



Staff Newsletter of Thomas Edison State College • October 2007

THOMAS EDISON
STATE COLLEGE

Higher Education.
For Adults with
Higher Expectations.®

About Us Admissions Tuition & F

It's Our Mission
Thomas Edison State College provides flexible, high-quality, collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults.

Finish your degree anytime, anywhere.

How much will it cost?
Tuition is reasonable, the value is exceptional...

What can I study?
How long will it take?
Will my college credits transfer?

Meet Lt. Col. Vito DiM
Father, CFO and recent graduate
of Science in Management program

Finish your degree anytime, anywhere.

How long will it take?
Not as long as you might think. Why?

What can I study?
How much will it cost?
Will my college credits transfer?

College Unveils New Web Site

On Sept. 5, the College launched its new Web site following more than a year of planning and research with all departments throughout the institution.

The site, designed by Lipman-Hearne of Chicago, features dynamic user-based navigation, a completely new design and an information-based architecture that provide entry points for prospective students, current students, military students, alumni, donors and potential corporate partners. In addition, the College has implemented a new content management system, which has enhanced the College's ability to make updates and changes to the site in a more timely and efficient manner.

"In developing the site, we leveraged focus-group research and extensive user feedback," said **Marie R. Power-Barnes**, associate vice president for Marketing and coordinator of the project. "We also commissioned an independent study on functionality, navigation, usability and site management assessment to ensure we created a resource that best serves the needs of all of the College's key audiences."

The previous College Web site was launched in 2000. Power-Barnes led a committee to work on the redesign of the site that included **Drew Hopkins**, chief information officer; **Jim Brossoie**, assistant director of MIS; **Dr. Susan Davenport**, dean of the Heavin School of Arts and Sciences, and **Joe Guzzardo**, communications director. This committee will stay in place to guide the ongoing development of the site and has taken on a new member, Vice Provost for Learner Services **Ray Young**.

The discovery phase of the project included extensive interviews with executive leadership at the College and two full-day workshops with key College staff that included all deans and vice provosts and members of Learner Services, Admissions and Information Center, Military Affairs, the Center for Directed Independent Adult Learning, Strategic Partnerships, Development and Alumni.

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College Night at the Trenton Thunder

The 2007 Thomas Edison State College Night at the Trenton Thunder on Aug. 10 was a rousing experience for more than 50 staff, family and friends. The Thunder was victorious over the Reading Phillies, 11-4, on a cool summer night at Waterfront Park.

Clockwise from left: **Carla Colburn**, senior program advisor, Office of Learner Services, with husband Larry and daughter Sabrina; **Beth Dey**, director of Special Events & the Annual Fund, Office of Development, with husband Jeff; and **Kevin Allen** (bottom right), educational technology specialist, Office of Management Information Systems, enjoys the Thunder game with friends (from left) Jonathon Baker, Alison Baker and Pat McGowan.



*Knowledge is power. Information is liberating.
Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.*
- Kofi Annan

Focus on: Dr. Susan M. O'Brien



Dr. Susan M. O'Brien is a visionary; however, the change in which she is involved is not merely revolutionary it's evolutionary. O'Brien, dean of the School of Nursing, has been an innovator in her last seven years on the staff of Thomas Edison State College. That creativity may be in her history or it may be in her genes — more likely it is some of both.

"I'm from a large family that for two generations has developed people who gravitate to public service," O'Brien explained. "We become doctors, nurses and professional soldiers. There is a strong familial tendency for us to become public servants and these roles provide us with long successful careers."

Prior to coming to the College, O'Brien worked in seven different schools of nursing. Some large state institutions; others small schools — they were private, parochial and state. This, she explained, gave her a great deal of expertise.

"These experiences, plus coordinating the clinical experiences of large groups of nursing students, helped me to identify the educational needs of nurses in practice," she explained. "I came to Thomas Edison State College because I love program development and believed I had what it took to develop an innovative nursing program, and because I believed, and still do, in the College's unique mission."

As dean, O'Brien's primary role is to provide current, state-of-the-art, accredited education for the College's nursing students. "My role has changed as our nursing program has grown," O'Brien said. "In 2001, when we closed the examination program, there were 45 students to be transferred into the newly designed online program."

"My goal during the first two years was to develop more online courses, identify more mentors and get the new program accredited. Since that time, we have placed the entire undergraduate nursing program online, opened the program to out-of-state nurses, and developed a graduate program and a certificate program."

