

Invention

FALL 2014

THE MAGAZINE OF THOMAS EDISON STATE COLLEGE

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Dear Alumni, Students and Friends,

Thomas Alva Edison said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

This issue of *Invention* is dedicated to the Class of 2014, which includes more than 3,300 self-directed, adult learners who never gave up on their goals and juggled their careers and family commitments to earn a degree from Thomas Edison State College.

We are honored to introduce you to Iris Arrington '14, who earned a Master of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in Clinical Trials Management. Arrington shares how her experience as a student in our program prepared her for professional growth and how her graduate mentors provided valuable insight about the clinical trials industry.

Also in this issue, we meet Robert James Towers '14, who is one of only a few graduates to complete his entire Bachelor of Arts degree using only our College's online courses (and no transfer credits). He discusses how our courses fit his busy schedule, which included caring for his young son.

We are also honored to share stories and photos from our 42nd Annual Commencement, which took place on Sept. 20 at the Sun National Bank Center in Trenton. Our annual commencement is the greatest day of the year for Thomas Edison State College. At this year's ceremony, we were honored to hear inspiring speeches from graduate Matthew Hayes '10, '14, who earned two degrees this year, and U.S. Rep. Rush Holt, a longtime supporter of higher education and our College.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Invention*.

Sincerely,

Dr. George A. Pruitt
President

College Mourns the Loss of Dr. Christine M. Rosner

Thomas Edison State College mourns the loss of Christine M. Rosner, RN, PhD, associate dean for Undergraduate Programs in the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing, who died suddenly in her sleep on Aug. 11. She was 57.

A resident of Dresher, Pa., Rosner joined Thomas Edison State College in October 2012. She was responsible for the School's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs, including the RN-BSN and Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN programs, and played an integral role in designing the new nursing simulation laboratory that is being built in the College's Nursing Education Center. Prior to joining the College, Rosner served as dean of the School of Nursing and Allied Health Professions at Holy Family University, where she also served as a professor.



Christine M. Rosner, RN, PhD

"Christine loved working at the College," recalled Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. "She was an extraordinary talent and a wonderful part of the College's nursing family who loved

participating in simulation sessions with our accelerated BSN students. She truly had a passion for undergraduate nursing education. This is a tremendous and devastating loss. We will miss her dearly."

The College recently established the Dr. Christine M. Rosner Clinical Excellence Award in her honor for graduates of the Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program.

Rosner received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Gwynedd-Mercy College. She completed a master's degree in Nursing of Children from the University of Pennsylvania and a PhD in Nursing Research and Theory Development from New York University. Rosner was a member of the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association and the Delta Tau Chapter-at-Large, Sigma Theta Tau International. She was also

on the executive committee of the Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Protestant Home.

She is survived by her husband, Gary, and their children, Sarah and Andrew.

"Students in this program are highly motivated individuals who want to enter the nursing profession to provide the best care for their patients. We are incredibly proud of our graduates and the extraordinary work they completed."

> Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing

Graduates of Accelerated BSN Program Honored

The W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing celebrated the 2014 graduates of the Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) Program at a pinning ceremony held on Sept. 18 at Thomas Edison State College.



(First row, from left) Susan Banon, Amy Mittelstaedt, Jacqueline Keehn and Leslie Rodrigues. (Second row, from left) Kristin Tilbury, Lindsey Smith, Lily Boros, Uliana Stoiko, Charmi Patel and Omolola Obeni.

"Students in this program are highly motivated individuals who want to enter the nursing profession to provide the best care for their patients," said Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing. "We are incredibly proud of our graduates and the extraordinary work they completed."

The Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program is an intense, one-year program designed for students who possess a non-nursing bachelor's degree and want to become registered nurses. The pinning ceremony signifies a ceremonial entrance into the nursing profession.

At this year's ceremony, the School honored the late Dr. Christine M. Rosner, associate dean for Undergraduate Programs, by establishing the Dr. Christine M. Rosner Clinical Excellence Award. Rosner, who passed away suddenly in August, worked closely with students, especially during their clinical sessions in the College's simulation laboratory.

TD Charitable Foundation Awards \$15,000 Grant to Watson Institute



TD Charitable Foundation, the charitable giving arm of TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank®, has awarded a \$15,000 grant to support a mentoring program based in The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy of Thomas Edison State College that helps teachers become more culturally aware of students from diverse backgrounds.

