

# Capital Campus

Staff Newsletter of Thomas Edison State College • February 2007



Pictured from left: James Selbe, director, Program Evaluations, Center for Lifelong Learning, American Council on Education, Julia Negrón, Daniel Negrón Jr. and Daniel Negrón Sr.

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**William J. Seaton**  
Vice President and Provost

## Thomas Edison State College Director Awarded ACE Distinguished Service Award

**With his parents and sister looking on, Daniel Negrón Jr.**, director of Corporate-Higher Education Programs at Thomas Edison State College, was awarded the 2006 Al Swinerton Distinguished Service Award for outstanding contributions to the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service program.

The College Credit Recommendation Service evaluates training and education courses offered by corporations, schools, professional associations, government agencies and unions, and recommends college credit for the courses where appropriate. These organizations provide a value-added opportunity to their employees or students to use these courses toward a college degree, and in many instances, opens the door to a college education.

Negrón also received recognition for his involvement as the New Jersey Affiliate Office Director, Advisory Board member, National Coordinator and Reviewer at a ceremony recently held at the College.

"I am pleased that ACE has nationally recognized Dan Negrón with the 2006 Al Swinerton Distinguished Service Award for outstanding contributions," said Vice President and Provost **William J. Seaton**, who attended the ceremony. "The College has benefited significantly from Dan's insight and effective work with corporations in transferring their training efforts into college credit equivalencies. I have never had any doubt that Dan is a national leader in this area and it is most appropriate that he be given this recognition."

During the presentation, James Selbe, director, Program Evaluations, Center for Lifelong Learning, American Council on Education, in Washington, D.C., remarked that Negrón was selected for the national award based on his extensive list of accomplishments in working with organizations, colleges and adult learners. Selbe commended Negrón for his accomplishments, such as implementing new workshops, conducting evaluations throughout the country and the world, and for developing a new handbook for organizations that undergo ACE evaluations. Selbe concluded that among Negrón's most important contributions was his recent co-facilitation of the National Coordinators Training Workshop.



## A few good men... and women



**The Office of Military Education** gathered its staff of regional military base counselors from around the world for training in November. To welcome them to the Trenton campus and give local staff the opportunity to meet them, a "meet and greet" was held the morning of Nov. 26 in the Great Hall of the Townhouses. Pictured from the left are (front row): Kristin Gonzalez, Brandi Masson, George Berko, Ellen Coleman, Cathryn Davis, Maria Marte, Misty Isak; (middle row): Danelle Brown, Yesu Guadarrama, Gail Boehm, Katrina Oakes, Jaye Burgess, Don Trucksess, Terri Tallon-Hamill; and (back row): Louis Martini, Dennis LeGaux, Felicity Myers, Gary Campbell, Valerie Manning, Laura Hill and Ed Gall.



## Focus on: Diane Stratton

*I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand  
A crown upon my forehead, a harp within my hand.*  
— Urania Locke Bailey

If you were to say that **Diane Stratton's** strength lies in her ability to deftly handle her responsibilities in the Office of the Controller, you would only be half right. Beside being a secretarial assistant to Controller Chris Stringer and handling the fiduciary side of College-wide travel, Stratton's volunteerism traverses College events, American Red Cross blood drives, The Cancer Institute of New Jersey at Hamilton and a local children's shelter.

"I'm on the Holiday Party Committee where I take part in event preparation and help raise funds to support the yearly event by coordinating the Canal Banks Building bake sale. I've been employed at Thomas Edison State College for two years in the Office of the Controller," said Stratton, who is also a Notary Public. "I enjoy working with Chris, handling a variety of jobs, and being in daily contact with so many talented and interesting people."

Prior to coming to the College, Stratton was employed for 12 years as an administrative assistant at McGraw-Hill Companies. Before that, she was an office manager in a commercial real estate company.

But for Stratton, her loftiest duties may be those that are self-imposed.

"I volunteer at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey in Hamilton where, with the director's blessing, I created a clothing program for patients called Comfort in Clothing. The program, created in memory of my late husband Maynard, relies on clothing and monetary donations from individuals and organizations as well as foundation grants. To date, I have raised more than \$10,000 in donations," noted Stratton.