Furthermore, under O'Brien's tutelage, the School received a large federal grant to promote diversity in nursing and developed an Honor Society of Nursing. In the meantime, the School's recruitment efforts were in full swing, resulting in an increase to more than 700 students, making it the largest RN to BSN program in New Jersey and one of the largest in the country.

"I love being part of an innovative College that allows for the education of RNs to better serve the public. Knowing that my role as dean affects both nurses and the public we serve gives me great satisfaction and allows me to really enjoy my work. While these accomplishments have not always been easy, what makes my job rewarding is that I have a wonderful staff, capable students and very experienced nursing mentors who enjoy teaching online. For all of this I am very grateful."

O'Brien lives in Yardley, Pa., with her husband of 40 years, Ray. They have two grown children, Kathleen and Martin, as well as two grandsons, 8-year-old William and 4-year-old Jack.

"When I am not working I enjoy spending time with my children and grandchildren, and I spend as much time as I can in Narragansett, R.I., where Ray and I have a home on the water and where we plan to retire."

More than 200 Staff Complete HR Survey

Results Will Help Office of Human Resources Enhance Services to Staff

Last Spring, more than 200 employees responded to an online survey designed to help the Office of Human Resources better understand staff needs and improve services and benefits.

"We are thrilled about the response we received," said Mindi Shalita, director of Human Resources. "Overall, 65 percent of College and Library staff participated in the survey. The results will guide our work to enhance services to our employees."

The survey, which was completed by 227 employees, contained two parts. The first reviewed awareness, utilization and importance of current benefits, and training and professional development opportunities.

The second gauged interest and importance of specific, possible future benefits, training and professional development opportunities. Key findings include:

Current Core Benefits

The survey identified eight core benefits that employees receive:

- Retirement plans
- Disability
- Health benefits
- Dental benefits
- Payroll
- Leave time
- Saving additional pension money
- Family Medical Leave Act/NJ Family Leave Act

Most respondents indicated they would like additional information on core benefits. Nearly half of those surveyed indicated that they would like to receive additional information on retirement plans and saving additional pre-tax dollars for retirement. In addition, one in every three respondents said they want more information on FMLA/FLA.

Current Additional Benefits

More than 75 percent of respondents are aware that the College and Library offer employee assistance programs, flexible spending accounts, staff tuition waiver, vision care, miscellaneous discounts, and a donated leave program. However, only 50 percent of respondents were aware of dependent fee waiver and long-term care insurance benefits. Staff considered donated leave, long-term care insurance and vision care as the most important additional benefits (excluding the core benefits).

Current Training Opportunities

More than 50 percent of respondents are aware of all training opportunities available to staff, and more than 97 percent are aware of time and attendance training. Consequently, 88 percent of respondents have utilized this training. While respondents indicated that all the training

opportunities listed on the survey were important, only 1 in 10 has utilized assistance with employee relations and confidential employee advising.

Lunch and Learn Programs

One of every two College respondents and one of three Library respondents have attended a lunch and learn program. In addition, respondents suggested numerous topics for future lunch and learn programs, including public speaking, team building and CPR.

Possible Future Benefits

Both College and Library staff identified flexible work schedules as the most important possible future benefit. The survey found that 93 percent of College respondents and 71 percent of Library respondents are interested in a flexible work schedule. More than 50 percent of combined College and Library respondents indicated an interest in an elder care referral service, and less than 50 percent were interested in a child care referral service.

Possible Future Training Opportunities

More than 70 percent of respondents indicated that they are interested in computer-based learning.

Possible Future Professional Development Opportunities

Leadership development was rated the most important of the three possible opportunities by both the College and Library. College respondents were more likely than Library respondents to respond they would be interested in leadership development (75 percent vs. 60 percent), career planning (64 percent vs. 52 percent) and job coaching (58 percent vs. 47 percent).

Next Steps

The Survey Committee, which is comprised of **Heather Brooks, Penny Brouwer, Ann Marie Senior, Mindi Shalita** and **Joe Youngblood**, will continue to analyze the data using gender, length of service and employment type to look for trends based on these identifiers. The committee will also compare responses from College and Library staff to better understand how to meet each institution's needs. In addition, the committee will review the specific comments and suggestions provided by respondents. Please look for future e-mail blasts that will provide staff with a more in-depth analysis of specific survey questions.

The Survey Committee and the Office of Human Resources thank all who participated in the survey.

For more information on the survey results, contact Mindi Shalita at ext. 4115 or e-mail mshalita@tesc.edu.

"We are thrilled about the response we received. Overall, 65 percent of College and Library staff participated in the survey. The results will guide our work to enhance services to our employees."