The N.J. Cultural Competency and English Language Learners Summer Institute (ELL), launched in 2007, is coordinated by the Watson Institute's Center for the Positive

(Front row, from left) Ana I. Berdecia, senior fellow/director, Watson Institute's Center for the Positive Development of Urban Children, and Barbara George Johnson, executive director, The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy. (Second row from left) John P. Thurber, vice president for Public Affairs at Thomas Edison State College; Dominique Goss, community relations manager and vice president at TD Bank; and Joseph P. Tredinnick, regional vice president at TD Bank.



Development of Urban Children. The program trains and mentors early childhood educators from across the state, helping them to create environments that affirm and celebrate the diverse cultural heritage and languages of their students.

"We are honored to receive this vital funding from the TD Charitable Foundation," said Ana I. Berdecia, MEd, center director. "The funding continues to be crucial in our ability to support more teachers who are working with a diverse population of children and families across New Jersey by giving them the tools and strategies to become culturally and linguistically responsive educators."

Funding from the TD Charitable Foundation has supported the mentor-based portion of the program since 2008. Since it began, ELL has trained and mentored 141 early childhood educators working in 75 classrooms throughout New Jersey, enabling them to create environments that affirm and celebrate the cultural diversity of their students.



2014 Accelerated BSN graduate Uliana Stoiko (center), first recipient of Dr. Christine M. Rosner Clinical Excellence Award, with Dr. Filomela Marshall, dean of the W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing, and Gary Rosner, husband of the late Dr. Christine M. Rosner.

The award recognizes students from the accelerated BSN program who demonstrate excellence in the clinical setting through compassion, critical thinking and professionalism. The 2014 recipient of the award is Uliana Stoiko, of Philadelphia, Pa.

"Uliana was eager to learn new skills that improved the care of her patients," said Marshall. "We are proud that she is the first recipient of this award."

College Anchors New Statewide Prior Learning Assessment Network

New Jersey Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno was joined by two graduates of Thomas Edison State College to announce the launch of the New Jersey Prior Learning Assessment Network (NJ PLAN) pilot program at Thomas Edison State College on July 17.



The College is serving as the anchor institution of the initiative, which will allow students to earn college credits by taking tests or preparing portfolios of their work that documents their college-level knowledge. Additional institutions taking part in NJ PLAN are New Jersey City University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rowan University, Essex County College, Ocean County College and Salem County College.

The experience was tremendous. This is a good program and I am very, very glad to see more institutions offering prior learning assessment.

> Rolando Gorostiza '07

"Securing a prosperous future for New Jersey depends on our ability to embrace new and innovative ways to extend the benefits of a higher education to as many of our residents as possible, and the NJ PLAN pilot program helps achieve that important goal," said Guadagno. "In addition to making it easier for those already in the workforce to get a head start when returning to college; NJ PLAN will translate their unique experiences and skills into college credits that will save time, hold down college costs and reduce student loan debt."

Guadagno thanked Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State College, for the institution's work in pioneering the concept of prior learning assessment over the years and for its leadership role in forming the NJ PLAN consortium.

"This is a win on every level and it started right here in Trenton and, more importantly, at Thomas Edison State College," she said. "I'd like to thank Dr. Pruitt for his work on this program and the institutions for taking part in this effort."

New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education Rochelle Hendricks said she is confident the program will be a success.

"NJ PLAN will help make colleges more accessible and affordable – and degrees more attainable," she said. "We are hopeful that other institutions will join the network, expanding the program's overall benefit and impact."

Rolando Gorostiza '07, of Riverside, N.J., and Nick Probola '14, of Hamilton, N.J., lauded prior learning assessment as a method of earning credit for adult students with college-level knowledge acquired outside the traditional classroom.

"I completed 43 credits through prior learning assessment portfolios at Thomas Edison State College, which was an efficient way of earning credits by documenting the college-level knowledge I had acquired throughout my career," noted Gorostiza, a senior manager, Corporate Technical Packaging at L'Oreal USA in Clark. "The experience was tremendous. This is a good program and I am very, very glad to see more institutions offering prior learning assessment."

To learn more about the consortium, visit www.njplan.org.



Rolando Gorostiza '07 discussed his experiences completing credits using prior learning assessment at the launch of the New Jersey Prior Learning Assessment Network at Thomas Edison State College.

"Being awarded the NRC scholarship grant is recognition of the quality of our programs and will remove the barrier of cost for many qualifying students."

> Dr. John O. Aje, dean of the School of Applied Science and Technology

College Receives NRC Scholarship Funds

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has awarded more than \$194,000 in scholarship funds to Thomas Edison State College to benefit students enrolled in undergraduate programs related to the nuclear industry.

"Being awarded the NRC scholarship grant is recognition of the quality of our programs and will remove the barrier of cost for many qualifying students," said Dr. John O. Aje, dean of the School of Applied Science and Technology. "This allows the School of Applied Science and Technology to provide affordable educational opportunities that attract and retain students who otherwise might not be able to enroll in our programs."