Stratton has also volunteered for Angels Wings located at Mary's Haven, an emergency placement center for abused and displaced children in Trenton. There, she helped the children by giving them one-on-one attention, taking them on day trips, feeding them, bathing them and getting them ready for bed. She also plied her creative skills by decorating the center so that it would feel more like home to its young occupants.

In her free time, Stratton likes to spend time on the beach, fishing, crabbing, swimming and just relaxing. She's also a water volleyball enthusiast and began playing the harp seven years ago.

"Diane has been a valuable asset to the controller's office and to the entire College community with her dedication and hard work," said Stringer. "She uses her organizational skills to ensure efficient work flow in our office and her upbeat personality makes her a pleasure to work with."

"I am very much looking forward to the upcoming year," said Stratton, "as I plan to further my education, continue my harp lessons and seek out new programs in which to volunteer."

Stratton has lived in Hamilton Township her entire life and has two children, a daughter, Stacey, 28, and a son, Erik, 27.

## Winds of Change

*You've heard about the Strategic Vision Plan  
and transforming our internal culture,  
but what does it all mean?*

One of the things that make Thomas Edison State College's Strategic Vision Plan so powerful is its commitment to transforming our institution.

The plan is not just a document with a list of goals to achieve. Rather, it is a guide to a transformational journey that the College and all of its employees are taking. It is something that can make a great institution even better, and a necessary step for Thomas Edison State College to take as the school faces increasing competition from other private and public schools interested in serving adults.

A new recent initiative connected with the plan is a professional development curriculum designed to foster and develop leadership among the school's current and future leaders, and help ensure that day-to-day operations are aligned with the College's shared values and strategic vision. The president and all four vice presidents are committed to this process and have made a significant investment of their time and talents to the process.

"This initiative is something I am very serious about," said President George A. Pruitt. "Our professional development curriculum is directly tied to enhancing the internal culture at Thomas Edison State College. It is something that has the potential to transform all of us, no matter what our titles or job responsibilities are."

Supporting materials for the curriculum are available to all College employees via Blackboard. It includes the following tracks:

- Adult learning theory
- Leadership
- Student-centeredness
- Work process
- Strategy
- Entrepreneurial practices
- Diversity

"Each area embraces a domain of learning and incorporates specific goals, objectives and activities," said Penny Brouwer, vice president, Division of Planning and Research. "We've designed the tracks to use real-life examples of situations at the College as case studies, so what we are talking about is directly relevant to our work."

Brouwer noted that goal leaders worked hard to determine how to judge whether the curriculum is successful.

"We must avoid thinking that this is just another general training initiative," she said. "What we are doing is unprecedented. It's about changing how we do things here. It's about challenging our old assumptions, taking a close look at how we have been doing things for a long time and seeing if there is a better way to do them. And it is all being done in the name of improving our students' experiences and the work we do to serve them."

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In October, goal and strategy leaders and the College's senior management team took part in a day-long meeting focused on ensuring that the management and organizational culture of Thomas Edison State College are aligned with the Strategic Vision Plan and shared values of the institution.

*The professional development curriculum is designed to help  
the College ensure that its day-to-day operations are  
aligned with its shared values and strategic vision.*

## Thomas Edison State College: SHARED VALUES STATEMENT

Thomas Edison State College promotes an entrepreneurial approach to fulfill the dynamic mission of the institution. We are client-focused and develop programs, products and services around the needs and aspirations of our students and organizational partners. Further, the College is committed to exceptional standards for quality. As such, we assure that the content and outcomes of our programs and services are preeminent. Thomas Edison State College actively pursues continuous quality improvements in order to appropriately respond to the needs of the markets, clients, and the public interest. Finally, we place great value on the confident, creative and effective leadership team and the competent, committed and diverse professional community. It is the people of Thomas Edison State College who dedicate their expertise and talent to ensure the quality and rigor of our academic enterprise.

## VISION STATEMENT

Thomas Edison State College intends to advance its position as one of the finest institutions of its kind in the world. The College will be known for its entrepreneurial approaches to higher education for the adult learner. We will be highly respected not only for the quality and caliber of our products, but also for the talented, professional and innovative staff that create and deliver them. The College will be recognized for its rigorous and continuous emphasis on assessment of learning and operational outcomes and its overarching goal of excellence. Graduates will be representative of those self-directed adults who have chosen to reinvent themselves and realize their personal and professional goals.