- Mindi Shalita, director of Human Resources

Academic Affairs Restructures To Position for Continued Growth

Thomas Edison State College has undergone a significant transformation over the past three decades, and today has record enrollment, a significantly expanded academic presence with six schools and a highly effective distance learning program. In order to position the College for continued success and growth, the Division of Academic Affairs has made the following organizational changes:

- The Office of Admissions and the Information Center are moving from the Division of Public Affairs to the Office of Learner Services within the Division of Academic Affairs. This will facilitate increased operational synergies within the offices of the Registrar and Admissions, and the Information Center. Additionally, evaluation will be integrated into the Office of the Registrar, allowing a more effective interoperational resource deployment between these two services.
- **Dr. Mary Ellen Caro** will assume the position of executive vice provost in the Office of Provost and Vice President. In this capacity, Caro will have leadership responsibilities for the offices of Strategic Partnership, Corporate-Higher Education Programs, Military Education and Graduate Studies, and Mentor Support Services. Caro will assist the provost in implementing strategic initiatives within the division that cross academic school lines. As a result of Caro accepting this new position, **Dr. Joseph Santora** has agreed to fill the role of acting dean for the School of Business and Management. Santora brings many years of effective higher education experience as a faculty member and as an administrator. His many publications include articles on nonprofit and for-profit businesses, and he has participated in several international forums dealing with business and management topics. A search for a permanent dean is underway.
- **Dr. Marcus Tillery** has stepped down as dean of the School of Applied Science and Technology. **Thomas Devine**, currently assistant dean within the School, will serve as acting dean in Tillery's absence. Devine brings a wealth of experience from the utility industry and higher education. His leadership will maintain the School's strategic direction and innovative approach to applied science and technology education. Tillery has agreed to continue working on several important projects as a consultant.
- **Dr. Joseph Youngblood II** is now dean of The John S. Watson School for Public Service. As dean of this new school, Youngblood will be creating innovative educational opportunities for individuals who work in the public service sector. This is an exciting new venture for the College and the Division of Academic Affairs looks forward to supporting Youngblood in his efforts. The Watson Institute for Public Policy will continue to operate within the Division of Public Affairs with Dr. Youngblood as executive director.

Ann Prime-Monaghan is now assistant vice provost, General Education & Learning Outcomes. She has effectively led the College in its learning outcomes effort and strongly positioned it to continue moving forward in this important endeavor. As part of this transformation efforts, the general education core will take on a decidedly outcomes centered focus, thus Prime-Monaghan has been asked to work on integrating the change in general education with the College's learning outcomes activities.

"All of these changes should make the College a stronger academic institution and position us for continued growth and more effective services to our hardworking and dedicated students," said **Bill Seaton**, provost and vice president.

College Unveils New Web Site

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Aside from the new graphic design and content management system, the most notable new feature of the site is its information-based architecture, which is largely focused on developing prospective students into current students.

This architecture also focuses on current students, alumni and donors.

The architecture consists of primary navigation, which is boldly reflected on the home page; local navigation, which appears on interior pages as the burgundy links on the right-hand side of the screen; gateway navigation, which appears on the homepage; tactical navigation, which enables users to take quick action; bread-crumbling, which appears on interior pages and enables users to quickly return to previously viewed sections or pages; and related links, which appear on interior pages and enable users to access links directly related to the programs they are viewing.

Making Edits & Adding Content

The College also implemented a new content management system and a slightly modified process for staff to request changes and edits that need to be made on the site. For now, all changes to the site should be sent to Power-Barnes at mpowerbarnes@tesc.edu.

Starting on Nov. 1, change or edit requests to the Web site will be made by submitting help desk tickets in myEdison, but with the following changes:

- If the change is content or copy related, such as information that has to be updated or added, or if new pages or links have to be added for new programs or initiatives, under "Department" please select "Marketing." When this is done, the topic will automatically show "Website Updates."
- If the issue is related to our course directories and databases of Thomas Edison State College courses and tests that appear on the site, under "Department" please select "MIS" and then "Website Maintenance" in the topic bar.

Additional protocol guidelines regarding making updates to the Web site will be distributed in the near future.

For additional information about making changes to the Web site, please contact Marie R. Power-Barnes at extension 2050 or mpowerbarnes@tesc.edu.

The Teaching Tribe

The area was abuzz with activity as the Awakan tribe planned its strategy; nearby the Richlanders did the same — both tribes knew the significance of their plan; their children's futures were at stake.

