

# I·N·V·E·N·T·I·O·N

NEWSLETTER OF THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

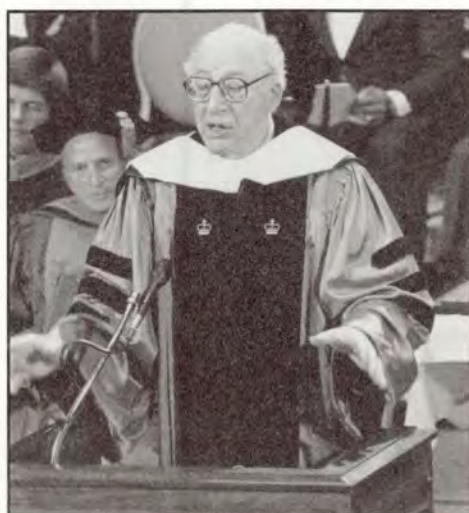
Fall 1991

## Students Honored at 19th Annual Commencement

A record number of 738 adult students was honored during the 19th Annual Commencement ceremony of Thomas Edison State College, held October 20 at the War Memorial in Trenton.

Fred W. Friendly, former president of CBS News and executive producer of the legendary "See It Now" series with Edward R. Murrow, received the Doctor of Humane Letters degree and addressed the graduates. Friendly was one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 1967.

Friendly talked to the graduates about the application of the first amendment and the Bill of Rights today, and the need for all citizens to understand the issues and get involved. In order to make informed



*Fred W. Friendly, former president of CBS News and a driving force behind the creation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, delivered the Commencement address at Thomas Edison's 19th Annual Commencement ceremony.*

decisions, Friendly believes that lifelong learning is essential. "What we don't know—about the environment, the Persian Gulf, the Caribbean—can kill us," he warned, "that is why we get educated."

Scott W. Moniak, speaker for the class, also spoke of the need for lifelong learning. "Learning doesn't stop once you get that degree or even the big job. Education is ongoing—a necessary evil—or perhaps the greatest gift of all," Moniak told his classmates. Moniak, a reporter for New Jersey Network, was also honored as an Arnold Fletcher Scholar. He was able to earn 68 credits toward his Bachelor of Arts degree through the portfolio assessment process by demonstrating extensive knowledge of the communications field.

### Behind the Scenes of Commencement

by Barbara W. Eklund

A few years ago, college staff would know that "Commencement Season" was upon them when display-size sheets of paper began appearing in rows on Registrar Jack Phillips' walls.

These sheets would be filled with lists which included *every* detail of organizing Commencement Day—from staff assignments, seating charts for VIPs, cap and gown orders (always ordering extra ones to allow for wrong sizes at the last minute), to compiling the graduates' names for the program. Added to the list over time have been such details as having mirrors, bobby pins, safety

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## PONSI Provides Forum To Discuss Training, Education

by Barbara W. Eklund

Representatives from business, education, and government who met recently at a day-long meeting to discuss adult education and training discovered that their concerns are more similar than they are dissimilar.

This did not surprise James A. Ratigan, director of the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (PONSI), who believes that "many opportunities for bridge-building and cooperative ventures exist among diversified groups." Ratigan has seen PONSI's impact with sponsoring organizations and colleges grow from providing the "nuts and bolts" of a PONSI evaluation, to a broader role of providing a forum for discussion on adult education and training issues.

PONSI is an American Council on Education program which evaluates training courses offered in noncollegiate settings (corporations and government, for example) and makes a college credit equivalent recommendation for the course. Over

1,500 colleges and universities in the U.S. accept the recommendations of ACE and award college credit for successful completion of courses that have been evaluated.

The Eighth Annual Regional PONSI Sponsors' meeting was held at the Bergen County Police and Fire Academy, and the agenda illustrates the growth of PONSI in recent years. Although participants had the opportunity to find out about the details of having a PONSI evaluation, they also participated in discussions on topics such as cultural diversity, empowerment, academic quality, and teaching adults. Many sessions included panelists from the corporate, collegiate, and government sectors, providing a rare opportunity for participants to hear the same topic discussed from several points of view.

