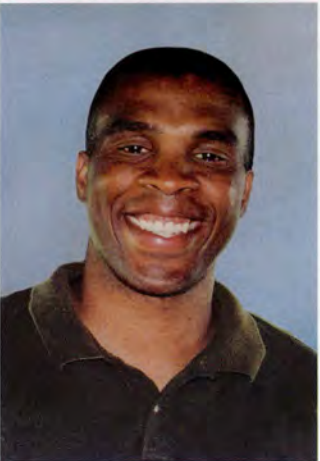
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MIKE DAVIS



As head basketball coach at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind. Mike Davis knows what it is like to have some pretty big shoes to fill. Named head coach of the Hoosiers in September 2000, Davis replaced the legendary Bobby Knight. Since taking over the helm, Davis has taken the team to some of the finest performances in Big Ten conference history. As head coach, Davis led the Hoosiers to three straight 20-plus winning seasons and three post-season NCAA tournament appearances.

Davis grew up playing sports in his hometown of Fayette, Ala., and was a scholarship athlete for the University of Alabama's Crimson Tide. Like many athletes, Davis turned professional a few credits shy of graduation. He played in the European leagues before returning to the States to coach full time. While coaching in Chicago with the Continental Basketball Association (CBA), Davis heard of an opportunity to complete his baccalaureate degree at Thomas Edison State College. When he received an offer to have his tuition paid for by the CBA, he jumped at the chance. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in communications from the College in 2001.

Like many who give back to the community, Davis feels that it is important to share one's success. "It's important to donate to a good cause," he said. "And Thomas Edison State College is a great cause." The College's flexible educational opportunities were a perfect match for the needs of his extremely demanding schedule as a basketball coach. "Thomas Edison State College was a lifesaver for me," said Davis, a first-time donor to the College's Foundation. "I'll always be indebted to the College."

A family man, Davis is married to the former Tamilya Floyd. The couple has a 4-year-old son, Antoine. Davis is also the father of 18-year-old son Mike Jr., and a daughter Lateesha, 24.

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DIANE CHIERCHIE



As a long-time employee of the New Jersey Highway Authority, Diane Chierchie had worked her way up the career ladder. The 23-year veteran started as a communications dispatcher and was promoted to radio manager, a senior position she has held for nine years. With retirement eligibility looming, Chierchie thought about starting a second career. The only problem was that she was highly skilled in a very esoteric field. "My technical skills do not translate well into the world of business," said Chierchie. "I wanted to teach, and I needed a master's degree."

After hearing about Thomas Edison State College's online master's degree program, Chierchie enrolled and graduated with her Master of Science in Management (MSM) degree in 2001. "It was the most rewarding experience of my life," she said. "Having my degree opened up

a whole new world and introduced me to new opportunities that I never would have been able to imagine before."

Armed with her graduate degree, Chierchie then worked evenings as an associate professor at DeVry University's North Brunswick, N.J., campus. She taught business courses and enjoyed the experience so much that she decided to pursue her doctoral degree online. Chierchie reported that she has completed her doctoral course requirements at Touro University International in Cypress, Calif., and is in the second draft of her dissertation proposal.

In addition to her job at the highway authority, teaching and doctoral studies, Chierchie finds time to give back to Thomas Edison State College. She not only contributes to the Thomas Edison State College Foundation, she is also a new member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. "There is no way I can thank the College enough," she said. Chierchie said that not only did she come away from the MSM program with a degree, she takes away a rather large network of new friends as well. "I still keep in touch with many of the cohorts and mentors from the program," she said. "The program opened my life up to a whole new group of people."

While she has no immediate plans to retire from her day job, Chierchie is especially grateful for the opportunities that have come her way as a result of her education at Thomas Edison State College. "None of this would have been possible without my experience in the MSM program." She said. "I now know there is something else for me out there."

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GEORGE BEACH



George Beach has spent an entire career working to keep the power flowing. When it comes to making his own light shine, the 76-year-old went back to school when Thomas Edison State College first opened in 1972, earning his baccalaureate degree in business science in 1982. His new degree earned the notice of his supervisors, and Beach credits the education he received for the advancements he enjoyed later in his career.

As a water treatment helper for Mobile Corporation, Beach could only travel so far up the career ladder when he retired in 1967 after 21 years of service. The Pitman, N.J., resident then landed a job at the New Jersey State Department of Labor and Industry.

“One day, we received some printed information about a new college that had opened up (Thomas Edison State College) and how we could receive advancements if we get our college degree.” Beach was among the College’s first students. He rose through the ranks and ultimately finished his career in public service in 1978 as one of the state’s three examining engineers. Armed with his BSBA degree, Beach was again employed by Mobil as an operating supervisor and held senior positions at the corporation until his second retirement in 1992.

“Getting my degree was a good way for me to achieve my career goals,” he said. “Thomas Edison State College has done a lot for me and others like me who needed the same opportunities to earn their degrees.”

