

INVENTION

Fall 1990

NEWSLETTER OF THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

THOMAS EDISON SPONSORS NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON PRIOR LEARNING

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), the process by which colleges award credit for learning that adults have achieved outside the classroom, is a growing practice among colleges and universities throughout the United States. What 20 years ago was considered a "nontraditional"—even radical—approach in education is becoming an integral part of college programs as they begin to recognize the special needs and expertise of adult learners.

The second National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential

Learning, sponsored by Thomas Edison State College in cooperation with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), brought top experts in PLA together with practitioners to discuss the PLA field today and its future directions. Some participants direct PLA programs at their home institutions; others were looking for direction as they begin to set up a new program.

"Through the Institute we have been able to share Edison's expertise and that of our Institute faculty with other professionals. We have

attracted internationally recognized faculty, leaders in the field of adult learning, including members of the Commission on Higher Education," stated Dr. Debra A. Dagavarian, director of Testing and Assessment at Edison and director of the Institute.

"Feedback from participants was excellent. Educators new to the field of PLA felt that we had provided them with the foundation to begin programs. Perhaps more importantly, they thought the Institute made it possible for everyone to meet and exchange ideas. Participants really got to know one another, and many commented that the contacts they made would be invaluable when they returned to their home campuses and needed additional help or ideas," she continued.

This year's Institute included two tracks, beginner's and advanced, and participants were able to select topics that they felt were most appropriate to their level of expertise. The beginning track covered a range of topics needed to understand PLA: identifying learning; setting up PLA procedures; selecting and training faculty assessors; documenting, measuring and evaluating learning; and marketing. The advanced track included such topics as current perspectives on adult and experiential learning; PLA and sponsored learning; the transcription of PLA credit and graduate-level PLA.

A new component of the Institute, a panel discussion of PLA and accreditation, included participation from three representatives of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. The panelists discussed existing standards for the awarding of PLA credits by the six regional accrediting bodies and explained the underlying assumptions that guide accreditors who are evaluating PLA programs.

All three participants, Dr. Paula Hooper Mayhew, Middle States Association; Dr. Amy K. Lezberg, New England Association and Dr. Gerald W. Patton, North Central Association, acknowledged that the number of PLA programs in colleges and universities across the country was growing at a tremendous rate. Mayhew pointed out that during an accreditation visit all regional accrediting bodies ask four common questions: What are the individual college's mission and goals and how are they measured? Are the resources available to implement the goals? Is the college doing what it says it is doing? (The college's self-study report is used to answer this question.) Can the college continue to meet its goals in the future? Mayhew advised PLA directors to be sure that PLA is connected to the mission and goals of

(continued on page 2)



Ida Julian

Ida Julian Appointed Development Director

Ida Julian, former president of Cybis Porcelain and a financial and marketing executive in the central New Jersey business community, has been named director of development for Thomas Edison State College.

In making the announcement, Dr. Norman C. Crawford, Jr., Thomas Edison's vice president for public affairs, said Ms. Julian's appointment represents "a milestone in the evolution of the College's outreach to the business and corporate communities. The College is fortunate to have attracted an executive of Ms. Julian's stature," Dr. Crawford said.

As chief executive of Thomas Edison's development program, Ms. Julian will be responsible for enhancing the College's strong regional ties with business and industry along the Route One corridor and throughout the central New Jersey area. At the same time, she will foster new partnerships in the state and throughout the nation with corporations, foundations and private individuals committed to the kind of forward-thinking higher education which Thomas Edison is uniquely equipped to deliver.

At Thomas Edison, Ms. Julian will work closely with the College's Foundation, chaired by Richard J. Gillespie, president of Gillespie Advertising, Inc., as well as an active Alumni Association representing over 6,500 graduates.

"This is an exciting time for Thomas Edison State College," Ms. Julian said in responding to her appointment. "In recent years, there has been an outpouring of interest and support in the business community for the College's mission to help mature adults earn academic degrees without interrupting their careers."

