Commencement Week Honors Graduates

OCC awarded associate degrees to 1,668 graduates during the 45th Annual Commencement Ceremony held May 24 on the College’s main campus mall. The ceremony featured guest speaker Bob Martin, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and student speaker Joseph Hathaway, Class of 2012. Additional remarks were given by Dr. Jon H. Larson, OCC President; Carl V. Thulin, Chair, OCC Board of Trustees; and Keith Buscio, Chair, OCC Foundation.

Ceremony highlights included a performance by the Garden State Philharmonic Chorus, led by Maestro Anthony LaGruth. The Rev. James Occhipinti, Ocean County Police Chaplain, delivered the invocation and benediction, and the Ocean County Sheriff’s Department provided the Honor Guard.

OCC’s Nurses Pinning Ceremony preceded Commencement on May 22 and the annual Awards Ceremony took place on May 23. Both events were held in the Arts and Community Center Theatre.
Seniors Give Expo “Two Thumbs Up!”

The Second Annual Senior Living Expo was a huge success. Held in mid-March in the OCC Gymnasium, the Expo provided area businesses, community organizations, and the College an opportunity to showcase products and services to area senior citizens. For the second year, Community Medical Center was the Expo’s major sponsor and provided special displays, screenings, and informational handouts on many of its services. In addition, New Jersey Natural Gas and Harrogate co-sponsored the event. More than 80 vendors exhibited at the Expo, up 25% from last year. In addition, there was an increase of nearly 34% in community visitors; more than 600 senior citizens attended this year’s four-hour event. The highlight of the Expo was a wonderful array of food vendors who provided free samplings of their specialties. Entertainment was provided by the musical group “Pizazz.” A presentation on “Your Heart and You: Tips on Staying Healthy” was given by Community Medical Center’s John Merlino, DO, Cardiologist, and Donna Bonacurso, RN, Administrative Director of Nursing. Vendors also provided gift baskets and prizes for the event’s drawing. The event was a huge success with OCC staff receiving many positive comments from both the vendors and senior citizens.

Award-Winning Jewish Poet Visits OCC

In recognition of National Poetry Month in April, the Department of English and Literature sponsored a poetry reading and workshop by poet/critic/activist Alicia Suskin Ostriker. The event was organized by Heidi Sheridan, OCC Instructor of English & Literature, who is studying under the mentorship of Ostriker.

A noted author, Ostriker gives passionate appraisals of women’s place in literature with her poetry and criticism focusing mainly on Jewish identity, personal growth, and social justice. “I write as an American, a woman, a Jew, a mother, a wife, a lover of beauty and art, a teacher, an idealist, a skeptic. When I give poetry readings, my hope is to make people in my audience laugh and cry,” she explained.

Twice nominated for a National Book Award, Ostriker has received awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, New Jersey Arts Council, Poetry Society of America, and the Rockefeller Foundation. She is also a contributor of poems and essays to literary reviews and magazines.

Ostriker is Professor Emerita at Rutgers University, where she has taught for 30 years, and has held teaching positions in the Princeton University Creative Writing Program, and in the low-residency Poetry Master’s of Fine Arts Programs at Drew University and New England College. She has also given writing workshops in Midrash – an ancient genre involving the elaboration of Biblical stories – throughout the country and overseas.

Displaced Homemakers Program Thriving

Since 2007, OCC has been the recipient of a grant from the New Jersey Division on Women for the Displaced Homemakers Program of Ocean County. The program provides services to individuals to help them become economically self-sufficient after the loss of their primary source of income due to divorce, separation, death, or disability of a spouse.

The program, overseen by Eileen Burdge and Dr. Kathryn Pandolpho of Career, Employment and Counseling Services, has had a very productive year. Eighty-three clients are currently participating in the program including 13 who are enrolled at OCC with two being members of Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society. Additionally, two clients are enrolled in the Keenan-Ocean program and two clients are enrolled at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.
Spotlight: Environmental News

The Barnegat Bay Partnership “Goes Native”

How can we help protect and restore the Barnegat Bay and what can be done to make a difference in the quality of Ocean County’s eco-system? The Barnegat Bay Partnership (BBP), housed on OCC’s main campus, says one way to help is to incorporate native plants into landscaping. Why? Native plants help yards absorb storm water and filter out pollutants before they reach the bay. To provide information about plants indigenous to our area, the BBP published Going Native: A Guide to Landscaping with Native Plants in the Barnegat Bay Watershed.

“Native plants have evolved over thousands of years to be adapted to conditions in a particular region and to the other plants and animals around them,” explained Karen Walzer, BBP Public Outreach Coordinator. “They thrive in our local climate and soil and have natural defenses to plant diseases, harmful insects, and other pests. Because they are so well-adapted to our region, native plants require less water and fertilizer than non-natives, and are less likely to need pesticides. They also provide essential food, shelter, and nesting sites for birds, butterflies, and other native wildlife.”

Planting natives can also help improve water quality in the Barnegat Bay. “Native plant roots hold soil in place, increase infiltration of rainwater into the ground, and filter pollutants from our water. Since natives need less fertilizer and pesticides, they help reduce the amount of pollution that storm water can carry into our rivers and the bay,” Walzer added.

Going Native: A Guide to Landscaping with Native Plants in the Barnegat Bay Watershed includes a beautiful color chart of local native plants, as well as two sample garden designs, and a list of other useful resources. To get copies of the guide, email bbp@ocean.edu or download a copy from the BBP’s website, http://bbp.ocean.edu.

Stewardship Puts OCC in the Green

Following an on-campus water quality inspection in March, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) recognized OCC as an Environmental Steward for proactively helping improve the environment. The NJDEP established this environmental initiative in 2008 and defines environmental stewardship as activities that go beyond the minimum requirements for environmental compliance; participation in the program is voluntary. OCC received Environmental Steward recognition by completing several items within three categories: Green Building Implementation, Renewable Energy Use, and the Outreach Program.

Elsewhere, three state-of-the-art storm water basins on the Main Campus were dedicated in mid-June when Commissioner Bob Martin, NJDEP, joined with Ocean County Freeholders and College administrators. According to Martin, managing water runoff pollution is at the heart of the Barnegat Bay’s restoration program. These innovative storm drains use gravel wetlands technology to filter pollutants that can degrade water quality. The project was made possible through the work of the NJDEP and the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (NJEIT). According to Freeholder Gerry P. Little, the $10-million project was funded by the state as part of Governor Chris Christie’s 10-point plan for restoration of the Barnegat Bay, which was introduced in December 2010.
OCC Students Receive Financial Aid Assistance from Many Sources

Over 10,000 families, or 68% of OCC students, receive some type of financial aid. For every three students attending OCC, the Financial Aid Office was able to assist two students via federal and state grants, work-study, loans, and scholarships.

To assist families and students, the Financial Aid Office has hosted College Goal Sunday for the past four years. This national initiative provides assistance to low income and first generation students including help in completing the FAFSA form and distribution of financial aid information.

For the last three years, OCC has been awarded a federal College Access Challenge Grant, which fosters partnerships among federal, state, and local governments and philanthropic organizations. These partnerships are aimed at increasing the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Additionally, the Financial Aid Office offers workshops and open houses for the Educational Opportunity Fund program, Adults Back @ College, Displaced Homemakers, NJSTARS, veterans, and high school students.

Dr. Norma Betz, Director of Financial Aid, praises her staff for their diligence in assisting every student to achieve his/her educational goals by removing financial roadblocks. “I am very proud of the work they do and the support they provide to OCC’s students,” she said.