Since his retirement, Beach has been a long-time supporter of the College. He gives annually to the Thomas Edison State College Foundation. “This is one way in which I can help,” he said.

When asked how his education at Thomas Edison State College prepared him for the future, Beach replied, “I received a better understanding on how to deal with people. This helped me a great deal when I was dealing with personnel issues. The course material changed my perspective and I was much more effective in my interactions with the employees I supervised.”

Beach not only supports the College but remains very active in his community. He is a 25-year member of the local school board, having served as school board president for the past 20 years. He is also a 48-year volunteer fireman and a member of the local planning board. The community recognized Beach for his years of service by naming the recently constructed Board of Education building in his honor.

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ONDINA A. JEFFERS



Ondina A. Jeffers (right) with her son Richard L. Jeffers II

Ondina A. Jeffers has had a love for learning that has encompassed a lifetime. “I’ve always wanted to know more,” said the East Windsor, N.J., resident who admits to being “just 71 years young.” Throughout her life, Jeffers has been involved in education in some form, whether an elementary school secretary, a Kindergarten teacher, a student herself or an advocate for the education of those around her. “Education has opened a lot of doors for me,” said Jeffers.

While working as a secretary to the principal in a New York City public school, Jeffers read an article in the paper about the unique programs for adults offered by Thomas Edison State College. Her son Richard Lionel Jeffers II, who would later earn a Master of Science in Management degree at Thomas Edison State College, was in high school at the time she embarked on what Jeffers calls the “Thomas Edison State College path.” Jeffers earned her Associate in Arts degree in 1980 and her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1982. She began a second career as an elementary school teacher and earned a graduate degree at Fordham University in New York City. She recalled her days teaching the city’s Kindergarten students with fondness. “I loved teaching the children,” she said. “When I could see in their faces that they learned a concept, it felt so good!”

Jeffers retired from teaching in 1992 and became active in the Thomas Edison State College Alumni Association. She and her son are both regular financial contributors to the Thomas Edison State College Foundation. Jeffers is a vocal student recruiter and said she never hesitates to recommend Thomas Edison State College to an adult who is thinking about going back to school. “I’ve always appreciated the time and effort that the staff took on my behalf,” she said. “They’ve been so good to me. I will never forget the help they have given to me.”

In recognition of her support and constant dedication to the Alumni Association, Jeffers was honored in 2002 with the association’s first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award. Not one to rest on her laurels, Jeffers continues to serve those around her. She is the chair of her community’s Commission on Aging, first vice president of her local League of Woman Voters and is active in the Central New Jersey Network of Black Women. Jeffers credits her education at Thomas Edison State College for “opening doors” for her and feeding a life-long hunger for learning.

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JIM GUENTHER



Twenty-five years ago, Jim Guenther had a career path that was zigging and zagging. He had worked as a truck driver, a prison guard and a welfare case worker. His passion was computers and he wanted to find a rewarding job in the field. To do this, he needed a college degree.

"I had an associate degree in liberal arts," explained Guenther, who lives in Lawrence Township, N.J. "But I needed the credibility that came with the credential."

Guenther enrolled in Thomas Edison State College and began his quest for a baccalaureate degree. In 1985, he earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree with a specialization in data processing. He now works for the New Jersey State Office of Information

Technology as a computer programmer. Guenther says that he owes his success to the education received at Thomas Edison State College.

This success has prompted Guenther to give back to the College. "The College has helped me out and now it is my turn to help out the College," he said. Not only did Guenther donate to the College's annual fund, the 53-year-old also serves as treasurer of the Thomas Edison State College Alumni Association.

"The College provides a useful service to the community, the county and the state of New Jersey," said Guenther. "The way the degree programs and courses are structured is perfect for my learning style. If I can help with the financial means and talent I have to assist in the improvement of another adult student, it is well worth the effort."

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A vertical photograph of a historic brick building. The building features large, multi-paned arched windows with green frames. A white, curved street lamp is positioned in front of the building. A clock face is mounted on the brick wall. The entrance is an arched doorway with a dark door. The building has a classic, ornate architectural style.

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ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SELECTS NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS

At its January meeting, the Thomas Edison State College Alumni Association Board of Directors elected new officers to manage the Association and to implement its three-fold mission of advocacy, service and support. The Alumni Association's new president is Tom Kosdemba, BSBA '97; the executive vice president is Edwin Irizarry, BSAST '99. Joining Kosdemba and Irizarry in service will be Andrew Kaufmann, BA '83, secretary, and Jim Guenther, BSBA '95, treasurer. Supporting these four will be vice president for Programming, Michael "Barry" Pilla, BS '01; vice president for Development, Lola Walker, BSBA '99, MSM '01; and co-vice presidents for Alumni Member Relations, Diane Chierchie, MSM '01 and Matthew Verdun, MSM '01. Directors and associate directors were also elected. For a complete list of officers, see page 4 or visit www.tesc.edu/alumni. Bylaws and meeting dates for 2004 are also posted on the "Alumni & Friends" section of our Web site.