Students enrolled in the College's undergraduate programs in Nuclear Engineering Technology, Nuclear Energy Engineering Technology, Electronic Systems Engineering Technology, Electronic Engineering Technology and Radiation Protection/Health Physics as well as graduates of the bachelor's program in Nuclear Engineering Technology interested in the second degree Nuclear Energy Engineering program (ABET accredited) are eligible to apply for the scholarships. In addition, students and graduates of nuclear-related programs at community colleges affiliated with the Nuclear Uniform Curriculum Program who apply to Thomas Edison State College are also eligible for the NRC scholarships.

The College partnered with the NRC to create degree templates aligned with the Nuclear Uniform Curriculum Program, an industry-led partnership involving community colleges designed to prepare students to enter the nuclear workforce. As part of this effort, the College has developed articulation agreements with community colleges throughout the country that are participating in the program.

Under the two-year NRC scholarship program, the College will award 25 \$2,000 scholarships and 10 \$4,000 scholarships per year, based on the need and academic performance of qualified students. The application period for the scholarships opened on Nov. 1.

Dr. Richard Coe, assistant dean in the School of Applied Science and Technology, said the scholarship will help ensure that the College's nuclear energy-related programs continue to prepare its graduates, a number of which have already advanced to key positions in the industry.


"There is a conspicuous need in the field to prepare the next generation as educational standards are becoming more exacting and a surge of managerial-level staff are reaching retirement," he said. "The College has always been a great fit for industry employees who already possess military training and professional licenses and certifications. Our ongoing collaboration with the NRC and this latest scholarship funding will help us to continue to meet the educational and career needs of our students."

To view complete eligibility requirements of the scholarship program, visit www.tesc.edu/nrcscholarship.



Dr. John O. Aje, dean of the School of Applied Science and Technology





Iris Arrington '14

TRIAL RUNNER

IRIS ARRINGTON KNEW AT AN EARLY AGE THAT SHE WANTED A CAREER IN THE LABORATORY SCIENCES WHERE SHE COULD HELP PEOPLE.



PRA HEALTH SCIENCES

MSAST

Clinical Trials Management

TRIAL

RUNNER

When she was a sophomore at Central Dauphin High School in Harrisburg, Pa., Arrington's science teacher nominated her for a forensic science certificate program at Shippensburg University, which she completed. She quickly developed a keen interest in science and became a certified nurse assistant (CNA) after graduating high school.

"It was second nature for me to care for people," she said. "It was physically demanding, but being a CNA gave me perspective and helped me realize that I enjoyed caring for patients and spending time with them."

At the time, Arrington was the mother of two young daughters and knew she had to continue her education. In 2006, she enrolled at Harrisburg University of Science and Technology. As a single mother with a full-time job, Arrington completed a Bachelor of Science degree in biotechnology and biosciences in 2011.

During her undergraduate experience, Arrington discovered that she possessed good technical skills and had a passion for lab sciences. In 2013, she was hired by Merck & Co., Inc. as a lab technician.

"The experience at Merck just blew my mind," recalled Arrington. "It convinced me that I wanted to manage clinical trials as a career. I also realized that only having a bachelor's degree would prevent me from moving up at the company. I knew that I had to get a master's degree if I was going to make it anywhere in the field."

Arrington started looking at graduate programs focused on clinical trials, but could not find a program that matched her career goals. She eventually found Thomas Edison State College during a Google search and decided to enroll in the Master of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree program in Clinical Trials Management.

"As far as clinical trials management programs go, most of what I found was focused mostly on legal or theoretical aspects," said Arrington. "The program at Thomas Edison State College really breaks it down to ethics, procedures and other real-world applications that are aligned with how trials are managed. Content in one course builds on the previous course, which was very helpful to me as a student."

Arrington, who completed the program in late 2013 and participated in the College's 42nd Annual Commencement Ceremony on Sept. 20, said her favorite part of earning her master's degree was interacting with her mentors.

"The professors come from all over the industry," she said. "They do not just teach the material in the courses. They

actually work in the field as practitioners and provide excellent information on the industry. The networking between mentors and students and the content and relevancy of the courses was amazing. This is what sets Thomas Edison State College above everyone else."

"I think there are huge opportunities in the industry, including drug development and pharmaceuticals," she said. "For younger candidates and those in transition who want to enter the field, it is important that they gain the expertise or the credential and add it to their resume."

manages approximately 40 study sites around the country. She said she is grateful to have found a career where she can blend her interest in laboratory sciences with caring for patients.