Dr. Jon H. Larson, OCC President, commended Dr. Betz for her leadership and staff success within the Financial Aid Office. “This is a remarkable achievement, one that is accomplished with efficiency, effectiveness, and respect for our students,” he added.

Web Surfing at OCC Just Got Easier

Looking for something on OCC’s website? From theatre tickets to job postings and from alumni news to rewards discounts, we’re proud to say that www.ocean.edu is your one-stop online-shop for finding just what you’re looking for. Check us out!

- Alumni (www.ocean.edu/alumni) allows you to connect with your fellow alumni on our social networking sites.
- Reward Program (www.ocean.edu/alumni/rewards.htm) allows you to view the special discounts and special offers using your OCC Rewards Cards.
- Human Resources (career.ocean.edu) is a sub-domain where individuals can learn about position openings at OCC and then submit a job application online.
- Tickets (tickets.ocean.edu) allows theatre patrons to view event details, create personal accounts, and purchase tickets online using a credit card.
- Robert J. Novins Planetarium (www.ocean.edu/planet.htm) provides information on a variety of celestial programs, including show schedules, special events, and ticket prices.
- The Online Admissions Application (apply.ocean.edu) allows individuals to create an account and submit an application directly to the Registration Office.
- E-Learning (online.ocean.edu) is a new micro-site that provides a separate and distinct web presence for students who want to pursue an education online.
Three Students Find Jobs with the Right Certification

By RoseAnn D'Urso, Editor

In today’s economy, many residents are looking to either start a new career or enhance their current resume, and healthcare continues to be the largest employer of jobs in Ocean County ... and elsewhere. Individuals looking to better their lives and expand their career options can prepare for one of today’s fastest growing careers as a Medical Office Specialist (MOS). New jobs are expected to grow in Ocean County as a result of a nationwide conversion of a paper-based system of medical records to an electronic system.

“Due to the uncertain economic climate today, many area residents have been downsized from their jobs or are seeking a new career path,” explained Kathryn Caro, OCC Administrator of Nursing & Allied Health. “Some people are looking to add new skills to enhance their current resume in order to increase their marketability in this highly competitive job market. Others are returning to the workforce in order help with the financial support of their families.”

To help meet this growing demand, OCC’s Department of Continuing & Professional Education offers a fast-track career certificate. With an MOS certificate, graduates from this three-month program can expect to find employment in physicians’ offices, insurance and medical billing companies, managed care organizations, healthcare and managed care facilities, and in hospitals in the areas of medical records, unit clerk, intake specialist, and outpatient clerk.

Mary-Katherine Peschieri, Manchester, completed the certificate in March 2012 and wasted no time in securing a steady job. “I am so fortunate to have found a wonderful job as a medical assistant in Toms River. I dropped off my resume and the office manager called me back the next day. She said that when she looked at my resume, my certification in electronic health records jumped right out at her,” Peschieri said.

According to Caro, the MOS program provides the education and training needed for individuals who are looking to reenter the job market in the healthcare field. This intensive “medical office boot camp” gives students the tools and confidence needed to seek employment in the healthcare industry.

Wanda Boucher, Brick, completed the program in May 2010 and has been working ever since. “I am happy to say that choosing to attend the MOS program at OCC proved to be the best career decision I could have made. I am now working as a certified medical coder for a billing company in Red Bank. Due to the comprehensive curriculum, I learned the basic skills needed for success. I started my first job prepared ... and I was. I wanted a serious job; and I chose a serious school. I’m glad I did it,” Boucher stressed.

Students enrolled in the MOS program receive intensive training in a number of areas including medical terminology, coding, and Medisoft billing; health information technology security; anatomy and physiology, insurance practices, among other topics. The program also prepares students to find a job after graduation by including resume preparation, job searching, interviewing skills, and customer service.

Maria Muncan, Ridgewood, NY, completed the MOS certificate in October 2011. According to Muncan, two weeks after graduating, she accepted a job as a medical biller for a private physician in New York City.

$181,351 Goes to H.I.T. Program

By RoseAnn D’Urso, Editor

Earlier this year, OCC received a one-year extension to its Health Information Technology (H.I.T.) grant in the amount of $181,351. The grant award, which funds training for professionals in the IT and healthcare fields, now totals $611,821.

The H.I.T. for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009 established a plan for advancing the appropriate use of health information technology to improve quality of care for citizens. As part of this program, OCC initially received a two-year grant to augment the skill sets of previously trained individuals to fill employment gaps in a rapidly growing profession.

Electronic health records skills are required for new, entry-level healthcare jobs. Individuals who were trained years ago and

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“I feel the skills I learned in the MOS class and Medisoft were the reason I got the job. Before I was interviewed, I was asked, ‘Have you worked on Medisoft?’ That really helped by confidence. My dream is to eventually get a job in a hospital where I could continue to learn and grow, as well as open more doors and increase job opportunities for me,” Muncan explained.

After successfully completing the program, students will receive an MOS certificate, HIPAA certification, a job shadowing experience in a physician’s office, and an employment portfolio. Students will also be able to sit for optional National Healthcareer Association (NHA) exams and certifications including Certified Billing and Coding Specialist, Certified Medical Administration Assistant, and Certified Electronic Health Record Specialist.

“Overall, I am grateful to all the instructors in the MOS course. It was their dedication that motivated me to stay the course and believe in myself. They believed in me and that increased my self-esteem and confidence,” Muncan said.

“Students, instructors, and administrators always go above and beyond the requirements to make this fast-track program successful. Our ultimate aim is to provide our students with training that not only includes the most current, up-to-date curriculum available, but also builds within the students, a confident attitude that is essential to learning and the key to successfully obtaining and sustaining a job,” explained Marilyn Knight, OCC Medical Office Specialist Coordinator/Instructor.

Peschieri added, “It was the best decision I could have made at this time in my life, and I would highly recommend this course to anyone interested in the expanding medical field.”

“The MOS has been a successful program at the College for over 10 years,” Caro said. “Local physicians and healthcare facilities continue to employ our students. It is so rewarding to continually receive emails from our graduates who have successfully secured employment in the healthcare field.”

In April, OCC’s School of Nursing joined the National League for Nursing (NLN), First Lady Michelle Obama, and Dr. Jill Biden, at the University of Pennsylvania, to announce a commitment from nurses across the United States eager to serve veterans and military families. In a broad effort, coordinated by the U.S. Departments of Veteran Affairs and Defense, the NLN, American Nurses Association (ANA), American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), more than 150 state and national nursing organizations and more than 500 nursing schools have pledged to further educate the nation’s three million nurses so they are better prepared to meet the unique health care needs of service members, veterans, and their families.

The partner organizations hope to disseminate knowledge to bring about overall improvements in health care and wellness for military service members, veterans, and their families, and to increase the supportive community of nurses, institutions, and health care providers dedicated to these improvements.

“Whether we’re in a hospital, a doctor’s office, or a community health center, nurses are often the first people we see when we walk through the door. Because of their expertise, they are trusted to be the frontline of America’s health care system,” said the First Lady.

“Nurses are at the center of providing lifesaving care in communities across the country – and their reach is particularly important because our veterans don’t always seek care through the VA system,” said Dr. Jill Biden. “This commitment is essential to ensuring our returning service men and women receive the care they deserve.”