In accepting her appointment, Ms. Julian observed that she has a

(continued on page 2)



Dr. George A. Pruitt (center), president of Thomas Edison, greets faculty who participated in the second National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning. Pictured (l. to r.) are Dr. Harriet W. Cabell, associate dean and director of New College/External Degree Program at the University of Alabama, Dr. Pruitt and Dr. Barry G. Sheckley, associate professor in the Adult and Vocational Program at the University of Connecticut.

College Experiences Unprecedented Growth through FY 1990

Applications and enrollments at Thomas Edison State College continued to grow at a tremendous rate this year, bringing the total enrollment growth over the last five years to 55 percent.

"Higher education is becoming more important to adults nationwide, and today they represent about half of all college enrollments," commented Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison. He continued, "and when adults are ready to continue their education, they view Edison's model as the best way to reach their goals. Students and alumni are our greatest source of referrals. They know the value of the Edison degree and tell friends and co-workers."

This year's growth is illustrated in the following chart:

	FY 1989	FY1990	FY 1990 gain
Applications	3,598	4,581	27.3%
New Enrollments	2,124	2,603	22.6%
Total Enrollments	7,202	7,811	8.5%

THOMAS EDISON PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State College, has been appointed by Lauro F. Cavazos, secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, to a three-year term on the National Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility. The Committee consists of 15 members who are representative of the education community—students, institutions, professional associations, state agencies and the general public.

The National Advisory Committee identifies and recommends to the Secretary of Education those accrediting agencies and associations which are reliable authorities on the quality of education and training in public postsecondary institutions. Institutional eligibility for federal assistance programs is directly related to regional or national accreditation by these designated authorities. The Advisory Committee also develops and criteria for evaluating those institutions outside the scope of the recognized accrediting bodies so that eligibility for federally funded programs will be possible on an interim basis.

Senior Program Advisor **Marian Stone** was recently awarded a fellowship by the National Center on Adult Learning at Empire State College, the State University of New York. The award-winning research project, "Peer Support as It Contributes to Success for Registered Nurses (RNs) in a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN) Program," will examine issues related to the role peer support groups play for nursing students.

Senior Program Advisor **Theresa Bowman** presented a paper entitled, "Whose Responsibility Is It Anyway? Responding to Cultural Diversity in the Social Services Profession" at the Convention for the National Organization for Human Services Education in Houston, Texas.

William J. Seaton, director of the Center for Directed Independent Adult Learning, has been recognized by the American Council on Education for his contribution to the development of "Principles of Good Practice for Alternative and External Degree Programs for Adults."

Also, an article written by Seaton, entitled "Computer Assisted Lifelong Learning: New Pathways to Higher Education," has been published in the September issue of the Journal of the International Council for Distance Education, Milton Keynes, England.



William J. Seaton

Senior Program Advisors **Rosa Lee Eickhoff**, **Pat Jackson** and **Ester Taitsman** presented a paper entitled "Changing Students: Academic Advisement that Works" at the National Academic Advising Association (ACADA) Mid Atlantic Region, 6th Annual Conference in Short Hills, N.J.

Thomas M. Eklund, coordinator of academic advisement at the College, recently participated in a panel discussion on "Alternatives to Traditional Higher Education for Adult Students," during the Northeast Region Conference of the Association for Continuing Higher Education. The theme of the Conference was "Strategies for Empowerment: for Ourselves, for Our Students."

Dr. Ruth M. McKeefery, dean of the College, has been appointed to the Associate Degree Advisory Committee of the Board of Higher Education of New Jersey. The Committee is charged with reviewing all program approval documents for proposed associate degrees in New Jersey.

Dr. Jerry Ice, vice president for academic affairs, has been invited to be a member of the Focus Committee for the Institute for the Management of Lifelong Education at Harvard University. The Focus Committee, composed of eight alums of the Institute, reviews and makes recommendations on future institutes.