"In our work, it is critical that quality supersedes everything else to protect the patients," said Arrington. "This is the

"The program at Thomas Edison State College really breaks it down to ethics, procedures and other real-world applications that are aligned with how trials are managed. Content in one course builds on the previous course, which was very helpful to me as a student."

> Iris Arrington '14

One of those mentors was Dr. Kathleen Frenia Cohen, director of Operations, Late Phase Services, at PRA Health Sciences. Cohen helped build some of the courses in the College's clinical trials management graduate program and continues to serve as a mentor in the program today.

Cohen explained that a bachelor's degree is required to enter the clinical trials management field, but often hiring managers look for one additional credential or direct experience in clinical trials that demonstrates a candidate possesses the knowledge they will need to be successful in drug development.

In addition to discussing course work with Cohen, Arrington asked her for professional advice about her career. Cohen eventually directed Arrington to an opportunity at PRA Health Sciences and said her drive to succeed made her stand out among other applicants.

"Iris is unique. She is very energetic and has a desire to advance professionally," said Cohen. "Not only was I impressed with her in the courses, but also because she was the first student I ever had with the ambition to ask me for advice about professional opportunities and development within PRA Health Sciences."

As a site management associate for PRA Health Sciences, Arrington currently

common core in the clinical trials management field, especially those in the lab and analyzing data in the trials."

She is currently enrolled in a Master of Jurisprudence program at Widener University School of Law that focuses on global compliance and regulatory law. Her inspiration for enrolling in the program was simple: to be a better clinical trials manager.

"Clinical trials take place all over the world and the field has a lot of international compliance issues that I want to master," she said. "I know U.S. law very well and feel this program will give me a complete knowledge that will help me professionally."