Among the most pressing health care issues facing military men and women and their families are the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and other combat-related injuries, as well as depression. Through this “Joining Forces” initiative, nursing organizations and schools have committed to educate current and future nurses on how to recognize the symptoms of these debilitating, though often invisible, conditions and provide care appropriate to each nurse’s practice setting.

Dedicated to excellence in nursing education to advance the health of the nation, the NLN reached out to its 35,000 individual members and 1,200 institutional members who represent nurse educators at all levels of higher education to sign the pledge. The NLN is also planning a series of professional development activities in connection with “Joining Forces” to help ensure that nurse faculty across the academic spectrum can educate future nurses about the physical and psychological needs of veterans and their families.

Dr. Colleen Manzetti, OCC Acting Dean for the School of Nursing, stated, “It is important to provide the educational foundation which will allow our graduates to care for our service men and woman upon entering practice. The faculty will be reviewing the curriculum to ensure emphasis on these conditions and the societal impact they may have on a person’s quality of life.”
Hospice volunteers are a special group of people who are available to provide supportive services for patients, caregivers, and other hospice staff. Men, women, students, business people, retirees, homemakers, and "puppy dogs" all donate their time to help with the goal of being a hospice volunteer.

Jan Kirsten, Director of College Relations, and her "pooch" Cinder, a two-year-old Golden Retriever, have formally trained under the guidance of Kindred Souls, Bright & Beautiful, and Paws for Patients.

The therapeutic use of dogs in the health care settings has been proven to help orient patients, especially those with dementia, to the present moment. Dogs decrease anxiety, reduce feelings of isolation, and even lower blood pressure in patients.

"Cinder is a great dog with special qualities," Kirsten said. "Most of the time she is patient, calm, and ready to bring smiles to those who request her services. Typically, it is at the request of a family to have someone from Paws for Patients visit … and what is better than a dog with a wagging tail?"

Kirsten said that it is very rewarding to be able to help those who need someone to listen to and share memories. She has been lucky enough to visit the hospice wing at Monmouth Medical Center as well as a variety of other agencies, including assisted living facilities, libraries, and fundraising events for therapy dogs.

Paws for Patients was launched in 2009 by the Barnabas Health Hospice and Palliative Care Center to further enhance its mission of caring for patients not only physically, but emotionally and spiritually, as well. The program is fully-funded by the generosity of donors and relies on volunteers and their dogs to provide services to hospice patients and families.

If you are interested in having your dog become part of the team, contact Jan Kirsten at jkirsten@ocean.edu and she can put you in touch with the program coordinator.

Other OCC faculty and staff involved in volunteering include Linda Henderson, Professor of Mathematics, who serves as Committee Chair and Treasurer for Boy Scout Troop 29 in Marlton, and Michael Putnam, Manager of Campus Services, who volunteers as the Cub

Volunteerism at its Best: Hooverville 2012

By Dr. Jim Brown, Associate Professor of Science

When I was young my grandfather often talked about the Great Depression and the "Hoovervilles" that sprang up across the country. Named after President Herbert Hoover, these shack towns and homeless encampments developed as people lost their jobs, homes, and life savings. Today, a similar homeless encampment of nearly 80 people is located in the woods in Lakewood, just east of the railroad tracks.

People have been "camping in the woods" in Lakewood since 2005. Tent City is a last resort for the homeless, and includes an impressive diversity of residents. I’ve found that folks who live there come from all walks of life.

Some Tent City “residents” are there as a result of foreclosure, some have lost $100,000 jobs, and some are veterans. Some are hard-working immigrants whose daily wages are insufficient to pay rent on an apartment. Some are elderly. While others are there as a result of mental health and substance abuse issues. Often, there was a convergence of life events that was simply overwhelming. Some no longer have a form of identification and some have missed appointments for public assistance by not having an accurate mailing address. Some people lived paycheck to paycheck, were laid off, and have run out of unemployment. However, many “residents” are eager to work but are not able to earn enough money to find affordable housing. People continue to arrive.

My church, Grace Christian, helped draw my attention to the needs of homeless people, particularly those who live in Tent City. I’ve donated time and equipment, and began visiting the encampment as
Master of Pack 175 in Toms River, as well as the assistant Tiger Den Leader. Putnam is a Friends of Scouting presenter and a member of the Finance Committee for the Jersey Shore Council. Putnam also works alongside Bobby Bal, Building & Grounds Technician. Bal, who is a member of the Marine Core League and participates in a variety of charitable work, assisted Eagle Scout Alex Thesing, OCC Reservist, with his Eagle project to clean up the OCC Arboretum entrance.

Johanna Fastige, Auxiliary Services Tech, loves classical music but never knew about the Garden State Philharmonic until she started working at the OCC Bookstore. Fastige found out how much the organization needed help, so she volunteers by stuffing envelopes, assisting with the youth orchestra auditions, making phone calls to patrons, and lending her extensive experience to fundraising projects.

Dr. Marilyn Kralik, Professor of Humanities, has been quite busy as she finishes her year as President of the Toms River Rotary Club. Among her many charitable works, Dr. Kralik ‘adopted’ a family from the Interfaith Hospitality Network; collected $2,000+ in donations for the tornado victims in Henryville, IN; painted fences for Horses for Heroes; collected items for Scouting for Food and books for the Driven to Read program; volunteered in the Encore Thrift Shop; helped coordinate donations for Tent City; and helped raise $12,000+ for college scholarships, and $67,200 for annual giving to local, national, and international charities.

Elsewhere, Betsy Hyle, Barnegat Bay Partnership Special Events Coordinator, began a senior advisory group which offers monthly educational, volunteer, and social experiences for local seniors. She also revived the Friends of the Island Heights Library and has been instrumental in getting the library painted, fundraisers planned, and having an ADA-compliant ramp built.

Dorothy LaPosa, the President’s Liaison, is the Chair of the Brick Township Shade Tree Commission, of which she has been a member for approximately 20 years.

Grace Johnson, Assistant Director of Multicultural Services, serves on the boards of the Toms River NAACP and Women Of Purpose, helping women and children in the U.S. and Africa. Johnson sits on a Supreme Court Minority Committee and the Ocean County Health Department “Building a Healthier Ocean County” committee. She also volunteers with Women In Need, which provides lawyers to assist women who can’t afford to hire an attorney.

often as possible. I also help out with the public health implications. As a former New Jersey Assistant Commissioner of Health and Past President of the New Jersey Public Health Association, I was able to obtain the commitment of knowledgeable professionals who provide technical assistance on a range of issues.

One of my former OCC students, Michele Terreri, now at Rutgers University, has enlisted the support of Dr. Sherri-Anne Butterfield, Chair of the Department of Sociology at Rutgers Newark, to conduct a needs assessment for housing, food, sanitation, and employment. Michele’s background as a former Army Sergeant gives her a special affinity for the conditions under which residents are currently living.

My “Introduction to Public Health” course for Kean-Ocean requires students to participate in a hands-on public health experience, analyze the public health issues addressed, and share their experience and analysis with their student-colleagues. Some students have chosen Tent City as their focus, and have acquired valuable understanding as a result. In the United States, we are not accustomed to using an outhouse, and take for granted the system that brings safe water into our homes. And yet, the situation I’ve described exists right here in our own community.