"Participants at this year's meeting appreciated the opportunity to view topics from different perspectives," Ratigan pointed out. He explained that

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*Lansing Davis, director, PONSI in Washington, D.C.; James A. Ratigan, PONSI director at Thomas Edison; and Alma Joseph, administrator, general agency training, Human Resources Development Institute, N.J. Department of Personnel, discuss PONSI at the annual meeting.*

## Sisters Share Graduation

Sisters Renee Keefe and Denise Thwing were among those graduating with the Class of '91 after having completed the rigorous requirements of the BSN program. Although most graduates acknowledge the support they received from family, friends, and employers, support for Renee and Denise went beyond the obvious.

"Kathy (their younger sister) knew we were studying for our performance examinations and came to bring us lunch one day," Renee recalls. "Our reaction was, forget the food, what we really need is a patient

to be able to practice." Within minutes, Kathy was in an old nightgown being examined.

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*Sisters (l. to r.) Renee Keefe and Denise Thwing share a happy moment just before getting ready to participate in the graduation ceremony. Both women earned BSN degrees.*

## CALL Network Aids Students

A growing number of students and potential students are relying on the Computer Assisted Lifelong Learning (CALL) systems to communicate with college staff and conduct business with the college.

There are two main components of CALL: The CALL Network, which is used by Thomas Edison students to obtain academic services; and the Public Bulletin Board, which can be accessed by anyone with the appropriate telecommunications software and a modem.

According to Evelyn Spradley, associate director for MIS educational technologies, use of the CALL Network during its first year

of operation is gaining momentum. Students have been able to leave messages for academic program advisors through the Academic Advisement Center, request copies of their files, and communicate with the registrar's and bursar's offices about their records.

Through the Public Bulletin Board, users have been able to read general messages, obtain detailed information about the college, and actually apply to the college via computer.

Anyone interested in using CALL is invited to contact the CALL Network Technical Support Center at (609) 777-4140 for further information.





**NEWARK OFFICE OPENS**—Thomas Edison State College opened its *newark office in Newark recently with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a very successful open house on the fifth floor of 153 Halsey St. Among the many dignitaries who attended the celebration of adult higher education in the greater Newark community were (left to right) Janice Toliver, associate director of admissions services; Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison; John Blossom, College trustee; William F. Chouinard of the Metro-Newark Chamber of Commerce; and Annette Singer, director of Alumni Affairs.*

## Sisters Share Graduation

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To graduate from the BSN program, each student must pass a series of cognitive and performance examinations to complete the professional nursing component. Many students elect to participate in peer study groups in order to prepare for the examinations. Renee and Denise both participated in a peer study group.

Renee, who was also honored as an Arnold Fletcher Scholar, believes that in nursing, "the BSN is becoming the entry-level degree." She works at Community Memorial Hospital as the Clinical Coordinator of Emergency Medical Services, and feels that the degree is necessary to maintain her position and will open new doors.

Renee chose Thomas Edison to complete her degree because of its flexibility. "I had a new baby, a full-time job, and I was teaching part-

time," she explained. She was able to earn credits for knowledge she had gained on the job by taking several examinations.

Denise is a staff nurse in the emergency department at Riverview Medical Center. She credits her employer, Bill Gottshall, (also a Thomas Edison graduate) and the hospital with giving her much support. Riverview's policy allows for 100 percent financial reimbursement for colleges courses.

Her degree from Thomas Edison fulfilled a lifelong dream and the fact that she and her sister were able to work on it together made it all the more fun. "We were a good support system for one another," Denise said, "as we passed the different tests we would get excited for one another, it helped us get through a tough program."

## PONSI Provides Forum

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people in the academic world seldom get a chance to view the excellent education going on in the noncollegiate sector. Conversely, corporate educators' views of academia vary depending on their experiences and relationships with some colleges. "The opportunity to discuss common concerns and get a glimpse into each other's worlds is a key attraction of a PONSI meeting," according to Ratigan.

For participants unfamiliar with PONSI, several topics dealt with the practical aspects of having training courses evaluated. They learned about how evaluations were conducted and

heard, first-hand, from faculty who conduct the evaluations.

Some college representatives, committed to expanding services to adult students, attended to explore the idea of establishing a policy on their campus to accept PONSI recommendations. They had the opportunity to hear how William Luithle, director of Weekend College at the College of St. Elizabeth, worked to have a policy established on his campus this year. Luithle, a former division manager of Corporate Training at AT&T, saw the value of PONSI and how it could serve adults on his campus.