GOLF NEWS

Mark your calendar! The 10th Annual Thomas C. Streckewald Annual Golf Classic is scheduled for Monday, June 7, 2004, at Sea Oaks Country Club in Egg Harbor Township, N.J. Sun National Bank will again be the Eagle Sponsor of this event, and Peter Hagan will serve as event chairman for a second year.

"We look forward to a successful event this year," said Stephanie R. M. Bray, director of College Development at Thomas Edison State College. "Sea Oaks is recognized throughout the state as a premier golf venue. We hope that our loyal supporters will join us again this year and that we attract new supporters of the College."

The golf outing, which is sponsored by the Thomas Edison State College Foundation, raises funds to support The Thomas C. Streckewald Endowment. The endowment supports staff development programs at the College, and is named in memory of Tom Streckewald, who served as the College's director of Institutional Planning, Research, and Outcomes Assessment. Streckewald died in an automobile accident in 1994.

NEW ALUMNI INITIATIVES

Linda J. Strating, director of Alumni Affairs at Thomas Edison State College, is working to design and develop a comprehensive strategy for the future of the more than 20,000 members of the Alumni Association. Strating is creating links and relationships with all campus departments and, in conjunction with the Alumni Association Board of Directors, will be launching new initiatives and programs. A key element will be the identification of specific industries where alumni can advocate to strengthen individual ties with the College while expanding the reach of the Alumni Association. As new programs and events are launched, information and details will appear in this section of *Invention* and under the "Current News" section of the "Alumni & Friends" page of the College's Web site. Alumni interested in participating in industry based advocacy groups are invited to contact Strating by calling (609) 984-1588 ext. 2090, or by e-mail at alumni@tesc.edu.

Stay Informed on Happenings at the College:

If you haven't already done so, register your e-mail address for @Thomas Edison State College, the free monthly eNewsletter for alumni and friends of the College. You can easily sign up by going online and registering through www.tesc.edu/alumni. Just click on the link provided at the bottom of the page.

"Applause, Applause"

Frank Cangemi

'89, BA

Frank Cangemi is working as a production manager with Chartwell International, Inc., in Quincy, Mass. Cangemi noted that earning his Thomas Edison State College degree has enabled him "to work in increasingly higher level jobs in the chemical industry, beginning at the technician level up to management, in a variety of fields which included metallurgy, ceramics, electrochemistry and polymers."

Michael W. Mitchell

'94, BA

Michael W. Mitchell, who works at the Houston Public Library, is currently pursuing a PhD in history at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.

Yehudit Sidikman

'02, BA

Yehudit Sidikman was promoted to Second Degree Black Belt in 2003 and is planning to open a women's center for self-defense martial arts in Jerusalem.

James J. Talerico Jr.

'95, BSBA

Leveraging his past consulting experiences with small- to mid-size businesses throughout the United States and Canada, James J. Talerico Jr. launched Greater Prairie Business Consulting in 2003. The firm is located in Las Colinas, Texas, in the heart of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex.

Caye Serling

'96, BA

Partnering with her sister and a childhood friend, Caye Serling launched Chez Puppy, an online-based gourmet dog treat bakery. Chez Puppy treats supports several canine-oriented organizations that benefit service dogs and abused and abandoned animals, as well as supporting pediatric AIDS and breast cancer research. Serling's products were featured in baskets at the premiere of the movie "Legally Blonde 2" and will be featured items in the gift baskets at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York City in May.

Frank Smith

'94, BSAST

Frank Smith recently published his second novel, "Fury from Within" (PublishAmerica), which will be available in bookstores in April 2004. His work is an action thriller taken from today's headlines. The West Chester, Pa., resident is currently working on a third novel.

Barbara Elliott

'96, BA

Barbara Elliott has been asked to serve as a member of Educational Testing Services' 2004 Scholarship and Recognition Programs (SRP) Review Committee. SRP provides administrative, consultation and development services to corporations, foundations and others. Affiliated with the College Board's College Scholarship Service, SRP offers services to major corporations that fund college scholarships. Elliott is the director of Admission's for the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

"Applause, Applause"

Information for *Invention*

New Job? Promotion?

Award? Marriage? Baby?

Did you move?

If it's news to you, it's news to us!

We invite you as a member of our family of Thomas Edison State College alumni to tell us about the exciting things happening in your life. Let us know what's new with you since you graduated from Thomas Edison State College, and we may include your updates in a future issue of *Invention*. Please tell us how your experience at the College changed your life. To contact us, please fill out the form below and mail it to:

Thomas Edison State College, *Invention* Editor,
101 W. State St., Trenton, NJ 08608-1176;

Fax it to (609) 984-1376; or

E-mail your good news to Invention@tesc.edu.

You may include photos to accompany your news. Items will be published as space permits.

Thank you for this opportunity to better serve our valued Thomas Edison State College alumni family.

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