I remember helping my grandfather dish out food at the Good Will Mission in Newark when I was six years old. He told me that homelessness can happen to anyone. Tent City brings that message home.
In His Own Words: One Man’s Journey

In the summer of 1965, at the ripe old age of 18, I knew that I had found my calling in life. I had just graduated from a high school in South Jersey that was blessed to have hired some of the finest teachers that the World War II generation had ever turned out. One in particular had convinced me that there was no greater or more important job than to be an educator. I knew then that one day I wanted to shape the life of another young person, to be the ultimate role model. I knew that I could be that motivational influence that could turn one child’s world around and make a struggling student become a lifelong learner, as my teachers had done for me. That was something that I knew that I was born to do. Sadly, there is an old adage that says: If you want to hear God laugh, go ahead – make plans.

My first attempt at getting a degree was interrupted in the late summer of 1966 by a letter from then President Lyndon Baines Johnson, inviting me to join some of the 2,709,918 Americans that would serve their nation in uniform in a terrible war, and to be a part of the more than nine million that would serve from 1964 to 1975.

Nine years later, I was back at (night) school, and my degree program was interrupted again by the birth of my third child and the need for a second (and sometimes a third) job to support my growing family. I tried again in the early 1980s, but by that time I was making more money than I ever expected to and thought I really did not need a degree. As a family we prospered, and I gained personal success in the business world. Sometimes you succeed in spite of yourself.

Fast-forward 33 years: I sold my successful small business for an obscene amount of money and retired – for one day. I knew immediately that I was too young to retire, and I still had dreams that remained unfulfilled. Twenty days later, I was enrolled at Ocean County College. It was truly a new beginning.

At OCC, I met a man who was formed in the mold of those teachers I had so respected in high school nearly 40 years earlier. Don’t get me wrong – I met a good number of fine professors my first year. One, however, was a true educator, a dedicated and hard-working teacher, and a man who lit up his classroom lectures with his sheer exuberance for teaching. After my first class with Richard Trimble, Assistant Professor of Humanities, I knew that someday I would stand in front of a classroom and make that ancient dream come true. I would teach. And when I did, I would teach with the same joie de vivre as Mr. Trimble.

I earned my bachelor’s degree from Kean-OCC in 2011, with a 4.0 GPA and a Summa Cum Laude on my sheepskin. And I had made a major dent in my “bucket list.” I had finally, after three false starts, completed a four-year degree.

I was too old (and frankly, too tired) to go into the public schools system as a new teacher, so I applied for my substitute certificate in Atlantic County, where my family and I now live full-time. I now sub three or more days per week at a local high school, and on most days, I leave the school grounds knowing that I could have been one hell of a teacher had money not gotten in the way all those years ago. I promised myself that if I ever got in front of a classroom I would be much more than a warm body, a simple “custodian” for students while their real teacher was off; I wanted to prove that a sub could do more than take attendance and keep order.

Those poor suckers who get me as a sub now know that they are going to be taught, either by using a lesson plan left by their teacher or by engaging in discussion that is germane to what they are learning. A discussion on any number of subjects led by me – their teacher for the day. Since 2008, I wanted to be Rick Trimble, and now I feel myself getting closer to that goal. At 64 years of age I am a teacher. I teach. I love doing it. Thanks, Mr. Trimble, for setting the bar so high.

Bruno E. Iocona
OCC 2008 / Kean University 2011
ALUMNI Q&A:

Carole Hedinger
Executive Director of the New Jersey State Lottery

[Ocean Views]: When did you attend OCC, and what was your course of study?

[Carole Hedinger]: I attended from 1979 to 1981. I was enrolled in AA in Business studies.

[OV]: Why did you attend OCC?

[CH]: I wanted to become a CPA and needed a Bachelor’s Degree in Business or Accounting in order to sit for the CPA exam. I also always had a desire to further my education and study various subjects such as: Spanish, History, and Literature.

[OV]: What is your fondest memory of OCC?

[CH]: It’s hard to say because I have so many. I was very fond of the literature, Spanish and history classes. I enjoyed every one of them.

[OV]: Where did you continue your education beyond OCC?

[CH]: After OCC I continued at Georgian Court University where I graduated in 1983.

[OV]: What other jobs did you hold after graduation?

[CH]: Upon graduation from GCU I went to work for Cowan Gunteski & Co., CPAs, in Toms River from 1983 to 1994 when I was asked to join Ginny Haines, Executive Director of the NJ Lottery to be her Deputy Executive Director. The Executive Director is the CEO and the Deputy is the COO. I did that through 2002 when I became Acting Exec. Director until April 2003. At that time I went to work for the Ocean County Surrogate’s Office as Chief Clerk where my responsibilities were to create the audit procedures for guardianship, estate and trust accountings. This also involved forensic investigations into wrongdoing by guardians and administrators which resulted in two major charges of criminal wrongdoing by two guardians. In 2010 I was asked to become the Executive Director of the Lottery.

[OV]: When and how did you receive your appointment as Executive Director of the New Jersey State Lottery?

[CH]: I was asked to be a member of Gov. Christie’s transition team to study Sports, Gaming and Entertainment. My responsibility along with a small sub-committee was the Lottery. At the conclusion of this work, the Governor asked me to be the Executive Director of the Lottery.

[OV]: What is your role as Executive Director?

[CH]: The role of the Executive Director is Chief Executive Director of the organization. I am responsible for the entire organization charged with maximizing revenue to the state from Lottery operations. Lottery revenue benefits education and state institutions such as the three homes for disabled veterans and the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf.

[OV]: What other responsibilities do you have as the Executive Director?

[CH]: I am the public face of the Lottery, I do interviews, make public appearances representing the Lottery, coordinate my Division’s activities with the Department of the Treasury, etc.

[OV]: What is your biggest career achievement?

[CH]: Serving as Executive Director is probably my biggest career achievement, however, the most satisfying moments of my career were when I was overseeing the funds of helpless, incapacitated people ensuring that their funds were properly handled and used for their benefit. Giving away millions of dollars ranks right up there, though. The only thing that would feel better would probably be winning – which I cannot do as I am not allowed to play.

[OV]: What is your favorite lottery game?

[CH]: I don’t have a favorite – I love them all.

[OV]: What do you enjoy doing when you are not working?

[CH]: I love to read (most anything) and travel. I also adore spending time with my family, especially my two beautiful granddaughters.

[OV]: What advice would you give to current OCC students?

[CH]: Don’t fear the future, don’t limit yourself to what you think you are “supposed” to do in life, say “Yes” to opportunities as you never know where they will lead you. I never dreamed wanting to become a CPA would lead me to the position I have today. If I had been afraid I couldn’t do it, I wouldn’t be here.

That is also true of when I decided to pursue forensic accounting that led to becoming a court-appointed expert in business valuation cases, when I decided to give seminars to fellow CPAs on various subjects, and when I decided to establish the audit department at the Ocean County Surrogate’s office to protect the funds of incapacitated people, when I decided I could run a $2.7 billion business (The Lottery) and when I accepted the position of President of the New Jersey Society of CPAs (2011-2012), the second women in its 100+ year history to be selected.

Finally, I would tell them – don’t look back, always look forward and keep putting one foot in front of the other. There’s no telling where the path will lead you.
Marcella Fernandez, continued from p.10

College of New Jersey. As she explained, Fernandez had speech and language problems while growing up. In addition, she took care of a grandmother who had difficulty with swallowing and cognition, as well as a grandfather who suffered from a stroke and Broca’s Aphasia (expressive aphasia). “I was attracted to the field of speech-language pathology. My credits from OCC directly transferred to Stockton and I did not have to take any duplicate classes, which saved me a lot of time and money!”