Senior Program Advisor **Dorothy Sconyers** has been appointed to the Credit for Life Learning Experience Advisory Board at Bucks County Community College in Pennsylvania. The board, which is made up of college administrators and faculty members as well as students who have utilized the CLLE program, helps to determine the direction of the college's assessment programs and to promote a greater understanding of earning credit for college-level knowledge acquired outside the classroom.

Sconyers, who has been on the Thomas Edison staff for two years, earned her master's and her undergraduate degrees in Sociology from Temple University and the University of Mississippi, respectively.

Ida Julian

(continued from page 1)

personal reason for her commitment to the College. "In addition to serving as director of development, I am also a student at Thomas Edison," she said. "During the years I worked my way up the career ladder at Cybis, from sales and promotions to vice president of marketing and finally president, I did not have the opportunity to complete my baccalaureate degree. Through Thomas Edison's flexible programs, I am now working on the completion of the bachelor's degree in business. When I tell the corporate community of the benefits of the Thomas Edison program, I do so with both experience and conviction!"

Ms. Julian holds an associate's degree from Bucks County Community College, a brokerage license and has taken courses toward the Certified Financial Planner certificate. All of these credentials will be applied toward her baccalaureate program at Thomas Edison.



Participants at the National Institute had the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences on prior learning assessment. Among those attending were Bartholomew P. Schiavo, academic vice president of Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio and Dr. Millicent Daly, dean of Academic Planning at Cambridge College in Cambridge, Ma.

INSTITUTE (continued from page 1)

the institution even if it means revamping the goals.

Lezberg, who was a returning adult student herself, stated that at many colleges "faculty have to be brought from their traditional views to PLA." Patton emphasized strongly that faculty at the home institution (not outside faculty) should be involved in the PLA program. He recommended Urban Whitaker's book, "Assessing Learning: Standards, Principles and Procedures," to any college interested in setting up a PLA program.

All of the panelists encouraged the Institute participants to become part of accrediting teams as a way to promote PLA and make an impact on the adult higher education field.

At an evening session participants learned about the history of the assessment of experiential learning from Morris T. Keeton, who created much of the history himself. Dr. Keeton was chief executive officer of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning from 1977 through 1989. He served as chair of the Steering Committee of the original CAEL when it was a project of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the mid-1970s.

Dr. Keeton pointed out that the decade of the sixties and the early seventies was the time of tremendous

explosion of programs for adults, although the beginnings of PLA can be traced to 1900 when the College Entrance Examination Board was established.

In the early sixties colleges began offering degree programs especially for adults and providing PLA through testing as one of the program options. Between 1968 and 1974, some 13 colleges were created with adult learners as the primary clientele. Thomas Edison was founded during this time. "Edison is a highlight in the history of PLA," Dr. Dagavarian pointed out. "We played a significant role in the last 18 years by creating some of the history and helping to set what are considered the standards for PLA nationwide today."

During the period of 1974 through 1977 CAEL published 54 publications on PLA and presented model programs and validation studies. Dr. Keeton estimated that "tens of thousands of days were spent in training faculty in the late seventies." By the eighties, over 500 colleges and universities were recognizing PLA, and that number continues to grow as colleges work to serve the adult learner.

by Barbara W. Eklund

Ms. Julian brings to the College a background rich in the subtleties of national and international protocol. As the CEO of the company which produced many of the official Gifts of State, Ms. Julian spent considerable time in the nation's Capitol meeting with Presidents Ford, Carter and Reagan as well as meeting and dining with the current First Family when Mr. Bush was Vice President.

During the 1980s, Ms. Julian was singled out by Nancy Reagan to greet First Ladies of aspiring nations during their visits to the White House. During private "teas" attended only by Mrs. Reagan, a First Lady from another country and Ms. Julian, the New Jersey executive described her rise to CEO status in an American corporation and answered questions through an interpreter.