## Winds of Change continued from Page 3

Diversity is a key part of this endeavor. It is the only topic that both has its own track and is being woven throughout the entire curriculum.

"Valuing diversity is something very important to me," said Pruitt. "By making diversity a core focus of the curriculum, we hope to build and promote tolerance in our workplace and learn how we can best learn from one another."

To guide this endeavor, the College has retained the services of Keeling and Associates, LLC, a firm specializing in helping colleges and universities improve institutional outcomes, student experiences and organizational cultures. In October, goal and strategy leaders joined members of the College's senior management team at a day-long meeting focused on ensuring that the management and organizational culture of Thomas Edison State College are aligned with the Strategic Vision Plan and shared values of the institution. The result was a lively and lengthy discussion, which led to the development of the professional development curriculum.

The October session also helped the College realize some hard truths about what is critical to the institution's success. One of the most important of these is that some of the ways in which the College currently operates are not always totally aligned with its shared values and strategic vision.

"That the College was able to make this distinction indicates that it is strong enough as an organization to be honest with itself," Brouwer said. The good news is that we control our destiny and we are working towards illustrating our shared values through our work. The ball is in our court. This, to me, is one of most exciting aspects about being at Thomas Edison State College at this point in time."

To access the professional development curriculum, log in to MyEdison, click on the "Communities" tab, and then click on the link for "Professional Development Curriculum." Employees access MyEdison using the same log in and password information they use to log in to their computers.

## Diversity Committee Formed at College

To help us value and celebrate diversity here at Thomas Edison State College, a Diversity Program Committee has been created to plan and implement events that will recognize various racial and ethnic groups throughout the year.

The Program Committee welcomes participation by any College employee who has a particular interest in working on one or more of these events.

The College kicked off 2007 with a Black History Quiz and has planned several other activities during February, Black History Month.

The committee is also planning activities to commemorate Women's History Month (in March); Jewish American Heritage Month (in May); Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (also in May); Hispanic Heritage Month (from September 15 - October 15); and Native American History Month (in November).

Look for e-mails from the Diversity Program Committee that will provide information on events and on how you can get involved!

## Director Awarded Distinguished ACE Award continued from Page 1

Nancy Musick, assistant director, Program Evaluations, American Council on Education, noted that "Dan's leadership, experience and professionalism were instrumental in helping to make the National Coordinators Training Workshop a success. His personal experiences in overseeing the myriad of duties at the New Jersey office enabled him to bring valuable first-hand experience to the national coordinators he was training. These same experiences also provided a window for other state affiliate office directors to view the possibilities available to them within their states from someone who has actually walked the walk."

Negrón, who has been with the College for 20 years, has served as director of the Corporate-Higher Education Programs since 2002.

In addition to Negrón's parents, Daniel and Julia Negrón, and his sister, Maria Negrón, a number of College staff attended the event, including **Mary Ellen Caro**, dean of the School of Business and Management; **Peggy Allan**, program assistant, and **Andrea Johnson**, clerk typist, Office of Corporate-Higher Education Programs. In addition, Susan Huggins, assistant director, Program Evaluations, Center for Lifelong Learning, American Council on Education, traveled from Washington, D.C., to participate in the presentation.

## Getting to Know Jovita Solomon-Duarte

When **Jovita Solomon-Duarte** was 22 years old, she migrated to the United States from the Philippines to fulfill her dream — to become a nurse leader and educator.

Transitioning to mainstream American culture and learning American healthcare practices were not easy; however, Solomon-Duarte sees it as an advantage in her career, noting, "I can relate to the stories of minority nurses because I am one."

Solomon-Duarte, MSN, RN, CCRN, joined Thomas Edison State College in October 2006 as diversity coordinator for the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant, which was awarded to the School of Nursing. The \$600,000 federal grant is being used to recruit and prepare minority nurse educators in online education.



Jovita Solomon-Duarte

"The potential impact of the grant project that I coordinate for the College's School of Nursing can vastly change nursing education and the healthcare landscape," Solomon-Duarte explained.

For the past 16 years, Solomon-Duarte has held positions in nursing management, staff development and education. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (*cum laude*) from University of Pangasinan, Philippines; and Master of Science in Nursing, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner focus (with honors) from Seton Hall University's online program.

"I'm surrounded by dedicated and passionate colleagues who are concerned about the future of nurses and nursing education," she said. "With a visionary dean, we will do great things at the School of Nursing. I'm very proud to be part of a great team!"