Fernandez studied speech-language pathology and audiology at Stockton, “and learned a great deal about the different types of communication disorders.” She provided speech services to the public via the college clinic, and completed several externships at educational sites and hospitals, where she observed, assessed, and treated clients for communication disorders.

“Most people think of a speech-language pathologist as someone who works with children in schools,” she noted, and while “about 50 percent of speech-language pathologists do work in schools, the other 50 percent work in hospitals, nursing homes, and rehab facilities.”

Following her 2007 graduation from Stockton, Fernandez worked to save money for graduate school in her field. “To work as a speech-language pathologist requires a master’s degree, and without it, legally you cannot practice,” she stated. In 2011, she was accepted to Western Kentucky University, which has a clinical practicum site in New York City.

“I decided after my first semester, after working with adult stroke victims and brain-injured people, that that is where my interest in practice lies,” said Fernandez. “I find it gratifying and fulfilling to work with such a challenging and diverse group of people. They all have different types of brain damage, some worse than others, but by working with them … I am able to help them get some function back in their speech and language so they can communicate more effectively with family, friends, and even strangers. You would be surprised at how different life can be when you have difficulty reading a simple menu when out to eat, writing a grocery list, or speaking on the phone and understanding what the other person is saying!”

Fernandez will soon begin her second semester at Western Kentucky University, and is on target to graduate in 2013.

“I am excited about the prospect of working in a hospital or rehab facility and bringing all my strengths and talents to the workplace to truly make a world of difference to someone who is suffering from deficits in speech, language, or swallowing,” she remarked, adding, “I always thank OCC for building a strong educational foundation for me!”

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If you have any comments or would like to see one of your favorite businesses become a partner, call Joanne Padrone, Manager of Resource Development, at 732-255-0400, ext. 2065 or email her at jpadrone@ocean.edu.
SHONIQUE BIBBY ’11 will pursue her bachelor’s degree in accounting this fall at either Kean University or Montclair State University.

EILEEN BIONI ’11 is completing her bachelor’s degree in sociology, with a minor in psychology, at Kean University, and is a member of Alpha Kappa Delta, an international sociology honor society. She is expected to graduate, with honors, in January 2013, and plans to pursue a master’s degree in occupational therapy so she can work with children and young adults with disabilities. Bioni believes that OCC was a great stepping stone in her education because it gave her the tools to move on to a four-year institution.

BRITTNEY CAMMAROTA ’09 earned a master’s degree in public health from the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia. She was a member of Alpha Delta Theta, volunteered at city public school libraries with West Philadelphia Alliance for Children, and conducted independent research at USciences.

CHRISTINA CARAROZZA ’10 graduated from Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, with a degree in communications. She recently moved back to Toms River and works as a waitress at JR’s on the Seaside Boardwalk and interned as an event coordinator at Enchanted Celebrations.

KAREN A. DEVERY ’09, a graduate of OCC’s nursing program, works as a clinical director for Star Pediatric Home Care Agency in Lakewood, where she began her career as a field nurse soon after receiving her RN license. Devery is pleased to say that she recently hired some well-educated and well-prepared OCC graduates!

NECHAMA FLORANS ’10 is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in math sciences, with teacher certification for kindergarten through 12th grade, from Kean University. He is also attending a summer research experience at the Center for Discrete Mathematics and Theoretical Computer Science at Rutgers University in New Brunswick.

JORDAN HENRY ’10 received his bachelor of science in public health and criminal justice from Rutgers University, and will pursue a master’s in healthcare administration at Seton Hall University this fall. Henry works part-time as an EMT with the Wall Township Police Department and is also a technical consultant with the New Jersey State Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services.

NICOLE HERTERICH ’10 received a bachelor’s degree in communications production and broadcasting from Georgian Court University. She currently works job in the Promotions Department of Press Communications, which owns four major radio stations.

LISA G. LOPEZ ’03 opened Home Alliance Realty in Manahawkin in 2004, and is the broker-owner. She is attending the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey to complete her bachelor’s degree in business, with a focus on marketing.

MARK C. MALONEY ’11 completed 12 weeks of basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot on Parris Island, South Carolina, which is designed to challenge new Marine recruits both physically and mentally. He works as a data base administrator at a hosting company called Datapipe.

DAVID MOSS ’10 has worked as a database administrator at the hosting company Datapipe for the last two years.

LINDSAY RASSMAN ’11 studied digital mass media – broadcast production at OCC, and worked in the College’s TV Studio. Rassman enrolled, under a NJ STARS II scholarship, as a broadcasting major at Montclair State University, where she is on the dean’s list. She has produced a number of television segments, including “Ryan’s Heart,” which aired as a three-part series on NJToday on NJTV; it was then turned into a mini-documentary titled “One Heart.” Rassman was awarded a Radio Club of America scholarship and will intern with NJToday this summer. She also served as feature editor of The Montclarion, Montclair State’s weekly student newspaper, and next year she will assume the role of managing editor. Her videos can be viewed at: http://tinyurl.com/88pbrfg.

TAMMY SAN GIACOMO ’10 graduated from the OCC nursing program and soon after began her clinical career as an emergency room RN at Community Medical Center in Toms River. She attends Drexel University in pursuit of a BSN, and is working as a medical research specialist for a leading electronic health record software company. With her experience as an RN in dermatology, San Giacomo has been able to help create a software program that helps nurses and physicians become more efficient with their documentation. Her position allows her to travel within the United States to meet with dermatologists and ophthalmologists in order to discuss the needs of their office. Recently, San Giacomo, her husband, and five children traveled to Arizona to see the Grand Canyon.
CONTINUED from p.13

BRIAN SANDY ’10 received a B.S. in Biology from Monmouth University. He says, “I loved OCC!” Brian plans to attend the New York College of Podiatric Medicine in August to become a Doctor of Podiatric Medicine.

ZAC SAUNDERS ’11, an alum of the Vikings Swim Team, is a student at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, where he is majoring in health and physical education, with a concentration in community health. Saunders serves as vice president of the school swim club and is employed as a health promotion peer educator for the Student Health Center.

STEVEN SAVACOOL ’10 earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting, summa cum laude, with a 4.0 GPA, from Kean University. He joined Phi Kappa Phi, the nation’s oldest, largest, and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines. Savacool’s studies at both OCC and Kean helped him prepare for the New Jersey civil service test for an accountant position, and he is currently ranked #1 in Essex County. As an undergraduate, Savacool independently lobbied and submitted a written proposal to the New Jersey Senate to sponsor a bill establishing breast cancer awareness license plates to generate revenue to help fund mammograms for uninsured women and raise money for breast cancer research. He prepared this bill in honor of his mother’s courageous battle with breast cancer, which left her handicapped.

KATIE SCHULTZ ’10 received her bachelor’s degree in psychology from Georgian Court University, and will remain at Georgian Court to pursue a master’s degree in applied behavior analysis. Schultz said OCC was a great start for her because she wasn’t sure quite what she wanted to do early on, but was able to earn two years’ worth of college credits at a very reasonable cost, then continue at a four-year school. Schultz eventually discovered a passion for psychology, and for working with children with autism and other developmental disabilities.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW ALUMNA: CLASS OF 2012

LAUREN MORONE ’12, Brick, graduated in May with an associate in science degree in general studies and a concentration in humanities. She plans on transferring to Montclair State University to study animation/illustration and would like to pursue a career in animation or freelance illustration. While a student at OCC, Morone was a member of Phi Theta Kappa honor society, and was on the President’s Honors List for three semesters.