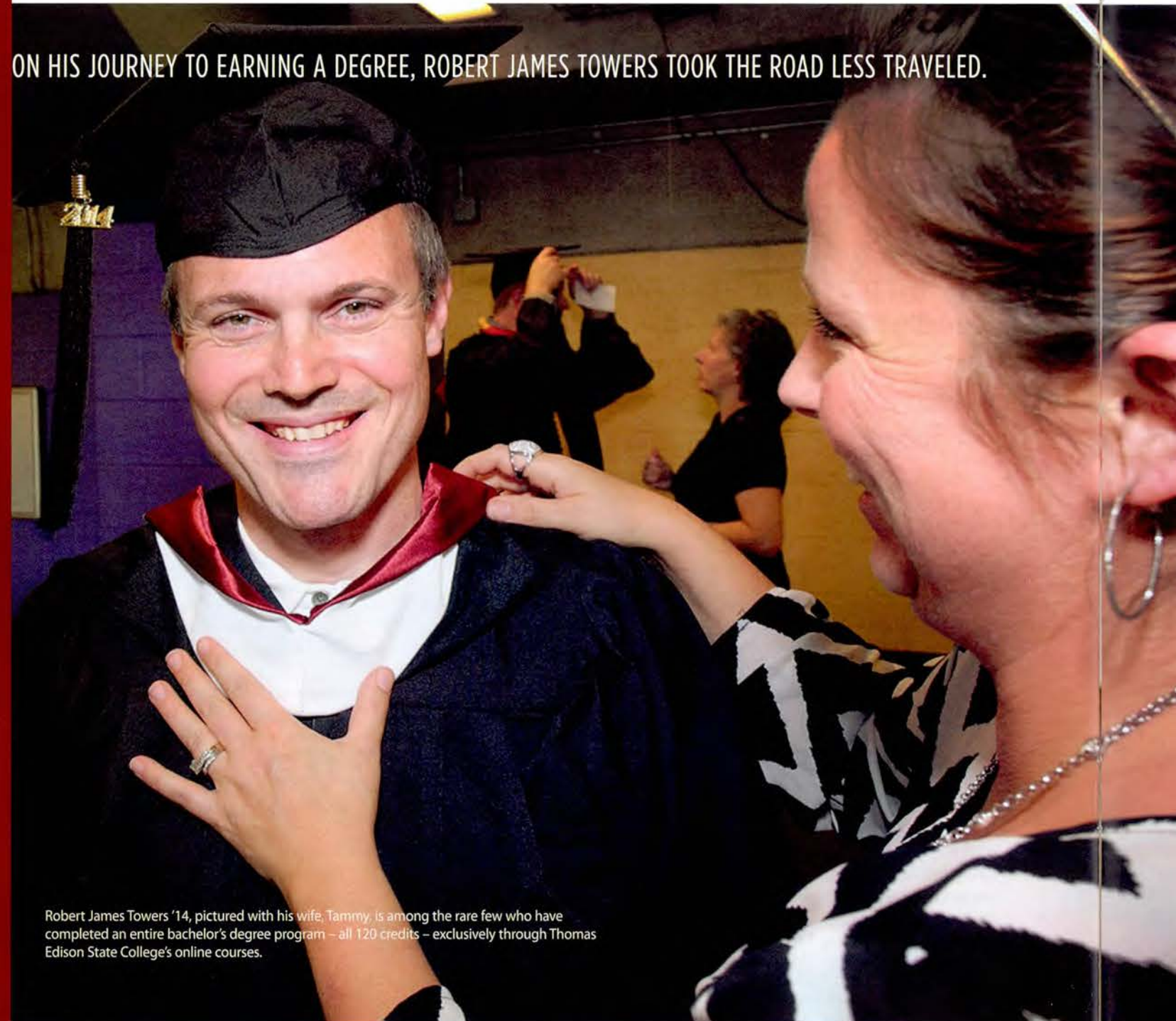


Iris Arrington '14 at Thomas Edison State College's 42nd Annual Commencement ceremony.



Starting from Scratch

ON HIS JOURNEY TO EARNING A DEGREE, ROBERT JAMES TOWERS TOOK THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED.



Robert James Towers '14, pictured with his wife, Tammy, is among the rare few who have completed an entire bachelor's degree program – all 120 credits – exclusively through Thomas Edison State College's online courses.

Alumni Profile

"Robert is one of the few students we encounter who complete all 120 credits taking our online courses and without transferring credits earned at other institutions."

*> Juliette Punchello,
director of Academic Advising*

When his employer closed the lab where he worked, Towers found plenty of company in the sluggish job market. He was a rarity, however, among adult learners.

Armed with a high school diploma and a solid work ethic, Towers had managed to land a sequence of successful positions as a biopharmaceutical lab technician. But after two of his most recent employers downsized, re-entering the industry was becoming more problematic.

"For the second time in my life I held a job that I figured I would remain in for the rest of my working days," said Towers. "That is, until my last facility closed and I was unemployed."

Thomas Edison State College would help him change course, but, unlike the majority of students, Towers started his degree program with no transfer credits. He earned all 120 credits toward his Bachelor of Arts degree in social sciences by completing the College's online courses in a little more than three years.

Only three to five of the nearly 3,400 students certified for graduation in 2013 took a similar path.

"Robert is one of the few students we encounter who complete all 120 credits taking our online courses and without transferring credits earned at other institutions," said Juliette Punchello, director of Academic Advising. "Not only did he earn his degree while maintaining a strong grade point average, but he did it while caring for a baby as his spouse worked."

Towers said his resolve stemmed from the realization that biopharmaceutical industry standards are now mandating that applicants possess a college degree. He heard about Thomas Edison State College when he began researching his degree options.

"I had already considered TESC and a friend who was enrolled in courses showed me what it was all about," said Towers, who completed his degree in 2014. "I was initially skeptical about the online course structure, but, after more research, I became drawn to the idea of taking courses at home. I knew that it could be a good fit for me."

Towers said the modular structure of online courses worked well with his schedule and learning style.

"The course structure was perfect for the type of person I am and the life I live," said Towers. "With my wife's support, I was able to take courses full time."

In addition to his love for learning, Towers said he enjoys spending as much time as he can with his wife, Tammy, and his son, Grayson.

"I enjoy teaching my son new things and am an avid bird watcher, coin and fossil collector, and enjoy reading anything that has to do with science fiction or fantasy," Towers explained. "I also love to write poetry and short stories and hope to one day publish a book that I have been working on for many years."

Towers and his family live in Bethlehem, Pa.