Solomon-Duarte's skill and commitment will be the cornerstone in coordinating the grant. Said School of Nursing Dean **Susan O'Brien**, "Jovita has the kind of nursing experiences that we need to promote diversity in nursing. We are delighted to have her with us."

## Scenes from the 2006 Holiday Party

Visions of sugar plums and pasta danced in the heads of staff and friends of Thomas Edison State College during the 2006 Holiday Party at Roman Hall in Trenton on December 15. Approximately 130 people attended the annual event.



## Staff Encouraged to be College Ambassadors

The Office of Alumni Affairs has recently launched the Alumni Ambassador Program, a new initiative that capitalizes on the experience, skills and passion for education of Thomas Edison State College alumni to help enhance the College's efforts to grow enrollment, build partnerships and expand development initiatives.

However, while preparing to launch the program, the Office of Alumni Affairs discovered that College staff members have also been spreading the word about the College to friends, family and others.

"I want to thank all of the staff members who have already referred students to us throughout the years," said **Roxanne Globis**, director of Alumni Affairs. "Thomas Edison State College staff can be ambassadors too, and our office can provide the information and tools to assist them in their efforts."

Just like Thomas Edison State College graduates, there are a variety of ways staff can support the College. For example:

- Refer your friends, relatives and co-workers to Thomas Edison State College;
- Help the College identify potential corporate partners;
- Leverage personal contacts you have with people who work at companies who could be potential partners.

To learn more about being a College ambassador, or to learn about the Alumni Ambassador Program, contact the Office of Alumni Affairs at (609) 633-8592 or [alumni@tesc.edu](mailto:alumni@tesc.edu).



# New Staff



**Patricia Certo** has been appointed admissions counselor in the Office of Admissions. Certo is located on the 3rd floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 3015.



**Allison Chambers** has been appointed regional military base consultant, Texas, Office of Military Education.



**Thomas Devine** has been appointed assistant dean in the School of Applied Science and Technology. Devine is located on the 2nd floor of the Townhouses and may be reached at extension 3197.



**Brandi Masson** has been appointed program assistant, McGuire Air Force Base, Office of Military Education.



**Julia Mooney** has been appointed clerk typist in the Office of Test Administration. Mooney is located on the 3rd floor of the Canal Banks Building and may be reached at extension 2265.

**Regina Roberts** has been appointed technical assistant III in the Office of the Registrar. Roberts is located on the 1st floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 3075.



**Linda Rosner** has been appointed confidential assistant in the Office of Marketing. Rosner is located on the 3rd floor of the Kelsey Building and may be reached at extension 2075.



**Jovita Solomon-Duarte** has been appointed nursing diversity coordinator in the School of Nursing. Solomon-Duarte is located on the 3rd floor of the Townhouses and may be reached at extension 3267.



## Staff Activities

**Robin Walton**, director of Community Affairs & Government Relations at Thomas Edison State College, has been confirmed as a member of the Board of Trustees for Children's Specialized Hospital, an affiliate member of the Robert Wood Johnson Health System. Children's Specialized Hospital is the largest pediatric rehabilitation hospital in the United States and provides a wide array of medical, developmental, educational and rehabilitative services for infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

**Dottie Sconyers**, senior program advisor, Office of Learner Services, was on the panel, "Mentoring Young Professionals Who Advise Adult Learners: Tales from the Front," at the 30th National Conference on Academic Advising, National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 18-21, 2006.

## Congratulations

**Kristy Murray**, senior clerk typist in the Office of Test Administration, and her husband, Todd Murray, are the proud parents of a baby girl. Born on Nov. 22, Rowan Taylor Murray weighed 6 pounds, 5 ounces and was 20 inches long. Rowan joins brother Xavier and sister Peyton.

**Tracy Novak**, assistant director, Office of Administrative Services, and Thomas Tosti, celebrated the birth of their son on Jan. 31. Thomas Reid Tosti weighed 8 pounds, 7 ounces and was 21 inches long.

**Michael J. Scheiring**, vice president and treasurer, and his wife, Marcia, became grandparents on Jan. 2. Daughter Dr. Kristy Scheiring and Dr. Manuel Jimenez are the proud parents of Benjamin Reese, who weighed 6 pounds, 13 ounces.