A recipient of an OCC Foundation Scholarship from fall 2010 to spring 2012, she was named to the 2012 New Jersey All-State Academic Team. A talented artist, Morone took Best in Show at the 2011 Laurelton Art Society’s Annual Spring Exhibition for her oil painting “Buddy John with Toothbrush” and won 3rd Place in mixed media-ceramic relief for “Koji & Masaki” at the 2010 Laurelton Art Society End-of-Year Show. Among her many activities, Morone volunteered for S.A.I.L. (Service & Achievement in the Library) and the Driven Bolts Robotics Team 2011 at the Villanova University Home School Science Fair. She designed the poster for 2011 Driven Bolts’ World Championship booth, which was displayed at ESPN Wide World of Sports Center in Orlando, Florida.

ETTY SIMS ’09 gave birth to a son after graduation, and also has a daughter. She earned a bachelor’s in medical technology from Kean University, and is currently working as a med tech at Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune. She will soon begin medical school at the Cooper Medical School of Rowan University in Camden.

MARK SKOBBEKO ’10 is continuing his education at Rutgers University – School of Management and Labor Relations in pursuit of a bachelor’s degree. He notes that he enjoyed every minute of his educational journey at OCC.

JASON WADWELL ’11 is a student at Rutgers University Business School in New Brunswick, working towards a bachelor’s degree in accounting.

LAURA WAGER ’08 earned a bachelor’s degree in business management from Kean University in 2010. She has a three-year-old son and currently works as a financial aid specialist at OCC.

WE’RE PROUD OF OUR ALUMNI
Let us Know what You’re Doing!

Email us your career moves, promotions, relocations, marriages, births, and other information you’d like to share with your fellow alumni. We’d also like to publish recent pictures, so please feel free to submit a digital photo. Email your submission to jpadrone@ocean.edu with the Subject line titled "Alumni in the News.”

Post a message on our Facebook page and you may get published in our next edition of Ocean Views!

Help us keep our database current. Update your name, address, phone, email, and career information. Contact Joanne Padrone, Manager of Resource Development, at 732-255-400, ext. 2949, or email jpadrone@ocean.edu.
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OCC gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the alumni and friends listed below who donated to the Alumni Annual Appeal Drive*.

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* We have made every effort to provide a complete and accurate list. Please advise us of any errors or omissions. This list reflects donations received November 2011 through March 2012.
Bernadette Amato, Coordinator of Career Services, National Certified Counselor, completed the required training and passed the written examination for the Board Certified Coach Credential issued by the Center for Credentialing and Education, Inc., a credential recognized by the National Board for Certified Counselors.

Dr. Jim Brown, Associate Professor of Science, gave the following presentations: “Ten Tips to Teaching Science Totally Online” at the 9th Annual Conference of the Pennsylvania Distance Learning Association at Temple University, “New Introduction to Public Health” to the Executive Board of the New Jersey Public Health Association, and an “Introduction to Public Health” at the 17th Annual Public Health Symposium: A Healthier New Jersey Begins Today: Health in All Policies.

Sandy Broughton, Executive Director of the OCC Foundation, serves as the Vice President of Professional Development for the Association of Fundraising Professionals for the State of New Jersey. She also serves on the Executive Committee of New Jersey ACE NET, the Gift Planning Council of New Jersey, the Board of Trustees of St. Barnabas Health – Community Medical Center, and the Monmouth/Ocean Development Council – Non-profit Committee.

Dr. Jennifer Dellner, Associate Professor of English and Literature, was selected to receive a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship to attend a summer seminar for college and university teachers in Dublin, Ireland. Dellner also authored a chapter in Two Thousand Years of Solitude, recently published by the Oxford University Press. The title of her chapter is “Children of the Island: Ovid, Poesis, and Loss in the Poetry of Eavan Boland and Derek Mahon.”

Karin Gargone, Instructor of Humanities, performed works for pipe organ and piano in concert at the Presbyterian Church of Toms River as a part of the Ocean Classics Concert Series. Works included Concerto in C Major (Johann Sebastian Bach), Sonata in D Major (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart), Symphony of Spirituals (Joel Raney), and a set of jazz Images (Joe Utterback).

Carol Gibbons, Adjunct Instructor of English and Literature, received a bachelor’s degree in languages and culture studies, with a concentration in Spanish, from the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

Jeffrey S. Harmon, Associate Director of E-Learning, serves on two programmatic accrediting boards, the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education and the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation.

Dr. Christine E. Kephart, Director of the Writing Center and Tutoring Resources, provided guidance to OCC alumni Kelly Johnson, David Torosian, and Meggan McGuire – now Kean-Ocean students and Writing Center assistants – with the presentation of their paper at the College Reading and Learning Association’s NJ-PA chapter conference at Montclair State University.

The presentation, titled “Incorporating Workforce Skills into the Classroom,” was designed to illustrate ways to use career-oriented tasks and goals as effective instructional tools in the classroom, and focused on student readiness for the workforce, particularly professional writing skills, web presence, and email etiquette. Additionally, Kephart’s book The Catherian Cathedral: Gothic Cathedral Iconography in Willa Cather’s Fiction was published in January by Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

Dr. Jon H. Larson, OCC President, was nominated to the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority Board. Earlier this year, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie filed nominations with the State Senate for various state board appointments, and nominated Dr. Jon H. Larson as the County College Representative on the Board of the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority. The nomination is subject to the advice and consent of the State Senate. HESAA delivers millions of dollars in financial aid annually. HESAA is a co-sponsor of College Goal Sunday, which was held on the OCC campus in February.
Martha Maxwell-Doyle, Barnegat Bay Partnership Project Coordinator, was invited to present at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s 3rd Annual Gulf of Mexico Community of Practice Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. Maxwell-Doyle, one of only four invitees from outside of the Gulf of Mexico region, discussed her role in various climate adaptation planning activities in New Jersey.

Francis Polk, Provost for Off-Campus Programs, is a consultant for the Association of Institutions of Jewish Studies, an accreditation agency for postsecondary women’s institutions.

Nancy Polonitza, Counselor/Assistant Professor, was recognized by the New Jersey Association of Community College Counselors for her outstanding work since the inception of the organization.

Laura F. Rickards, Director of the Educational and Opportunity Fund/Office of Multicultural Services, was recognized by the American Conference on Diversity at an event held at the Jumping Brook Country Club in Neptune in April.

Heidi M. Sheridan, Instructor of English and Literature, published her poem, “The Cat in the ’69 Plymouth” in ABZ Press in May. Sheridan was also inducted as an honorary member of Chi Alpha Epsilon (XAE) National Honor Society, Beta Chi Chapter.

Megan Springsted, Recruitment Coordinator, was honored with the Counselor of the County Award by the Ocean County Personnel & Guidance Association.

Sara Winchester, Vice President of Finance, served as a member of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education team for the evaluation of Clinton Community College in Plattsburg, New York. She received a letter from Dr. Thomas Isekenegbe, President of Cumberland County College and Chair of the Visiting Team, expressing his appreciation for her participation and for the significant contribution she made in reading the self-study documents, interviewing college staff, and writing an evaluation report on the assigned Middle States Standards.
Welcome, New Board Members!

In February, the OCC Foundation Board of Trustees welcomed four new members, all of whom will serve a one-year term.

Karen Escobedo (Brick) is the Manager of Community Outreach for New Jersey Natural Gas, for which she began her career in 1998 as the Lead Internal Auditor. An active member of the community, Escobedo also serves on the Brookdale Community College Foundation. She received a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Rutgers University and a master’s degree in business administration from University of Phoenix.