Barbara Plasker, an assistant director of adult enrollment services at Pace University, attended the meeting to "get a sense of how we at Pace could expand our services to students. Thomas Edison should be commended for taking such a proactive stand for adult students."

Carolyn Nelson represented the U. S. Department of Agriculture, which has had 256 of its courses evaluated by PONSI. In recent years, she has noticed that more employees are interested in building upon those courses and completing a college degree. "Everyone wants to be credentialed," Nelson pointed out. She attended the meeting to explore the possibility of a cooperative partnership with Thomas Edison so

## Behind the Scenes

(continued from page 1)

pins—even an electric iron—available. A flower vendor was added so that family and friends can present their favorite graduate with fresh flowers. Over 60 people work behind the scenes to ensure that graduates have a day to remember.

The Registrar's office decor has improved in the last few years; now the lists are kept in a 3-ring binder. But the work to improve Commencement each year continues. "I am already making notes on how next year's Commencement can be better," Phillips stated early in October.

The pace of the planning, preparation—and Commencement day itself—does not faze Phillips, who at age 65 is up not before 4 and 5 a.m. to jog. He has never lost a day of work due to illness, although he does recall having the flu once—on a weekend. He recently recalled some commencement events—planned and otherwise—that have occurred:

- In 1988, when Governor Kean was the keynote speaker, his staff was concerned that the ceremony be on schedule because the Governor had other commitments that day. Although the ceremony ran like clockwork, the Governor was so impressed with the graduates and some of their personal stories that he ended up staying longer than planned and personally greeted each of the graduates as they received their diplomas.
- That same year, a photographer anxious to get the best shot of the Governor, quickly leaped on stage and dashed through the curtain. He was just as quickly "escorted" off stage by secret service members who came with the Governor.
- One year, just five minutes before the ceremony was to begin, the organ blew an internal fuse and was unusable. Phillips remembered that Dr. Arnold Fletcher, the College's vice president for Academic Affairs at the time, was a trained classical pianist, and quickly called on him to play the piano for the procession. When Dr. Fletcher agreed and asked to see the music, Phillips, frantic to begin the ceremony, blurted out: "Just bang the piano, make any noise you can." And Dr. Fletcher gallantly saved the day. (A piano has been used every year since.)
- One year, a nursing graduate was hospitalized just prior to Commencement due to a serious accident. The director of the Nursing Program, Dr. Dolores Brown-Hall, travelled to the hospital and, as the graduate's name was announced on the stage of the War Memorial, she was given her diploma in the hospital.
- Guillermo Estevez, who had spent years in a Cuban prison, was the speaker for the class one year. He spellbound the audience with his story of struggle and how it felt to achieve his goal of earning a college degree.
- Graduates have travelled from most states in the country to attend Commencement and receive their diplomas in person. The farthest a graduate has travelled to attend the ceremony is from Guam.
- Graduates are routinely given printed invitations to distribute among family and friends, but additional invitations can be requested. The most ever requested was 50.
- A mace was added to the ceremony in recent years and is carried by the dean of the College, Dr. Ruth McKeefery, followed by the president, Dr. George A. Pruitt. The acquisition of the mace took over a year of research, and the search included queries to England (where the best mace is made for the Queen at a cost that is completely out of the college's budget range) as well as to a man, referred to the college by the University of Maryland, who literally worked out of his garage.
- Commencement Sundays in Trenton are usually beautiful sunny days, with the fall foliage along the Delaware providing the perfect backdrop for the ceremony at the War Memorial. One year however, that tranquility was interrupted when 60,000 protesters and scores of buses arrived in Trenton for a protest at the nearby Statehouse.

Following each Commencement there is "Monday morning quarterbacking" by staff as they arrive at work. Even the president participates. Less than 24 hours after Commencement, he can usually be found walking the halls with his inevitable question: "Who should we ask to be next year's speaker?"

that adults who take USDA courses can go on to earn degrees.

As director of Operations Support for Dow Jones and Company, Inc., Celia Currin runs a technical support unit. Dow Jones has had some of its courses evaluated by PONSI in the past and is currently developing new courses it expects to have evaluated. For Currin, the PONSI meeting provides the opportunity to see what kind of training other companies are doing and how they do it. "The day-long meeting gives us a chance to think strategically

about what we are doing and talk to others who are dealing with similar issues," Currin stated.

PONSI meetings are held in different locations each year so that attendees have the opportunity to view a new training site. Currin and others were extremely impressed with the tour conducted by the Bergen County Police and Fire Academy in Mahwah. During the day, participants toured the state-of-the-art facility and saw training demonstrations.

## Chamber Seeks College Intern

The Education Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of the Princeton area is seeking a college intern to help coordinate its shadow-day program activities with businesses and secondary schools in the Princeton area. The intern will have the opportunity to work with interesting, motivated people and will gain exposure to local school districts and corporations. An outgoing personality, good interpersonal and administrative skills, and an automobile are necessary. For additional information, contact the Chamber office at 609/520-1776.



**Participating in a panel discussion at the meeting were, (l. to r.) John Ford, program manager, Digital Services Education Program, Digital Equipment Corporation; Linda Long, director of Testing and Assessment at Delaware County Community College; and Dr. Jerry Ice, vice president of Academic Affairs at Thomas Edison.**



# HONOR ROLL OF CONTRIBUTORS

July 1, 1990 - June 30, 1991

## Message from the Chairman



Richard J. Gillespie, Chairman

Thanks!

Our Thomas Edison State College Annual Fund was, once again, an outstanding success. I am reminded that individuals do make an enormous difference when they band together and give to something they truly believe in.

Special thanks also to our matching gift corporate and foundation partners as well as those corporations and foundations that have extended outright gifts.

Together these contributions enable the College to continue its great tradition of excellence in providing its unique educational service to an ever-growing group of students, and to continue much appreciated scholarships to people in need.

I extend my personal thanks, and those of the entire Thomas Edison State College Foundation Board, for your continued generosity.

Richard J. Gillespie  
Chairman

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	Phil Nevius, '86 Jamison, PA	Letty P. Thoms, '90 East Orange, N.J.
	Kevin O'Brien, '80	

**Dr. Caliendo Appointed Vice President for Public Affairs**

The Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison has approved the appointment of Dr. Nat S. Caliendo as the College's vice president for Public Affairs and executive vice president of the Thomas Edison State College Foundation, Inc. He previously served as executive assistant to the president of Suffolk University in Boston. In announcing his appointment, Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison said, "Dr. Caliendo brings to Thomas Edison a wealth of experience in higher education. His background in building and nurturing partnerships among the university, government, community and the corporate sector is appropriate for this institution as it continues its leadership role in this decade and prepares for the next century." As Vice President for Public Affairs, Dr. Caliendo will expand the College's relationships with government and the business community and interpret to a wide range of constituencies the College's unique mission to serve adult learners. The Vice President is responsible for Admissions Services, Alumni Affairs, the Center for Corporate and Public Partnerships, Communications and College Relations, Development, Veterans' Affairs and Financial Aid. Since 1985, Dr. Caliendo worked with the president of Suffolk University to set education and university relations agendas

and to develop and implement strategies to strengthen the university. Active in legislative relations and development, he also served on the Education Committee of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce and has served on U.S. Department of Education Review Panels. Previously, he served in a variety of leadership positions, including Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations at the University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI, from 1980 to 1985. During the 1970s, Dr. Caliendo was an Education Policy Fellow at The Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C.; an independent education consultant dealing with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Coordinator of Data Research for the Financial Aid Office of Syracuse University. A graduate of Springfield College with a BS in education, Dr. Caliendo received his MS in education from Springfield and his PhD in higher education administration from Syracuse University. He served with the United States Army from 1967-69.



**Dr. Nat S. Caliendo**



# A·L·U·M·N·I

H I G H L I G H T S

## Letty P. Thoms, '90 Exhibits Basie Art

by Jane Coult '86

Letty P. Thoms, B.A. '90, recently exhibited a portrait of Count Basie at the Monmouth County (NJ) Museum in Lincroft. The portrait's permanent home will be in the County Basie Theater lobby in Red Bank. This painting is one of a series, "Expressions of Jazz Musicians," consisting of performers from the 1940s to the present.

Ms. Thoms, who recently retired from 27 years of government service as an artist and illustrator of technical equipment for the military, has been painting for over 40 years. She exhibited her paintings in her studio in Long Branch until her retirement.

While she studied art, Ms. Thoms seized the opportunity to visit West Africa. In 1983, she went to Senegal to learn their textile and batik designs.

Ms. Thoms received her A.A. degree from Brookdale Community College before earning her B.A. at Thomas Edison. She redesigned the logo for the Alumni Association's New Graduate



Letty P. Thoms, '90 stands beside her portrait of Count Basie on exhibit at the alumni-student reception held at the Monmouth Museum on the campus of Brookdale Community College.

Committee Activity Preference Sheet while she was a member of the New Graduate Committee. Currently, Ms. Thoms is co-chairperson of the Nominating Committee and an associate director on the Thomas Edison Alumni Board. She lives in East Orange with her husband and has two children and three grandchildren.



Peer counselors attend the Annual Peer Counseling Day at Thomas Edison. Seated (l. to r.) are Darlene King, AS'90 (also a BA student), Paula Soloway, BSHS '90, Jodi Schreiber, BSHS '90, Madelon Riley BSHS '90, Linda Green, BSHS '90; standing: Stephanie Feist, BSBA '90, John Molner, BSAST '90, Edwin Matlack, BA '79, Marilyn DeCoster, BA '83, and Ida Hammond, BA '78.



Welcome to new Alumni Office secretary Leslie M. Williams. Leslie filled in as a part-time secretary during the search for a full-time person and decided to apply for the full-time job because "working in the Alumni Office is fun. Our alumni are great people, very friendly."



Attending the reception for alumni and students at the Monmouth Museum on the Brookdale Community College Campus are (l. to r.) Leila Wallman, '90, coordinator of the reception, greeting Thomas Edison Alumna Marilyn Montroy, '91 and her husband Michael. Doris Hudak, '90, also a Thomas Edison and Brookdale Alumna, assisted Leila.



Carmel Silva, (l.) is presented with a PHT ("putting him/her through") certificate at the Commencement Banquet by Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison. Over 50 PHT recipients were honored by the new graduates.

## FOCUS ON:

## Rita Ackley, '90 BA

by Adele K. Ellis '88

**Q:** I've been told that you have an unusual graduation story. What happened on your Commencement day?

**A:** This story goes back to when I filled out the Committee Preference sheet I received after graduation. I was asked to work on the Nominating Committee. I filled out an application to be on the Alumni Board and after my appointment as an associate director, I joined other board members who were greeting the graduates at the October graduation. I didn't plan to attend the ceremonies as a graduate because I had received my degree the previous November and felt that too much time had gone by since then. While I was talking to Anthony Mangeri, another board member, I mentioned that maybe I should have been part of the program—I was caught up in the excitement of the day! He told Annette Singer (the College's director of alumni affairs) and the next thing I knew I was walking down the aisle in a cap and gown like everyone else.

**Q:** You co-chaired the 1991 Phonathon, very well I might add, and had never attended one before. What was it like?

**A:** Before the Prephonathon I read all the information that was available to me. I prepared the same way I do for all my business meetings: I asked plenty of questions and kept minutes to review later. Jane Coult (alumni vice president of development) and Annette Singer guided me through the process. The Phonathon is very organized—it is set up for success. I think the key is to keep all the participants active and energetic. It can be very tiresome to be on the phones for several hours. I attended all the sessions because I felt by giving my all I could inspire others to work as hard. It really was tiring, but I kept looking toward the goal I wanted to reach and we did it!

**Q:** Tell me about your career in the health field.



**A:** I've always been fascinated with hospitals. My first job in a hospital was as an EKG technician on weekends. I enjoyed working with patients as well as working with new technology. When I started to work full-time, I was promoted to supervisor, then associate director, and eventually director of patient services. Admissions, financial counseling, pre-admissions testing, and laboratory services were among my responsibilities. I've also had ten years experience managing three different Cardiology departments and an Electrodiagnostic Center. It was at this time that I decided to pursue my degree in business administration. After I received my bachelor's degree I interviewed and accepted a position as director of administrative services/administration in a subsidiary of a large hospital foundation in Philadelphia. My new responsibilities include space planning, facilities management, and manager of materials management.

**Q:** You have been very successful, what's your secret?

**A:** In everything I do I feel committed to put forth my best effort. I worked hard for my degree which gave me the courage to pursue new horizons and leave the safety of the familiar. While I was pursuing my education and career I have many people to thank, but the most important, above all, is my family.