The new director is also known throughout the state for her involvement in community and humanitarian causes. Ms. Julian was one of the first women to be inducted into Rotary International and is president of the New Jersey

Association of Women Business Owners. She is a member of the Mercer County and Princeton Area Chambers of Commerce, ZONTA and the Princeton Area Association of Business and Professional Women.

She also serves on the following boards: Mercer County Community College Foundation (immediate past president); YWCA of Trenton, vice president; The American Boychoir School, Princeton, past chair, development committee; the Salvation Army, Helene Fuld Medical Center and Boy Scouts of America (George Washington Council).

Among her numerous awards and achievements are: Woman of Distinguished Achievement (N.J. Federation of Business and Professional Women's Club); New Jersey's Outstanding Businesswoman (New Jersey Monthly Magazine); and a recipient of YWCA's Tribute to Women in Industry and Government.

by Linda L. Holt

ALUMNI Highlights

FOCUS ON: Jane Coult, V.P. of Programs, Alumni Association



- Q:** Why did you pursue your degree through Thomas Edison State College?
- A:** In 1975 the College sent Admissions Representatives through the Trenton area to promote enrollment. One of them convinced me to take some of the college examinations for which I received credits. I was on my way from that point. Before Thomas Edison, I never thought I would be able to pursue a college degree because my schedule did not allow time for regular class attendance.
- Q:** When did you join the Alumni Board? What positions did you hold before becoming Vice President?
- A:** I attended a few board meetings with Cecile Caruso, an alumni board member, and also worked on the Phonathon, which helped to feed my interest in "giving back" to the College. I inquired about the Alumni Association and in 1988 was elected to the board as an associate director. In 1989 the board was expanded to include several new vice president positions and I was appointed to the position of vice president of programs. I was re-elected for the 1990 year.
- Q:** You hold many positions on various committees. If you could make one thing happen in 1990, what would it be?
- A:** I would really like to hold the first seminar program. The Alumni Association has looked forward to making this program a reality for a very long time. Our main mission is to encourage graduates to continue their education.
- Q:** I've been told one of your talents is dancing. Did you ever want to have a career as a dancer?
- A:** Oh, yes! Especially ballet and Broadway. I still take dance lessons and teach young children, usually three- to five-year-olds. They are so cute, and they light up your life just watching them.

by Adele Ellis, '88

ALUMNI ACTIVITIES ABOUND ON COMMENCEMENT DAY

A graceful blend of tradition and innovation will characterize alumni activities at Commencement, Oct. 14.

In keeping with tradition, the Alumni Association will hold its annual meeting and breakfast prior to Commencement ceremonies and a reception and banquet in the late afternoon and evening.

By way of creating a new tradition, Association members will not wait until the annual reception and banquet to make the acquaintance of new members. According to Alumni President Mildred Koslow, the Association's new Graduate Relations Committee will be on hand *prior* to Commencement ceremonies at 2 p.m. to assist new alums with their gowns and other last-minute details.

"New Thomas Edison graduates will learn right away that the Alumni Association is there for them," the president noted.

The graduates will also have an opportunity throughout the day to order class rings and purchase other college mementoes, such as sweatshirts, mugs and aprons.

This year's reception and banquet will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Princeton beginning at 4:30 p.m. Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison, will present Putting Him/Her Through (PHT) certificates to family and friends of the new alumni.

For information on alumni activities on Commencement Day, please call the Alumni Affairs Office (201) 266-1951.

Alumni Discover Thomas Edison . . . Again!

Many alumni are discovering that Thomas Edison continues to meet their educational needs—even after graduation. "The College is involved in over 100 articulation agreements with academic institutions and professional organizations," explained Dr. Jerry Ice, vice president for academic affairs, "and alumni in need of additional certification in a specific area return to Thomas Edison to build upon their previous educational credentials."