Frank L. Gelormini (Toms River) is the Chief Operating Officer at Community Medical Center in Toms River, an affiliate of the Barnabas Health System. He has been in the healthcare industry for more than 25 years. Gelormini is a graduate of Kean University. He and his wife, Maryann, have two children.

Pauline Rota (Toms River) works for TD Bank, NA, as a Small Business Relationship Manager. She has served on the Board of Directors of the Monmouth-Ocean Development Council and the Toms River-Ocean County Chamber of Commerce, and she is represented on five chambers of commerce in Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Rota graduated from OCC and continued her education in business studies at the University of Buffalo.

Ruthanne Scaturro (Brick) manages 13 Ferguson Enterprises showroom locations throughout the state. She holds leadership roles for the Lakewood and Brick Township Chambers of Commerce, the Brick Rotary, and the Jersey Shore Council Boys Scouts of America. Scaturro received the Thomas Maiorine Republican of the Year Award and named a Woman’s History Month “Woman of Distinction.” She holds a bachelor’s in psychology from Cabrini College.

OCC Foundation Speakers Bureau

The OCC Foundation is seeking invitations from local service and social organizations to help spread the word about our important and continuing effort aimed at raising more scholarship funds for OCC students.

The “Dollars for Scholars” presentation will include a brief video and speaker who will talk to your group about how the Foundation is working to meet the needs of deserving OCC students who require financial assistance to make their dream of a college degree a reality. To arrange for a speaker, please contact Sandy Broughton, Executive Director, OCC Foundation, at 732-255-0400, ext. 2134.

Every Gift Makes A Difference! The OCC Foundation and Alumni Affairs invite you to invest in the future of our community by supporting the “Dollars for Scholars Campaign.” Please consider a donation to this annual campaign. Funds raised will enable the Foundation to provide needed scholarships to deserving students. Donations of $1,000 or more will be acknowledged on a Donor Wall.

Send your donation to: Ocean County College Foundation, P.O. Box 2001, Toms River, NJ 08754-2001. OCC Alumni can direct their donation to the OCC Resource Development/Alumni Affairs Office. Please specify your graduation year and name at graduation to ensure proper credit.

Your support is greatly appreciated!
Annual Foundation Golf Outing a Success

This year’s OCC Foundation Golf Outing, held on May 1, took place for the first time at Pine Barrens Golf Club in Jackson Township. The event attracted nearly 100 golfers and raised more than $50,000! Combined support from sponsors, donors, and golfers will enable the Foundation to continue to provide assistance to OCC students through scholarships, special projects, and academic programs. The Foundation offers its sincere thanks to all who played a role in this event, especially the Golf Committee, chaired by Michael York.

11th Annual Golf Outing Committee
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Tickets Available for Grand Celebration!

The OCC Foundation will honor Gary and Amy Lotano, Toms River, as Humanitarians of the Year 2012 at its “Come Fly with Me” Scholarship Celebration on Saturday, September 8 at 6:00 p.m. on the Main Campus. The event’s major sponsor is Investors Bank. The evening’s festivities will include live entertainment, a sumptuous gourmet buffet, and both live and silent auctions. Proceeds will support the Foundation’s scholarship fund.

Tickets: $250 per person. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Donations of “high-end” auction items are being accepted. For information, call the OCC Foundation at 732-255-0492.

H.I.T. PROGRAM, continued from p.6

have been working in the field now need to upgrade their skills. OCC is providing the education that working professionals in I.T. and healthcare need in order to remain competitive in today’s workforce.

At the end of year two, 173 students were enrolled in the program – 129, or 75 percent, have graduated. The additional funding for year three will enable OCC to offer scholarships to 95 new students. The ultimate goal is for the program to be self-sustaining and continue without grant funding after the third year.

Kathryn Caro, OCC Administrator of Nursing & Allied Health, explained that expanding the college’s program will help meet the job skill needs as more emphasis is placed on the supervisory and management aspects of the job. “Students in year three will learn how to manipulate and use the data captured in the electronic health record. There will also be emphasis on the legal aspects of the health record, including health information and HIPPA.”

To be eligible for the H.I.T. program, prospective students must already have a career or previous education/training in I.T. or healthcare. The program includes intensive non-degree training that can be completed in six months or less, accommodates each trainee’s skill gaps, and is flexibly designed to allow each trainee to enroll in just those courses needed to attain the desired level of competency.

Basic help regarding job searches, interview techniques and resume development are provided to students who successfully complete the program. As Caro pointed out, OCC has established partnerships with the three major hospitals in Ocean County: Community Medical Center, Ocean Medical Center, and Southern Ocean Medical Center.

“We’ve also established good working relationships with numerous medical practitioners in the county who accept our students for externships and job shadowing experiences, in addition to offering many of our students jobs after successfully completing the program,” Caro added.
Hoops Players Each Score 1,000 Points

By Juliet Kaszas-Hoch, Staff Writer

This past winter was a milestone season for Viking basketball players Elizabeth Lawler (co-captain/center) and JaMario Clayton (guard). Both athletes hit the 1,000-point mark in their college athletic careers, placing them on OCC’s list of elite players.

On February 9, in a game against Gloucester Community College, Clayton became one of just six athletes in the history of OCC sports to score 1,000 points. Clayton explained how it all happened. “In that game, I remember saying to everyone, ‘I’m not going to force it; I’m going to let the game come to me,’ and as soon as we ran our play, the first look I got I shot the ball and it was all net,” a three-pointer that brought his total to 1,001. “It was one of the most thrilling moments of my life.”

Clayton graduated from OCC in May, and this fall he will enroll at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University in New York, to which he received a full ride. “After that,” he noted, “I want to play pro basketball overseas.”

Less than a month after Clayton scored his 1,000th point, Lawler reached 1,000 points for the Viking Women’s Basketball Team, in a March 3 Region XIX Championship game against Northampton Community College. “The game before,” the regional semi-final, “I didn’t know I only had two points left” to reach 1,000 points, said Lawler, a Forked River resident who attended Lacey Township High School. “I had so many chances,” she added with a laugh.

In the following game, the regional final, Lawler and her teammates were well aware that she was almost at 1,000 points, though she didn’t want that to be their focus. A few minutes into the game, Lawler took a pass down low. “I turned and banked it in,” she recalled, and an announcement about her achievement came over the loudspeakers as the game continued. “What a feeling that was,” she said. “There’s this heaviness to it that I didn’t think I’d encounter, but I did.”

The women’s team, which had won the Garden State Athletic Conference, ended up losing that regional final game by just two points, so the day was “bittersweet,” but, Lawler noted, “I was in a state of contentment because I left it all on the court.”

Lawler, who has four siblings, said she comes from “a basketball house,” and started playing the game in fifth grade. “I learned a lot from my dad and the rec teams I played on. Basketball is such a mental game. It’s so technical. It takes a lot out of you. But I love it.”

She went on to play at Lacey High School for four years, first as a shooting/power forward. When the varsity team lost its center to graduation, Lawler, the tallest player at 5’11,” stepped in to fill that role. “I fell in love with it,” she stated.

When deciding to continue her education at OCC, Lawler knew that “financially it would be best, but for so many reasons, I’m so thankful I went there,” starting with the Jumpstart Program in September 2010 through her

Sports Shorts

Vikings Nationally Ranked

The National Alliance of Two-Year College Athletic Administrators (NATYCAA) ranked OCC’s Athletics program seventh in the country. The NATYCAA Cup program began in 2004 and recognizes excellence in two-year college athletics based on success in championship competition.

