

Capital Campus

Staff Newsletter of Thomas Edison State College • November 2006



Dr. George A. Pruitt



Dr. Susan O'Brien



Pictured from the left are participants of the panel discussion titled, *Strengthening Diversity in Nursing Through Online Education*: Ngozi O. Nkongho, PhD, RN, deputy director, National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission; Carmen Rivera-Ozoria, RN, Thomas Edison State College online RN to BSN/MSN student; **Louise Riley**, MS, RN, BC, assistant dean for distance learning, Thomas Edison State College, and panel moderator; Joann Pacis Cummings, MS, RN, independent consultant for Hospital Policy and Procedure, and a grant participant; and Leo-Felix Jurado, MSN, RN, assistant chairperson, Department of Nursing and Allied Health, County College of Morris, and grant participant.

"It was a thought-provoking day in which people were able to share thoughts, ideas and experiences that will promote faculty diversity through the use of online education."

– Susan O'Brien
EdD, RN, dean – The School of Nursing

Team Effort Makes First Diversity in Nursing Lectureship a Success

The School of Nursing at Thomas Edison State College sponsored its first annual distinguished lectureship on diversity in nursing on Oct. 11. The one-day event, *Stewardship and Diversity in Nursing Through Online Education*, took place in Prudence Hall and was the successful culmination of a coordinated effort by the staff from the School of Nursing as well as other members of the College community.

"The conference was warm and friendly, attended by a diverse group of people interested in using online education as a tool to increase access to minority nurse educators thereby reducing the nursing faculty shortage," said **Susan O'Brien**, EdD, RN, dean. "It was a very interesting and thought-provoking day in which people were able to share thoughts, ideas and experiences that will promote faculty diversity through the use of online education. The School of Nursing staff as well as staff from the offices of Communications and Administrative Services worked hard to make this event a success. It was truly a collaborative effort."

Speakers included Dr. Hilda Richards and Dr. Kem Louie, nationally known minority nurse leaders, as well as Linda Gural, president of the New Jersey State Nurses Association. Peter Block, noted author and lecturer on stewardship, ended the day.

The lectureship is part of a three-year, \$600,000 grant the College received in 2005 from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to recruit and prepare minority nurse educators in online education and develop a collaborative network of diverse nurse faculty members to enhance nursing programs nationwide. This month, the first 15 minority nurse educators to take part in the initiative at Thomas Edison State College will complete the program. Several of these grant participants were panelists in the discussion titled, *Strengthening Diversity in Nursing through Online Education*.

"Panel members identified that online education enables minority nurse educators to reach a diverse student

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College Staff Earn their Degrees

Approximately 350 adult learners, including two Thomas Edison State College staff members, received their diplomas at Thomas Edison State College's 34th Commencement ceremony in Patriots Theater at The War Memorial on Oct. 7.

The College conferred 1,942 degrees to graduates in 2006 and attracted graduates from as far away as Kenya, Spain and Hawaii and from 24 states across the country. Among the graduates this year were **Heather Broadhurst**, acting associate director, Office of Human Resources; and **Shanika Henderson**, acting program assistant, Office of Alumni Affairs.

Broadhurst completed a Master of Science in Human Resources Management degree and Henderson received a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from the College. Henderson had a dual celebration, sharing the day with husband Justin Henderson, who earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from Thomas Edison State College.



Heather Broadhurst lines up for the big walk.



Partners in accomplishment, as well as life, Shanika Henderson and husband Justin prepare to receive their degrees.



P. Henry van Zyl

Focus on: Henry van Zyl

"Teaching is the perpetual end and office of all things. Instruction is the main design that shines through the sky and earth."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

For **Henry van Zyl**, vice provost for Directed Independent Adult Learning (DIAL), the sound of an alarm clock heralds wonderful possibilities. It's an enthusiasm he feels every day.

"Through DIAL, I feel that I am making a worthwhile contribution to the College and in the way we serve our students," said Van Zyl. "It is a job I'm excited about; and one that makes me want to come to work every day. The position is very challenging, but also very satisfying and fulfilling."

Van Zyl has been with Thomas Edison State College since March 1997 when he began as an instructional designer. He now manages four offices within DIAL: the Office of Instructional Design; the Office of Instructional Services; the Office of Learning Assessment, which includes the Office of Prior Learning Assessment; and the Office of Test Administration. He also serves as DIAL's liaison to deans and College administrators in determining course needs.

Van Zyl grew up in South Africa where he received the very first baccalaureate degree conferred at the University of Port Elizabeth. He went on to receive his teaching certification and eventually, his doctorate degree in education. Prior to coming to the United States, Van Zyl worked for the University of South Africa (UNISA) as director of Instructional Design in the Bureau for University Teaching where he pioneered the team approach to creating study materials for students.

He and his wife Lorraine have three daughters who, among other pursuits, are all accomplished musicians. Their oldest daughter lives in Pretoria, South Africa, and is a flutist in the South African Army Medical Corps Orchestra and runs a music school with her husband. Their second oldest lives in New York City and is a business manager in an advertising firm; and their youngest daughter is a nurse living in Columbus, Ohio. Van Zyl's wife is an accomplished fashion designer who won a prestigious fashion design competition in South Africa shortly before they moved to Newtown, Pa., nine years ago.

According to Vice President and Provost Bill Seaton, "Since joining the College, Henry has contributed to the expanded use of electronic technologies in distance education and developed an innovative vision for the future of distance education; further, Henry has provided leadership resulting in new opportunities for access to quality higher education for people all over the world. He is knowledgeable, caring, a pleasure to work with and a true gentleman."

Outside of work, Van Zyl has always been interested in handcraft. "When I lived in South Africa, I did a lot of leatherwork," he said. "Since moving to the U.S., I've been enjoying digital photography and restoring old photographs. It's a hobby I spend a lot of time, and too much money, on."

In summation, Van Zyl remained modest, "I'm an ordinary person who took an extraordinary step fairly late in life, to move myself and my family from a country 12,000 miles and seven times zones away, to the United States to begin a whole new life in a different culture and, in essence, a different world. It's been an exciting and challenging process," said Van Zyl.

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body nationally and internationally as well as offers a forum for minority students that might not otherwise participate as openly due to cultural or language barriers," said **Louise Riley**, RN, assistant dean, who moderated the lively panel discussion. Panel members included Ngozi Nkongho, deputy director, National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission; Leo-Felix Jurado, president-elect of the Philippine Nurses Association of America; Joann Cummings, independent consultant for Hospital Policy and Procedure; and Carmen Rivera-Ozoria, Thomas Edison State College RN to BSN/MSN online student.

Linda Soltis, of the Office of Communications, handled media relations for the event, which was covered by *Nursing Spectrum* magazine, News 12 New Jersey and the *Trenton Times*. Soltis also photographed the lectureship and developed the post-event press release.

George A. Pruitt, PhD, president of Thomas Edison State College, addressing the distinguished lectureship on diversity in nursing attendees, offered this challenge: "We have to make healthcare accessible to all individuals. Minorities are severely underrepresented in healthcare in this country; we are working to change this. We want you to help us and to use this College as a tool to do that."

Staff Activities

Members of the **The Office of Military Education** represented the College at the Department of Defense (DoD) Worldwide 2006 Symposium in Orlando, Fla., in July. More than 1,800 participants attended from approximately 150 nationally and regionally accredited institutions of higher education as well as organizations that support voluntary education programs for military personnel.

The symposium titled *Educating America's Service Members Any Place, Any Time* served to explore strategies to effectively deliver voluntary education programs while meeting the ever changing needs of the military, increasing cooperation between DoD education personnel and academic institutions, and stimulating creative thought on current educational issues.

Employees from the department also participated in a team building exercise, that according to Assistant Director of Military Education **Terri Tallon-Hamill**, presented its own challenges. "Our team building 'run' took place on the golf course at the conference hotel. The temperature at the 6:30 a.m. start was already in the mid 90s. Everyone was assigned to a running buddy because there were five-foot-long alligators on the course. We're happy to report that everyone completed the event!" The Thomas Edison State College vests were handmade by Terri's mom Dr. Marion Tallon, a College mentor who teaches psychology and literature.