Robert James Towers '14



Thomas Edison State College

CELEBRATES ITS

42nd

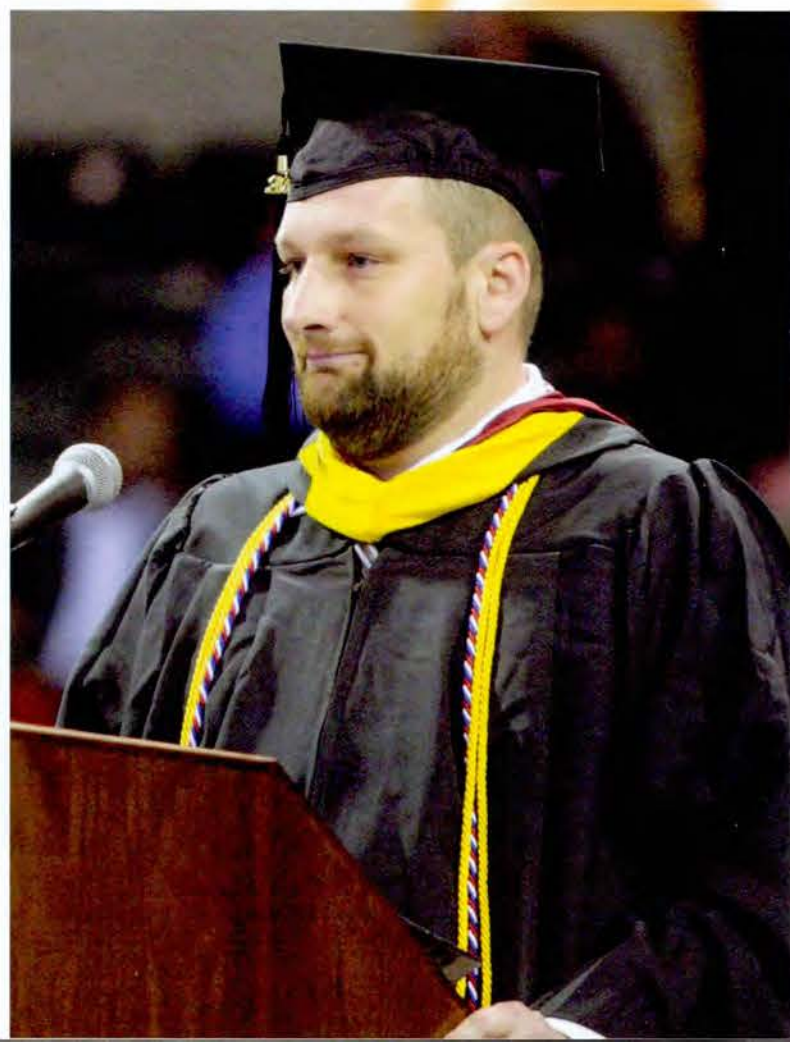
ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

Thomas Edison State College celebrated its 42nd Annual Commencement on Saturday, Sept. 20, at the Sun National Bank Center, where nearly 600 graduates from 33 states around the country as well as Japan and the United Kingdom traveled to Trenton, N.J., to participate in the ceremony.

Matthew Hayes '10, '14, of Lake Jackson, Texas, gave the Response for Graduates and used a quote from Henry Ford to help remind his fellow classmates to stay focused on achieving their goals.

"Henry Ford said obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off of your goal," he said.

On behalf of the 2014 graduates, U.S. Navy veteran Matthew Hayes thanked College staff and family and friends for their support and challenged his fellow graduates to apply the same passion to their lives that they applied to the goal of earning their degrees. Hayes, who previously earned an Associate in Applied Science degree and a Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in 2010, completed the Nuclear Energy Engineering Technology Second Degree Program (ABET accredited) and his Master of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in 2014. He serves on the Industry Advisory Committee of the College's School of Applied Science and Technology.



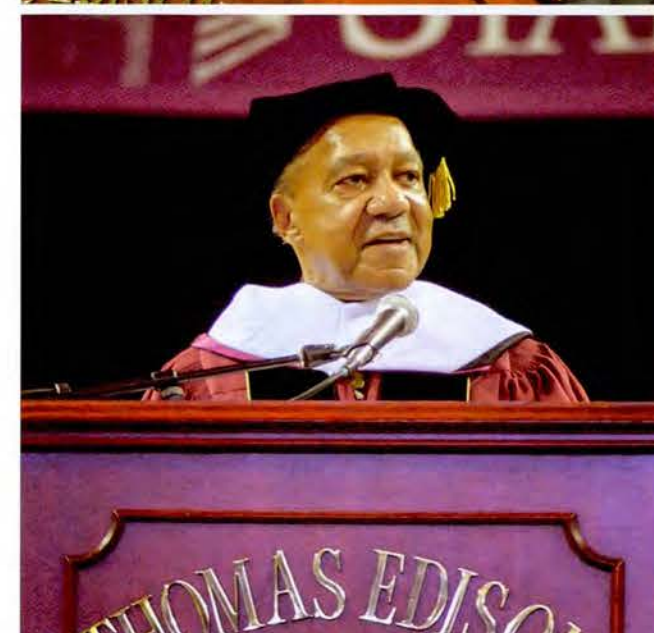
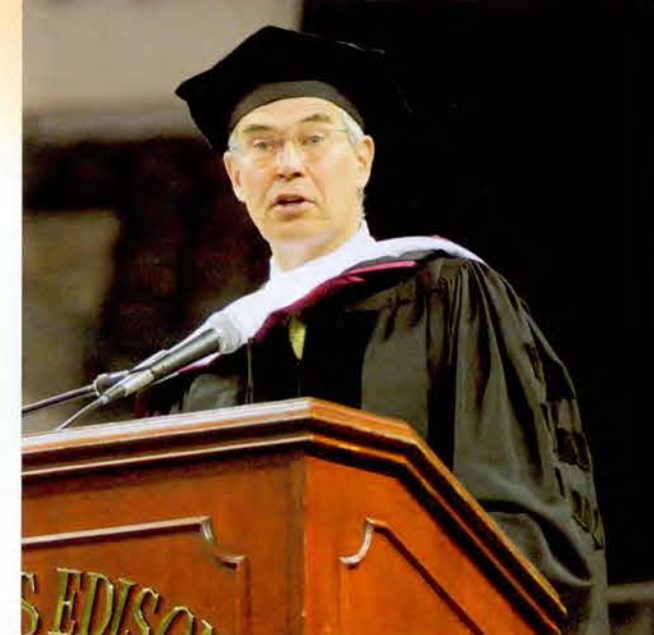
"For some of us, this degree is the ticket to a promotion, the ability to change careers or maybe just a personal aspiration that we set for ourselves long ago. Regardless of your personal driver, continue living your life with the same vigor, determination and focus that you have applied to achieve this monumental goal."

