



Staff Newsletter of Thomas Edison State College • April 2009



Dr. George A. Pruitt

*"Despite these challenging circumstances, Thomas Edison State College will not compromise our academic integrity or our educational standards. We remain committed to providing the high-quality educational opportunities our students deserve."*

- Dr. George A. Pruitt  
President

## Dr. Pruitt Addresses Funding Cuts in NJ's 2010 Budget Proposal

*The following message was sent to all staff from Dr. George A. Pruitt on April 13 regarding the anticipated cuts to higher education included in the proposed FY 2010 state budget.*

On March 10, Gov. Jon Corzine unveiled his 2010 budget recommendations to the New Jersey State Legislature. The governor's budget message was sober and austere, calling for significant reductions in the state budget made necessary by declining revenues associated with the nation's economic downturn.

These are times that call for shared sacrifice, and Thomas Edison State College has certainly been affected. In response to anticipated continuing cuts in state support, the College is freezing the salaries of nonunion administrative personnel with managerial responsibilities, as well as consolidating the School of Professional and Continuing Studies into the John S. Watson School of Public Service.

We are closely monitoring discretionary expenditures as we continue to seek ways to increase efficiencies and productivity. The National Center on Higher Education Management Systems has already recognized New Jersey's public colleges as being among the most productive in the country, and we are committed to building on this record of effective management.

The economies achieved by these measures are being used to mitigate cuts and redeploy resources in response to the demands of a growing student body. The governor's recommendations include an additional 5-percent reduction in operating support (amounting to \$300,000 for Thomas Edison State College), as well as the withholding of funds to pay for a salary increase that will average 5.5-percent (amounting to \$549,285 for our College) mandated by the labor agreement negotiated by the state for employees who are members of bargaining units, which include a cost of living increase of 3.5 percent and incremental increases.

Taken together, the reduction in support and the withholding of salary-program funding results in what is essentially a cut of \$849,285, or approximately 15 percent of our original appropriation of \$5,357,000.

The College will not participate in the governor's recommended furlough program because there are legal, policy and procedural impediments unique to higher education that make this strategy impractical. Further, our students, through their tuition dollars, have paid for our services and they have a right to expect that they will be delivered.



One of my primary objectives is to ensure job security for everyone at the College. Therefore, I support the governor's efforts to seek an agreement to freeze bargaining unit members' salaries until such time as the state can provide the increased appropriations necessary to fund the negotiated increases.

The timing of these cuts is particularly unfortunate in that New Jersey public higher education has had its appropriations reduced for seven of the last 10 years. These cuts were being made even when the economy was strong and while other states were increasing investment in their colleges and universities. In real dollars, the budget recommendation before the legislature will take our appropriation back to where it was in 1997, when our enrollment was half of what it is today. The state has not made any investment in higher education facilities since 1988, again, placing us last in the nation in support for higher education infrastructure. The consequence is a system of public higher education that ranks near the bottom in the nation in its capacity to serve the higher education needs of its citizens.

According to the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, our state's eight traditional senior public colleges and universities received approximately 54,000 freshmen applications last fall for about 10,500 openings. The state cannot continue to deny educational opportunity for its citizens without sustaining irreparable harm to its human capital infrastructure, quality of life and economic future.

Despite these challenging circumstances, Thomas Edison State College will not compromise our academic integrity or our educational standards. We remain committed to providing the high-quality educational opportunities our students deserve.

I look forward to working with each of you to continue serving our students and carrying out our mission to provide collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults.

## Focus On: Lt. Col. Randolph Schwartz

When it comes to service, there are always a few individuals who truly stand out — **Lt. Col. Randolph "Randy" S. Schwartz** is one of them.

Schwartz, a systems coordinator in the Office of Management Information Systems who has been providing service to College staff, students and mentors for 14 years, recently retired from the U.S. Army Reserve after more than 33 years of dedicated service.

"The Army presented this boy from Trenton with many opportunities and challenged me to always try harder," said Schwartz. "By serving my country, I learned self-discipline, leadership skills and planning techniques. As an enlistee in the all-volunteer Army, I witnessed the transformation of a military devastated by poor judgment during the Vietnam War to the professional force you see today. While mobilized, I was proud and honored to help prepare the young men and women of our military for their deployments."