Although it was only a simulation exercise, the teachers and aids involved in the three-day Cultural Competency and English Language Learners Summer Institute were taking it all very seriously. They were participants in a pilot project that was designed to help position early childhood teachers to examine their own cultural fabric, biases and the world of English language learners from different cultural perspectives. Sponsored and funded by the Family Strengths Associates, Inc.; New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development; and **The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State College**, the Institute was made possible by a \$9,000 grant.

"The number of children who come from homes where English is not the first language is increasing across New Jersey's classrooms," said **Ana I. Berdecia**, senior fellow/director of the Center for the Positive Development of Urban Children at the Watson Institute of Thomas Edison State College. "Teachers often feel they do not possess the skill set to address the intersection between culture and language. Higher education institutions and professional development opportunities seldom address these issues in a way that impacts classroom practices due to their emphasis on content only. This Institute addressed those cultural issues."



Let them eat cake! Vice Presidents **John Thurber**, **Penny Brouwer**, **Bill Seaton** and **Michael Scheiring** honored College President **Dr. George A. Pruitt** with a commemorative plaque recognizing his 25 years of service during the State of the College on Sept. 19. A celebration followed with cake and breakfast fare.

Lunch-N-Learn

The School of Applied Science and Technology Discusses New Initiatives

At the Institutional Lunch and Learn in August, College staff learned how the School of Applied Sciences and Technology will be positioning its programs with growing job markets and how current programs dovetail to careers in the fields of technology and applied sciences.

The School specializes in providing learners already in the fields of science and technology with carefully tailored programs that buttress their current skills and convert their expertise to college credits.

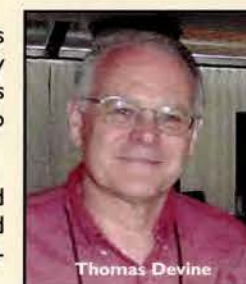
It's a program structure especially unique and appealing to those who have already acquired work experience, licensing, training and certifications in their fields.

Learners from specific areas such as military and security, the energy and power industry, civil engineering and construction, fire protection, aviation support, information technology, environmental safety and allied health

fields are being targeted. Anticipated shortages of managers in the coming years will also have some of these industries clamoring for a partner to provide as seamless a hurdle as possible from job skills to college credits for their employees.

"Growing civic attention to quality control and infrastructure such as bridges will result in job expansion in those areas as well," said **Tom Devine**, who has recently been appointed acting dean of the school. "Our current alliances with Energy Providers Coalition for Education, which is sponsored by the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning and PSE&G, as well as area community colleges and high schools, will be expanded and additional partnerships will be pursued in those areas."

For more information on the Lunch & Learn series, please contact Human Resources at hr@tesc.edu.



New Staff



Karen L. Bitner has been appointed administrative assistant in the School of Professional and Continuing Studies. Bitner is located on the 3rd floor of the Canal Banks Building and may be reached at extension 2217.



Michelle Leonard has been appointed human resources assistant/payroll in the Office of Human Resources. Leonard is located on the 1st floor of Kuser Mansion and may be reached at extension 4135.



Greta O'Keefe has been appointed administrative assistant to the dean in the School of Nursing. O'Keefe is located on the 3rd floor of the Townhouses and may be reached at extension 3277.



Lori R. Parker has been appointed test development specialist in the Office of Learning Assessment. Parker is located on the 3rd floor of the Townhouses, and may be reached at extension 2280.

Staff Activities

Dr. Sonja A. Eveslage, associate vice provost, and **Dr. Esther Taitzman**, former assistant vice provost and director, Graduate and Undergraduate Programs in the School of Business and Management, had their paper, "Graduate Portfolio Assessment – Is the time Now?" published in *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, ACHE, volume 55, Spring 2007.

Dr. Mary Ellen Caro, (pictured on left) executive vice provost, Office of Provost and Vice President, and **Sylvia G. Hamilton**, vice provost, Office of Strategic Partnerships, provided information to the attendees of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) at its recent 2007 National Convention and Expo held in Philadelphia. The exhibit was part of Thomas Edison State College's focus on CPAs and highlighted the launch of the BSBA - Accounting program, which is now completely online, and the Bachelor's – Master's CPA track.



Dr. Mary Ellen Caro and Sylvia Hamilton

Dr. Ann Marie Senior, director of the Office of Institutional Research & Outcomes Assessment, facilitated a roundtable discussion at the 13th Annual New Jersey Association of Institutional Research conference that was held at Mercer County Community College in April 2007. The topic of the roundtable discussion was "Monitoring Efficient and Timely Customer Service Using Performance Standard Reports." **Ying Jiang**, staff assistant in the Office of Institutional Research and Outcomes Assessment, also attended.

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.