A prime example is the working relationship of Thomas Edison with the N.J. Association of School Business Officials (NJASBO). This group, composed of school business officials in each of the school districts in New Jersey, recently was successful in securing passage of a State Board of Education ruling which revamps totally the requirements for certification as a School Business Administrator. The new guidelines attempt to upgrade and professionalize the qualifications for this position.

As a member of NJASBO's College and University Committee, Dr. Ice participated actively in the formulation of the group's recommendations to the State Board of Education, which ultimately resulted in the incorporation of these recommendations into the new law for certification.

According to Dr. Ice, the testing program at Thomas Edison (TECEP), the independent study opportunities offered and the valuable assistance available from the College staff make it possible for students to "bank" credits obtained through various sources for use in accreditation for professional degrees such as the SBA.

"Our relationship with NJASBO is just one example of the articulation agreements the College has entered into," said Dr. Ice. Another example, he noted, is an agreement with the National Emergency Management Group. This organization handles disaster readiness and includes local disaster coordinators who manage and coordinate community response

to disasters by bringing together a number of support resources.

The Senior Baptist Ministerial Seminary Group is still another organization with which Thomas Edison is working on an articulation agreement. Through this agreement, the College works with ministers who have no bachelor's degrees, but who have taken a number of courses evaluated by the American Council on Education and recommended for college credit. Through Thomas Edison they are able to earn a B.A., which satisfies the requirements of ministerial work and accelerates their careers.

"One really interesting group we're working with at present is the perfusion technologists, a group which includes the professionals who work with doctors performing open heart surgery and other types of surgery," Dr. Ice said. The working agreement with Thomas Edison facilitates the degree completion options for these individuals.

"Thomas Edison exists to serve the adult learner with or without a bachelor's degree," Dr. Ice pointed out. "Although the majority of our students are seeking undergraduate degrees, there is an increasing number of students who are working through Thomas Edison to obtain professional certification in their respective careers. We are unique in education. Since our founding in 1972, we have built our programs around meeting the changing needs of the adult learner," he concluded.

by Claire M. Cope, '89

Claire M. Cope earned her B.A. from Thomas Edison in 1989 and is currently earning additional credits through the College to meet requirements for obtaining her School Business Administrator Certification.

Success Follows Florida Alumna

For the Thomas Edison graduate who is eager to sample what success life can hold after achieving that prized degree, Elizabeth Girvan Lindsay, BSAST '80 of Sarasota, Fla., is a special role model.

Liz Lindsay is president of Bairn's Company, her own construction and interior design firm in Sarasota. She says that reaching this pinnacle represents the realization of her girlhood dreams. While most young girls were busy playing with dolls, she was interested in inspecting new homes under construction to find out exactly how they were put together. She came to recognize and admire the quality of workmanship in construction.

After three years of engineering studies at Purdue University, Liz enrolled at Thomas Edison, where she attained a bachelor of science degree in applied science and technology. After earning an M.A. in business administration at the University of Southern Florida, she became one of a select few women to hold a contractor's license in that state.

"I love remodeling and renovation," Liz says, "and we do a lot of work in that area."

In 1988 Liz Lindsay added still another star to her crown with her selection as Distinguished Alumna at the University of South Florida, an award made in recognition of her status as a graduate of the charter class in the Executive M.B.A. program at the university.

Her distinguished career, coupled with her professional and educational accomplishments, offer an excellent study in what can be accomplished by Thomas Edison students.



Norma L. Horton '83, immediate past president of the Alumni Association and Alumni Affairs Director Annette Singer met with Edison alumni and students from North Carolina and Georgia during a visit to that area.

APPLAUSE, APPLAUSE

81 Norma D. Lewis of Louisville, Ky. (B.S.), writes to say that she enjoys this section of *Invention* and to report on her own activities as a freelance interpreter for the deaf.

Norma retired in 1988 as coordinator of the deaf program at Jefferson State Vocational Technical School in Kentucky and subsequently has worked on a freelance basis. Recently however, she spent four months writing a book which she

describes as "humorous." Best wishes with the book sales!