Annette Singer, director of Alumni Affairs, is greeted at the reception preceding the Commencement Banquet by mime Janet Berkowitz. While entertaining the guests, Janet, a Thomas Edison student, said she was inspired by their accomplishments and encouraged to complete her own degree.



# APPLAUSE APPLAUSE

'81

**Bob Friedman** (BSBA '81, ASM '80) of Union, NJ, recently earned an honorary resolution from Union Township for his volunteer work as an investigator for the Office of Consumer Affairs. Bob made an amazing comeback in the years since his graduation from Thomas Edison. He was paralyzed following a back operation in 1987, but after years of intensive physical therapy he is able to walk with a cane. Although Bob still suffers chronic pain, he puts in his time at the

office in addition to working from his home helping consumers. Bob brings to his job his experience as a member of the New Jersey Citizens Consumer Affairs Advisory Committee to which he was appointed by Gov. Brendan Byrne in 1976.

'86

**Robert L. Dimond** (BSBA), E. Lansdowne, PA, who was elected mayor of East Lansdowne in November 1989, is running this November for a county council position for Delaware County (population, 571, 000). Bob is a member of the Pennsylvania Mayors Association and a board member of the Pennsylvania Boroughs Association. He is an American Legion commander, and his biography will appear in the 1991 edition of "Who's Who in Government."

'88

**James Jeffrey Regan** (BSBA) Forest, Va., received his M. Ad. from Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Va., in June.

**J. Richard Showalter II** (BA), Topeka, KS, graduated in December 1990 from Washburn University Law School, Topeka. He is employed in the Carpenter Charter law firm in Topeka.

'89

**L. Tyler Orion** (BA), on Del Mar, CA completed her MBA in Health Services Management at the San Diego campus of Webster University. She was honored by the faculty with the Outstanding Graduate Award for 1990-91, and she has been elected president of her local alumni association chapter. In a letter recently, Tyler wrote: "Your assistance in completing the B.A., which I started in 1969, allowed me to move on."

**Edward A. Sierra** (BS/AST), Mastic Beach, NY, received his Master of Science degree in Training and Learning Technology at New York Institute of Technology's commencement exercise in June. He is employed at the Brookhaven National Laboratory.

'90

**Stephen F. Oleksak** (BS/AST) Sarasota, FL, is enjoying her retirement with his wife, Fran. Stephen spent many years as a Thomas Edison

student after retiring from General Felt Industries (Dec. 1981) where he was director of international sales, and from the Air Force as a Lieutenant Colonel. He spend his "leisure" time earning an associate degree and BS/AST, both from Thomas Edison. He thanks Thomas Edison for guiding him through his education.

'91

**Felicia T. (Phyllis) Sinoradzki** (BSBA, ASM '88) Clark, NJ, has been accepted into the Master of Arts Program in Psychological Studies at Seton Hall University. Once she completes that degree, Phyllis plans to earn a doctorate. She is employed in the Marketing department at Schering-Plough. Phyllis writes: "Thomas Edison was the best way for me to get my education . . . I recommend it highly whenever I get the opportunity."

If you would like news of your accomplishments included in the Applause, Applause section of Invention, please send information to: Office of Alumni Affairs, Thomas Edison State College, 153 Halsey Street, 5th Floor, Newark, N.J. 07102-2898. You may enclose a black-and-white photograph for consideration. Please include your daytime phone number, Thomas Edison Degree earned and year of graduation.



*Robert L. Dimond*



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**A record 738 adults graduated at the College's 19th Annual Commencement.**

*1*



**Representatives from business, education, and government met to discuss common education concerns at the Eighth Annual Regional PONSI Sponsors' Meeting.**

*1*



**Dr. Nat S. Caliendo has been appointed Vice President for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison.**

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*Invention is the newsletter of Thomas Edison State College.  
It is distributed to students, alumni and friends of the College.*

DR. GEORGE A. PRUITT, President; DR. NAT S. CALIENDO, Vice President for Public Affairs; LINDA L. HOLT, Director of Communications and College Relations; BARBARA WATERS EKLUND, Editor-in-Chief, *Invention*; CINDY WARRICK, Secretary; ANNETTE SINGER, Director of Alumni Affairs; MILDRED KOSLOW, '82 President of the Alumni Association; Alumni Newsletter Committee: ADELE ELLIS, '88 chairperson; JANE COULT '86; and NANCY SEMON '90



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