Recently, Schwartz was mobilized for a three- and a-half-year tour of active duty service to train commanders and their staff prior to deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan. It was that extended leave that was the impetus for the 'Above and Beyond' award that was bestowed upon the College.

"That award is given in limited numbers and presented annually by each local ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve) Committee," Schwartz explained. "It is designed to recognize those employers who have surpassed the legal requirements for granting leave for military duty."

Recognition, however, was not limited to the institution. **Drew (Hopkins)** and **Jim (Brossoie)** received the 'My Boss is a Patriot' Certificate of Appreciation. "ESGR awards this certificate on behalf of the Department of Defense," he added. "This nomination is used by ESGR as the basis for consideration to receive higher level awards."



Lt. Col. Randolph "Randy" Schwartz

Schwartz's military service began when he enlisted in 1975, while a senior at St. Anthony's High School in Hamilton. In 1978, Schwartz joined the N.J. Army National Guard as a radio repairman and soon was selected to attend Officer Candidate School. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1981. Assigned to the 1st Battalion 114th Infantry, he held numerous positions including scout platoon leader, rifle company commander and military intelligence officer.

In 1995, Schwartz joined the College and the U.S. Army Reserve. He was soon promoted to major and assigned to the 78th Battle Projection Group, where he became an expert in the use of the Army's many constructive computer simulations. His mobilization in 2004 supported Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Noble Eagle (ONE).

"At the College, I provide support and training to students, mentors and staff for the myEdison® portal and the Help Desk. I most enjoy helping a mentor or student who is at wits end. Sometimes it's the simplest task but they are just overwhelmed and need someone to listen and help."

A 2003 graduate of the College with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree, Schwartz observed, "Being a student here helps me understand students' and mentors' frustrations. I can honestly say things like 'I understand how you feel about this problem...' when I take their calls."

In his spare time Schwartz likes to cook, lift weights and ride his bike. "Since 2001, I've ridden in the MS150 five times to raise money for research on Multiple Sclerosis. That's a two-day ride of 150 miles from Camden to Ocean City, N.J., and back."

Schwartz resides in Hamilton with his wife of 16 years, Dorothy, who is currently a director with the N.J. State Comptroller. She is also a retired colonel from the N.J. Air National Guard and, Schwartz will be the first to tell you, "yes, she outranks me."

## Corporate Partner Recognized

United Parcel Service (UPS) was named as a winner at the 10th Annual Corporate University Xchange Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Corporate Learning at a gala on Feb. 25, 2009, at the University of Pennsylvania. UPS received the Exemplary Practice award in the category of Corporate/College Partnerships for its partnership with Thomas Edison State College.

The Corporate University Xchange Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Corporate Learning salute corporate and government learning organizations that create exciting, effective programs that result in measurable improvements in employee and business performance.



Pictured above (back row, from left) Anne Schwartz, vice president of United Parcel Services' Corporate Learning and Development; **Dr. David Grossman**, dean, School of Professional and Continuing Studies; **Sylvia G. Hamilton**, vice provost for Strategic Partnerships; (front row, from left), Pat Myers, United Parcel Services' corporate compensation manager; and **Dr. Mary Ellen Caro**, executive vice provost.

## Staff Activities



Senior program advisors **Todd Siben** and **Carla Colburn** attended the Region 2 NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) Conference, *On the Right Track with Advising!*, in Dover, Del., March 16-18. Siben has been selected as the New Jersey statewide representative to the NACADA National Board for a two-year term beginning in April 2009. He was officially introduced at the NACADA Regional conference on March 16, where he also presented a session called "Serving the Non-Traditional Adult Collegian – Benefits to Student, Institution and Employer." At the same conference, Colburn served as a member of two committees: Program Selection Committee and the Registration Committee. Furthermore, Colburn served as a member of the Proposal Review Committee in preparation for the National NACADA Conference, *Academic Advising: Deep in the Heart of Student Success*, which will be held in San Antonio, Texas, this fall.

**Dr. Garry M. Keel**, director of Academic Advising, Office of Learner Services, and former Neptune Township resident, was the guest speaker during the conclusion of Neptune Township's month-long Black History program on Feb. 28 at the Neptune High School performing arts center. Keel is a 1974 Neptune High School graduate and a 1999 Neptune High School Hall of Fame inductee.