Athletes are Great Students, Too

Not only were OCC student-athletes well represented at the national championships, they were also recognized for outstanding academic achievements by the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). For a list of season highlights, see page 22.

Coaches Excel at the Helm

Eight Viking coaches were honored this past year by the Garden State Athletic Conference (GSAC). In the fall, Ed Baynes (Cross Country), Stan Friedman (Women’s Tennis), and AJ Trump (Women’s Soccer) were named “Coach of the Year” in their respective sports. At the end of the winter season, Head Coach Dana Kovitch and Assistant Coach Nicole Ciocher (both Girls Basketball) were chosen as
“Coaching Staff of the Year.” And this spring, Golf Coach Kevin Beirne was recognized as the “2012 GSAC Coach of the Year,” while Bob Mazanec (Softball) and Ed McRae (Baseball) earned, respectively, their 150th and 200th college career wins!

Highlights of the 2011-12 Season

- 94 Academic All-Conference student-athletes (3.0+ GPA)
- 68 Academic All-Region student-athletes (3.25+ GPA)
- 9 teams with a team GPA 3.0+
- 31 All-Region athletes
- 27 All-Conference athletes
- 22 All-American athletes
- 17 nominees Academic Achievement Honoree Awards (3.60-4.00 GPA)
- 3 players selected in their own sport as Region XIX Player of the Year
- Women’s Soccer: Region XIX & GSAC Champions – placed 3rd at Nationals
- Women’s Cross Country: Region XIX Champions – placed 3rd at Nationals
- 3 Tennis players won their flights and were named National Champions
- Women’s Tennis: GSAC Champions – placed 4th at Nationals
- Men’s Cross Country: Region XIX & GSAC Champions – placed 6th at Nationals
- Men’s Golf: Region XIX & GSAC Champions – placed 10th at Nationals
- Men’s Swimming: placed 10th at NJCAA Nationals
- Women’s Swimming: placed 12th at NJCAA Nationals

1,000 POINTS, continued from p.21

graduation this past May. She’s still deciding which four-year school to attend, and whether she’ll play basketball or soccer, for which she was also a standout player at OCC.

Lawler thanked OCC President Dr. Jon Larson, Athletic Director Ilene Cohen, Vice President of Student Affairs Don Doran, her coaches – Head Coach Dana Kovich and Assistant Coach Nicole Ciocher – teammates, and her family for their support. “I truly am so blessed and thankful for the encouragement from all corners.”

As Lawler also pointed out, she saw Clayton score his 1,000th point. “That was awesome. He is some heck of a player. This kid is unbelievable. With his skill, his speed … he’s amazing. He could play in the NBA; I’m not even kidding.”

Clayton noted, “Unfortunately, I didn’t get to see (Lawler’s 1,000th point) game, but I can say that Liz is a very dominant player who contributes to the game in many ways, whether it’s scoring points or rebounding the ball or playing defense. She is a versatile player who has a bright future.”

Both athletes were honored by OCC on the court following their milestone games, and were also recognized at a Board of Trustees meeting. “The achievements of JaMario and Elizabeth have been outstanding in both academics and athletics,” Dr. Larson said in his March report to the Board. “Both are excellent students and both have excelled in sports.”

The two athletes were each named Region XIX Player of the Year for 2011-2012, and were selected as National Junior College Athletic Association Division III Basketball First Team All-Americans.

Clayton, a second-year selection as an NJCAA All-American, played in 51 games during his time at OCC, accumulating 1,165 points – with a 22.8 points per game average – and 123 steals.

Lawler – who was named OCC’s Woman Athlete of the Year and was recognized by the Garden State Athletic Conference at the New Jersey National Girls and Women in Sports Day celebration at Seton Hall University – competed in 52 games for the Women’s Basketball Team over her two years at OCC. She scored 1,010 points, with a 19.42 points per game average, and pulled down 901 rebounds.

Also this year, Lawler was selected to have her Vikings jersey hang in “The Ring of Honor” section of the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, Tennessee, which consists of more than 100 jerseys that represent the top high school and college players from each season. Lawler’s jersey will hang until May 2013. “Elizabeth is the first OCC athlete to receive this honor, and we again congratulate her on yet another recognition of her outstanding accomplishments,” Dr. Larson said in his April President’s Report.

“We could not be more proud of JaMario and Elizabeth,” the President stated. “They have been exceptional representatives for their teams and the College.”

“They are two great student-athletes that helped put Ocean County College ‘on the map,’” said Cohen. “They are very talented individuals in their own ways, and I wish them the best of luck in all that they do.”
Cheerleaders “Attack the Crowd” and Take First Place

The Viking Cheerleaders won first place in their division at the 32nd Annual National Cheerleaders Association and National Dance Alliance’s Collegiate Cheer & Dance Championship in Daytona Beach, Florida, in April. OCC’s squad performed in the Intermediate All Girl II Division, and outscored other teams representing four-year universities from North Carolina, Massachusetts, Georgia, and Texas – earning them the coveted title of national champions.

“I am incredibly proud of our girls!” said Head Coach Maureen Williams. “They worked non-stop all year for this competition. In addition to exhaustive practices, choreography, and fundraising efforts, these girls all maintain their studies, and in many cases work schedules, without exception. Cheerleading is an important part of their college experience, sharpening their overall organizational and leadership skills and personal disciplines, giving them opportunities to meet athletes and staff from leading universities, where some will move on to after graduating.”

This was the second time the Vikings competed at this prestigious national-level competition, the largest college cheer and dance championship in the world. More than 5,000 student-athletes, along with thousands of spectators, assemble each year for this competition, which shows off each team’s technical skills, showmanship, and teamwork.

Save the Date: 2012 Sailing Hall of Fame

The 2012 Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame will take place on Saturday, October 6 in the OCC Gymnasium. Outstanding sailors who earned their sea legs on the Barnegat Bay will be formally honored at this gala celebration. Proceeds from the Induction Ceremony will support the OCC Sailing Club. The Barnegat Bay Sailing Hall of Fame promotes the area’s maritime heritage by recognizing individuals whose accomplishments on the water and/or on shore have significantly enhanced Barnegat Bay’s maritime character and strengthened its status as a maritime center. Tickets: $75. Call the Office of Student Life at 732-255-0348.

For More Information
Contact the Office of Student Life
occsail@ocean.edu • 732-255-0348

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6TH

2012 Induction Ceremony
Join us on campus!

ROBERT J. NOVINS PLANETARIUM

Now open with the latest projection technology to bring you the universe in innovative and exciting new ways! Check out the latest schedule including presentations and laser shows at:

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ARTS & COMMUNITY CENTER

Our beautifully renovated Theatre and Black Box are host to wonderful campus events and visiting performers. Find the current schedule at:

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Ocean County College Alumni are entitled to a variety of benefits:

Free OCC Alumni Rewards Membership for discounts, specials and incentives

Complimentary subscription to Ocean Views, the OCC Alumni newsletter

Special events to connect with friends and the community

Discounts on day trips

Questions?
Email us at jpadrone@ocean.edu

Spring 2012

Ease Your Stress

Painting & Drawing

Yogalates

Golf Instruction

Adult Community Leader

Day & Overnight Trips

Survival Chinese

Presenting Yourself on Camera

Boating & Navigation

Start Training Here!

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