Hayes, who served for six years in the U.S. Navy, is the radiation protection manager at the South Texas Project Nuclear Operations Company.

On behalf of the graduates, he thanked College staff and family and friends who provided the support needed to earn their degrees.

"You have helped guide and mentor us through our schedules, our courses and our lives," said Hayes. "To our families and friends, we thank you for encouraging us. You picked up the slack in other areas of our lives. You supported us through tough deadlines, and you loved us while we juggled conflicting priorities. To all of you, we say thank you."

Hayes earned two degrees in 2014. He earned a 3.8 grade point average while completing a Bachelor of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in Nuclear Energy Engineering Technology and 4.0 grade point average while earning a Master of Science in Applied Science and Technology degree in Technical Studies.



The College awarded honorary degrees to U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (D-12) and Princeton architect E. Harvey Myers. Holt (top photo), who will step down from Congress in January, lauded the College for its unique model and asked graduates to think like scientists and look for evidence when trying to solve problems in their personal and professional lives. Myers (bottom photo) is the longest serving member of the College's Board of Trustees and thanked the College for honoring his work on behalf of the institution, which began in 1983. He plans to retire from the board later this year.





The College awarded two honorary degrees at the event, including one to U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ 12th) and one to Princeton, N.J., architect E. Harvey Myers, a long-time member of the College's Board of Trustees.

Holt, who currently serves on the Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Committee on Natural Resources, recognized the uniqueness of the Thomas Edison State College model.

"Thomas Edison's degrees are different because Thomas Edison's students are different. The degree is more of a certification of what you have accomplished" he said. "That's what a college should be about - learning to learn. More than most groups of college students, you are lifelong learners. Perhaps Thomas Edison is closer to the ideal of higher education."

Holt challenged graduates to think about evidence differently and use evidence to measure the most important things in their lives.

"I urge you to step back and gain perspective. See whether, with all of your progress, you are measuring the right things and whether the mile markers going past you show that you are on the right road," he said.

"One of the hardest things in life is to balance the many things you want. Take a moment often to ask yourself: What gives me fulfillment? What are the questions we really want answered? What is the relevant evidence that will help me understand the answer? You don't have to be a scientist to think like a scientist, but I urge you to look for evidence that points to answers, not evidence that points to what you think already. Be open to evidence, especially evidence that can surprise you and confound your expectations."

This year marked the fifth year that Thomas Edison State College graduates wore gowns made from recycled plastic bottles and the fourth year where they had the opportunity to return the gowns to be recycled into other products.

The Class of 2014 included nearly 3,300 graduates. The College has awarded approximately 51,000 degrees to nearly 47,000 graduates since it began providing flexible, high-quality, collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults in 1972.

To watch a video of the 42nd Annual Commencement, visit www.tesc.edu/commencement.



Steven Altomare BSAST '10

Steven L. Altomare was recently named the vice president of Pharmaceutical Services at Precis Engineering, Inc. He leverages nearly 36 years of pharmaceutical project leadership and engineering management experience to lead Precis' pharmaceutical compliance, consulting and support business. As a Precis vice president, Altomare directs pharmaceutical engineering services, including oversight of utility and support systems design, master planning, project management and client relations. In keeping with Precis' philosophy of hands-on, principal-led project leadership, Altomare actively engages in project design and delivery.



Barbara Dan BA '86

Barbara Dan has written a Civil War historical novel, *Petticoat Warrior*, released on Oct. 19, 2014, in eBook and trade paperback. The lively novel takes the reader onto the battlefields of Virginia, where young suffragette Dr. Sarah Boudinot spars with surgeon Dr. Gabe McKissack. In May 2014, Dan brought out her best selling historical novels again: *O'Rourke's Bride* and *MacGregor's Bride*, in eBook and trade paperback.

Dr. Ambrose E. Edebe BSBA '99

Dr. Ambrose E. Edebe published a new book, *The Manager's Handbook*. In this book, he instructs readers how to respond effectively to employee complaints, attract the best possible workers for their team, keep workers motivated and more. This is Edebe's third book and joins bestselling books: *Your Women Did Prophecy* and *Basic Principles and Practice of Business Administration*. In addition to book writing, he is a preacher, teacher and a regular speaker at national and international conferences. He is married to his wife, Josephine, and they have four children: Sarah, Mary, Elizabeth and Samuel.

Lana K. Eliopulos BA '09

Lana K. Eliopulos was recently named associate attorney at Davi Law Group, LLC. She graduated with her JD from Rutgers University School of Law. Prior to and during law school, Eliopulos was on active duty with the U.S. Air Force and served as a paralegal to several Judge Advocates Generals (JAGs); she has extensive experience in military law and



military criminal defense. Eliopulos remains a member of the Michigan Air National Guard where she assists military members with various legal issues including wills, powers of attorney and matters relating to family and criminal law.

Kristen A. Hammer BA '10

Kristen A. Hammer served as research assistant and editor for the newly-released book *Understanding the Guatemalan Patient: A Glossary of Spanish Medical Terms and Folk Medicine*. This pocket-sized reference represents the nine years her father, Steven Hammer, MD, spent in Guatemala as a medical missionary. Hammer, herself born in Guatemala, was delighted to collaborate on a project that has such potential for helping both the Guatemalan people and those who serve them. "The flexibility and affordability of Thomas Edison State College," said Hammer, "gave me freedom not only to get my BA at age 19, but also to continue to invest time in ventures I believe in, like this book."



Karen Hatcher BA '11

Karen Hatcher was recently hired by the Jefferson Awards Foundation, the nation's preeminent public service activation and recognition organization as its national director of Students In Action (studentsinaction.org), a high school leadership training program that develops tens of thousands of youth leaders across the country. Hatcher was previously executive director of Celebrate New Jersey (celebratenj.org) and creator of its successful classroom creative writing programs. She also recently served as the regional director for the New Jersey State Governor's Jefferson Awards program.

Donald M. Stevens BA '01

Donald M. Stevens, currently the senior pastor of Central United Methodist Church of Point Pleasant Beach, N.J., was recently ordained to the order of elders of the United Methodist Church. This honor came after 14 years of work and study that included earning a Master of Divinity degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in May 2004. Stevens and his family are also survivors of Super Storm Sandy in 2012 at which time he was only in his fourth month serving the community of Point Pleasant Beach. He oversaw recovery and rebuilding efforts for the church, his parsonage and others in the community, including distribution of more than two tons of relief supplies and the distribution of gift cards for residents rebuilding their homes.

Tom Johnson-Medland BA '95

Tom Johnson-Medland published his 13th book, *Bathed In Abrasion: Poems of Midlife and Erosion*. This is the first of three volumes planned to be written about the importance of 'place' in the lives of individuals. This volume deals with the tentative nature of life and the unique abrading qualities at midlife. The poems reach out into the natural world, death, war, aging and the inner life to paint the pathway of midlife. Johnson-Medland lives in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania with his wife, Glinda, and two sons, Zachary Aidan and Josiah Gabriel.



Dr. Robert McGee

AA '80, BA '82, ASM '83, BSBA '83

Robert McGee competed in the Taekwondo World Championships in Little Rock, Ark. He won five gold, one silver and two bronze medals in the 60+ age category.

Matthew Warner AA '05, BA '09

Matthew Warner, MBA, SPHR, was awarded the Distinguished Member Award of the Northwest Human Resource Management Association at its 76th Annual Conference, recognizing association members who have made significant contributions to the human resources profession, the community or the association.

Mark Zarrilli BA '11

Mark Zarrilli is the executive director of mortgage-backed (MBS) and asset-backed (ABS) securities, regional sales dealer and fixed income institutional salesman with Mizuho Securities USA, Inc. in its New York, New York office.

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