82 Barbara A. Miller of Prescott, Ariz. (B.S.B.A.) is self-employed as a career development consultant. She conducts career development workshops for support staff in the corporate and academic sectors. Barbara reports that she includes a segment on Thomas Edison's opportunities for obtaining a degree, and that interest in the College has been high.

83 Jeffrey S. Appel, (B.S./A.S.T.), San Diego, Calif. is currently working for General Dynamics, Convair Division, as a

reliability engineer. After graduating from Thomas Edison, Jeffrey earned his M.B.A. at National University in San Diego.

89 Geraldine H. Moore (B.S./H.S.), Mount Laurel, N.J., recently accepted a position as probation officer for the Burlington County Superior Court in New Jersey. Geraldine writes, "my hard work and determination have finally paid off . . . thank you, Thomas Edison!" Congratulations, Geraldine.

90 Linda W. Vestal (B.S./H.S.), of Somerset, N.J., recently received the "Woman of Achievement Award" of the Business and Professional Women's Club of Somerset Hills, N.J. She was chosen for this honor for outstanding service to the community and for personal achievements.

A sergeant in the Somerset County Sheriff's Office, Linda was the first female Sheriff's Officer in the 300-year history of the department. Appointed in 1979, she earned the

rank of sergeant in 1986. She received a "Special Award of Honor" recently at the International Drug Conference in Hollywood, Fla., and is one of 25 police officers who represented the United States as Ambassadors to Law Enforcement in Russia in April 1990.

Linda is a member of the Somerset County Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council and chairwoman of the Somerset County Commission on Women. A wife and mother of two, she is studying for a master's degree in police science at Jersey City State College.

Thomas Edison in Kentucky

We are indebted to alum Norma D. Lewis (BS '81) for supplying a piece of interesting Thomas A. Edison information which is not widely known. Norma, a Kentucky resident, has uncovered the fact that Edison arrived in Louisville, Kentucky in 1866, just after the Civil War, and worked in the Western Union office in that city for the next two years.

APPLAUSE, APPLAUSE

If you would like news of your accomplishments included in the Applause, Applause section of *Invention*, please return the form below to: Office of Alumni Affairs, Thomas Edison State College, 20 Evergreen Place, East Orange, NJ 07018. You may enclose a black-and-white-photograph for consideration.

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime Telephone Number _____

Thomas Edison Degree Earned _____

Year of Graduation _____

Information _____

COMPLETE YOUR CIRCLE OF SUCCESS

order your

Thomas Edison State College Ring

This small circle is a symbol of your tremendous achievement . . . **your college degree!**

For information contact: Ondina A. Jeffers, BA '82
Alumni Association Ring Chair
682 Ithaca Place
East Windsor, N.J. 08520

I N S I D E INVENTION



1 Thomas Edison Sponsors Institute

An internationally recognized faculty of experts in prior learning assessment participated in Thomas Edison's second National Institute.

1 Applications, Enrollments Up

Adults are returning to college in record numbers and discovering that Thomas Edison can help them meet their educational goals.



3 Commencement Set for October 14, 1990

Over 600 students are expected to graduate this year and many will participate in the day-long activities planned to celebrate Commencement day.

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

Dr. George A. Pruitt, President; Dr. Norman C. Crawford, Jr., Vice President for Public Affairs; Linda L. Holt, Director of Communications and College Relations; Barbara Waters Eklund, Editor-in-Chief, *Invention*; Linda Soltis, Program Assistant; Cindy Warrick, Secretary; and Annette Singer, Director of Alumni Affairs
Mildred Koslow, '82, President of the Alumni Association
Alumni Newsletter Committee: Claire Cope, '89, *chair*; Adele Ellis, '88; Leona G. Bothwell, '78; and Phyllis Sinoradzki, '88

Thomas Edison State College
101 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08608

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Trenton, N.J.
Permit No. 112



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper