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## STAFF ENEWSLETTER OF THOMAS EDISON STATE UNIVERSITY

# Capital Campus

NOVEMBER 9, 2018

## Welcome to the Capital Campus Staff eNewsletter!

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## TESU In the News

### Thomas Edison State University

#### [\*My Central Jersey\*](#)

Thomas Edison State University had plenty of cause for celebration during its 46th Annual Commencement, on Saturday, Sept. 29, at the CURE Insurance Arena in Trenton. During the ceremony, the University inaugurated its fourth president, **Merodie A. Hancock**, PhD, and recognized 10 new graduates of its inaugural Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program. New Jersey Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ 12th District), Class of 1985, served as keynote speaker.



### JetBlue Scholars Named a Winner of the U.S. Department of Education's '2018 Reimagining the Higher Education Ecosystem Challenge'

#### [\*Bakersfield.com\*](#)

JetBlue and its employer-sponsored college degree program – JetBlue Scholars – was recently named a winner of the U.S. Department of Education's "2018 Reimagining the Higher Education Ecosystem Challenge." The JetBlue Scholars program features high-quality online courses at a fraction of the cost of a traditional college. Since the program launch in 2016, 135 JetBlue crewmembers have earned college degrees. Forty additional crewmembers are slated to receive their

degrees from program partner – **Thomas Edison State University** by the end of this year.

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## TESU Foundation 2018 Grande Ball

Thomas Edison State University Foundation held its 27th Annual Grande Ball on Oct. 13 at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, N.J. The Foundation honored **Merodie A. Hancock**, PhD, and celebrated her recent inauguration. With close to 200 attendees, the formal affair raised more than \$140,000.

In his opening remarks, Michael Toscani, PharmD, chair of the Foundation's Board of Directors, officially welcomed Hancock saying, "I speak on behalf of the entire University family when I say – we are truly honored and thrilled to have you leading this amazing institution."



During the evening's program, Hancock spoke about her passion for serving adult students and "ensuring that a degree is not simply an empty promise, but a life-changing reality." In addition, former student trustee Frances Parrales, BA '12, MA '15, shared her journey as a TESU student who earned two degrees and who now supports the University she credits with giving her so much. Parrales invited guests to join her in contributing to the TESU Scholarship Fund to support future students in their journeys.

The Thomas Edison State University Foundation is extremely grateful to all the staff members who attended and generously supported the event and the volunteers, pictured above, who helped make it a success.

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## New Staff

**Catherine "Katie" Tottser** has been appointed nursing simulation lab coordinator in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. Tottser is located on the 2nd floor of Pruitt Hall and may be reached at extension 3259.



## Staff Activities



**Dennis Devery**, EdD, vice president for Enrollment Management, discussed how lifelong learning and his own degree pursuit at TESU augmented his military career and advanced his professional trajectory during a presentation to New Jersey Division of Taxation employees on Nov. 2. More than 100 of the organization's staff members attended the motivational presentation at The War Memorial in Trenton.

**Nadine Hoston**, administrative assistant, Office of Management Information Systems, was honored with the 2018 Outstanding Staff Member Award by PLAN/NJ at its 30th Anniversary: A Celebration of Abilities in New Brunswick on Nov. 1. Hoston was recognized for her extensive knowledge, skill and expertise in working with a wide array of PLAN/NJ clients with mental health challenges and developmental disabilities.



## Social Media

### Happening on Social:



Thomas Edison State University is 🙌 feeling inspired.

"I was homeless for a few years - lost my wife, my kids, my family. I spent my time in and out of a wheelchair and hit rock bottom. No one understood what was wrong with me. After coming off suicide watch in Georgia, I moved back to New Jersey where I was born and had family support. Shortly thereafter, I got the counseling I needed to understand what I was going through and started to have hope again. Someone convinced me a few years ago you're not too old to get a degree, why don't you try? Halfway through my degree, I got really sick and had to withdraw from classes for a semester after being diagnosed with full-blown diabetes. The ADA coordinator came in and said "there is an ADA program here, why don't you let us introduce you to that and give you just a little extra time and take your tests at the college on paper?" And that really changed my life. I got through the program - actually, I wound up with a 3.7 grade point average which shocked me! I finally made it through my degree. Within two months, I had over 20 job offers, got hired by the VA in Philly and, within four weeks, got promoted to the VA in Newark. So it is amazing what has happened with college. I am helping others, and I love what I do so I encourage everyone today to have hope and get your degree. I am sure it will change your life just as it has changed mine!" - Robert Pelsang II, BSBA '17







2,693

People Reached

573

Engagements

91

16 Comments 11 Shares



**Laura Lee Mahoney** Wow !We all have a personal Journey we some how come out good at the other end . I am so proud of you Coach Bob ..your amazing person . Continue to encourage and touch others with your story . One drop at a time . 🙌❤️🙌

3



**Jerome J. Zakutansky** Glad you overcame your obstacles. Keep strong brother.

3



**Robert Pelsang** Jerome J. Zakutansky love you man!

2



**Judith Duarte** This story brought me to tears. Congrats and god bless you!

3



**Geneveve Lorenzana** Congrats rob keep it up the good works

1



**Donna Palmer Murphy** Congratulations, Robert! 🙌🙌🙌

2



**Lue Dayton** Thanks for sharing. I had no idea !! Congrats coach

2



**Donna Ozturk** Beautiful ❤️

2



**Bob Clair** Outstanding accomplishments Coach Bob

2



**Angela Argiro-Burke** Nice going Bob. Congratulations

2



**Tamoney Martin Morris** So Amazing! And congratulations!

2



**Terri Shafer** Inspiring! Thank you for sharing ❤️

2



**Malik Rivers** Amazing Robert!!! Congratulations



**Debbie Romer Gonzales** What a great inspiration!!! ❤️❤️❤️



**Shauna Gibson Gott** Wow!! Super amazing!! ❤️



**Robert Pelsang** Shauna Gibson Gott Thank you Shauna!



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Please share your news with us at: [capitalcampus@tesu.edu](mailto:capitalcampus@tesu.edu), so that we may share it with the University community.



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