Desiree Drindak, military programs coordinator, Office of Military Education, attended a series of education fairs around Meridian, Miss., and Millington, Tenn., and gave personalized briefings on Thomas Edison State College to *Troops to Teachers* personnel in Baton Rouge, La.

Gary Coleman, regional military base counselor, Southeast, Office of Military Education, represented



Pictured from left to right: (front row) Terri Tallon-Hamill, assistant director of Military Education; Ellen Coleman, regional military base counselor, Virginia; Misty Isak, assistant director of Military Education; (middle row) Gary Campbell, regional military base counselor, South Carolina; Desiree Drindak, military programs coordinator; Jaye Burgess, regional military base counselor, Virginia; Cheryl Dienes, testing coordinator, Office of Testing Administration; and (back row) Louis Martini, director of Military Education.

Thomas Edison State College at Kings Bay, Ga., during Navy Command Training Day.

Cathryn Davis, regional military base counselor, Southern California, Office of Military Education, attended a week-long series of education fairs at her local bases in San Diego, Calif.

Felicita Meyers, regional military base counselor in Hawaii for the Office of Military Education, went to an education fair in Pearl Harbor and also represented Thomas Edison State College at an annual Military Recognition Ceremony.

Jaye Burgess, regional military base counselor, Hampton Roads, Va., Office of Military Education, traveled to Tinker AFB in Oklahoma to cover a site that she visits regularly to offer face-to-face contact with many Thomas Edison State College students there.

Dr. Judith Krom, dean of the Heavin School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, has been selected to be a member of an accreditation team for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Furthermore, Krom will be presenting at the national conference of the American Association for Paralegal Education in New Orleans. She is part of a panel on articulation agreements between two- and four-year colleges.



Dr. Judith Krom

New Staff



Gail V. Boehm has been appointed regional military base counselor, New England, Office of Military Education.



Christine Carter has been appointed Learner Services representative, Office of Learner Services. Carter is located on the 1st floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 3447.



Cathryn L. Davis has been appointed regional military base counselor, Southern California, Office of Military Education.



Kathleen E. Griffis, MSN, RN, BC, has been appointed distance learning education specialist in the School of Nursing. Griffis is located on the 3rd floor of the Townhouses and may be reached at extension 3257.



Dennis C. LeGaux, has been appointed regional military base counselor, Southeast, Office of Military Education.



James McCarty has been appointed assistant dean, School of Arts and Sciences. McCarty is located on the 3rd floor of the Townhouses and may be reached at extension 3177.



Dosiree Mims has been appointed acting confidential assistant to the vice president, Division of Public Affairs. Mims is located on the 3rd floor of the Kelsey Building and may be reached at extension 2045.

Employee Safety

The New Jersey State Police have assured the College's Office of Administrative Services that it has increased its presence in the areas surrounding the Capitol Complex and Thomas Edison State College. The number of troopers, K9 & mobile units and the use of closed-circuit cameras are being increased to ensure staff safety. Director of Administrative Services **Mary Hack** also urged employees to take the following precautions:

When walking to your vehicle at the end of the day:

- pay attention to your surroundings;
- whenever possible, walk with another employee;
- have your keys in your hand;
- try not to talk on your cell phone; and,
- lock your vehicle as soon as you get in.

If you feel the need to have someone escort you to your vehicle, you may do one of the following:

- ask the security officer on duty in your building to call the patrol unit for assistance; or,
- contact the New Jersey State Police at (609) 777-4949.

Please be advised that if you call the NJSP, response time depends on the availability of an officer at the time of your call. If you experience any problems, have any concerns or see suspicious activity, please contact the Office of Administrative Services immediately.

Congratulations!

Jennifer Stark, academic records and registration coordinator, Office of the Registrar, and her husband John are the proud parents of a baby boy. Born on Sept. 8, Ryland Joseph Stark weighed 8 pounds, 1 ounce and was 21 inches long.

Ivan Thorpe, clerk driver, Mail Operations Center, Office of Administrative Services, and his partner Andrea Hicks welcomed the newest addition to their family, a baby girl. Samarah Ivy Hicks-Thorpe was born on Oct. 16, and weighed 5 pounds, 14.5 ounces.

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