Senior learner services representatives **Mary Beth Lynch** and **Kristin Lobasso** co-authored a presentation entitled "An Inside Look at High-Quality, High-Volume Transfer Credit Evaluation." Lynch presented at the Second Annual AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) Transfer Conference in Tampa, Fla. The theme of the conference was *Academic Mobility: Perspectives on the Future of Transfer*.

**Dr. Joseph C. Santora**, dean, School of Business and Management, recently had a featured article published in *Nonprofit World* (November-December 2008) entitled "How to build a framework for strategic analysis: It's all about trust."

## College Staff Explore Issues Vital to the Global Community

**Nia I. Abuwi**, program advisor, Office of Learner Services, and **Margaret Allan**, program assistant, Center for Academic Program Reviews, attended the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference of the United Nations Association of the United States (UNA-USA) on Feb. 6, at the U.N. in New York City. Dedicated to educating Americans about its role and mission, the UNA is committed to a new way of thinking institutionally about issues of vital importance to the global community.



Faculty and students from Monmouth University, Bergen County Community College, and Seton Hall University, among others, represented their respective UNA-USA chapters and posed concerns and questions to the distinguished panel. The work of the UNA-USA and the participation and involvement of students in these important issues are inspiring Abuwi and Allan to establish a local chapter.

Some of the work of the UNA chapters includes working toward the fulfillment of the UN General Assembly's Millennium Development Goals to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development.



## New Staff



**Carl Carter** has been appointed as head clerk in the Office of the Registrar. Carter is located on the 1st floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 3120.



**Jeronica Lawrence** has been appointed as graduation auditor in the Office of the Registrar. Lawrence is located on the 1st floor of the Academic Center and may be reached at extension 3377.

## Staff Brings Easter to Local Children

AFT Local 4277 thanks College staff for its generous contributions to the Children's Home Society of New Jersey Easter project. With the items collected, the local was able to make more than 25 baskets for area foster children served by the organization.

Special thanks goes to helpers (pictured from the left)

**Maureen Leonard, Kristin Lobasso, Cheryl**

**Dienes, Christine Carter, Mary Beth Lynch, Cecelia Blasina and Nancy Broglie**, who prepared and delivered the baskets.



## Leadership New Jersey Seminar on Government and Politics

On March 18-19, Leadership New Jersey (LNJ) participants kicked off a two-day seminar on government and politics in Thomas Edison State College's Prudence Hall. Gov. Jon Corzine was on hand to share his views on the state's fiscal condition and entertained questions from the audience, which detailed the priorities currently guiding his administration.

Joining Gov. Corzine were Thomas G. Dallessio, executive director of Leadership New Jersey, and Phil Salerno, co-vice

chair of Leadership New Jersey Board of Trustees and the chair of LNJ Graduate Organization.

**Dr. Joseph Youngblood II**, director, The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy, opened the program with welcoming remarks. Staff in attendance were **Pamela Sims Jones** (LT '02), director of Leadership Trenton; **Constance South**, associate fellow, Watson Institute; and **Dosiree Mims** (LT '08) confidential assistant for the Vice President for Public Affairs and chair of the Leadership Trenton Alumni Association.



*Pictured from the left are Phil Salerno, Gov. Jon Corzine and Thomas Dallessio at the Leadership New Jersey seminar held at Thomas Edison State College.*

## MIS Will Soon Fix Your PC Remotely

**GoToAssist** is a new support tool recently implemented by the Office of Management Information Systems (MIS). The tool allows MIS staff to connect to your PC remotely and assist in resolving PC-related issues. Here is how it works: 1.) you submit a Help Desk ticket; 2.) MIS staff determines if the best way to resolve the ticket is to actually view what is occurring on your PC; and 3.) you receive an e-mail from MIS inviting you to connect to **GoToAssist** where your case can be resolved. The e-mail invitation will include a link to download software the first time MIS uses this tool on your PC. It will also provide a support key which allows you to connect to your specific support session. Once connected, MIS staff can take control of your PC and work with you in resolving the problem. When the session is complete, the connection is closed and MIS no longer has access to your PC.

**GoToAssist** is anticipated to add efficiency and reduce response time in resolving PC issues. Look for your invitation the next time you request MIS support.

**From:** Barbara Sandstrom  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 10, 2009 8:53 AM  
**To:** training1  
**Subject:** GoToAssist Express Invitation

Please join my session at  
<https://www.fastsupport.com/780323792>  
Support Key: 780-323-792

*An e-mail message similar to this will prompt you to connect to GoToAssist*