

OCEAN VIEWS

A Magazine for Ocean County College Alumni,
Our College Family and the Community
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DR. JON H. LARSON



LEAVING A LEGACY, FOUNDING A FUTURE pp. 6-9



A magazine for Ocean County College alumni, our College family and the community

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EXECUTIVE DECISION:

Dr. Pamela Monaco Named OCC's Next President



The Board of Trustees has announced the selection of Dr. Pamela Monaco as the next president of Ocean County College. The presidential profile and posting attracted a strong pool of candidates from across the country, and approximately 60 applications were received. After several months of diligent work by the ACCT Search Consultant Dr. Bradley Ebersole, the College Search Committee and the Board of Trustees, three candidates were selected as finalists. The finalists visited OCC the week of November 7, meeting with the Board and other stakeholders and participating in open public forums to which the entire campus community was invited. Dr. Monaco will take office on July 1.

"A passionate advocate for community colleges, Dr. Monaco believes that education transforms lives, and she has consistently demonstrated her commitment to removing the barriers that stand in the way of student success," Board Chair Jerry Dasti wrote in an email to the college community.

"The Board is confident that Dr. Monaco will be a dynamic and proactive leader at OCC, one who shares our values and goals for the future and whose strategic vision and collaborative spirit will position the College to thrive and excel in the years ahead."

Although President Larson is stepping away from his role on June 30, 2023, he is not leaving the college community behind entirely. Dr. Larson will continue to serve the College for two more years in a part-time capacity, as off-campus counselor to the new president. In this consulting role, Dr. Larson will help Dr. Monaco become acclimated to Ocean County and assist with transitioning the relationships he has formed with our international partners and U.S affiliate university leaders.

In this issue, *Ocean Views* takes a look back at Dr. Larson's remarkable tenure in the president's office and celebrates the legacy he leaves behind as he exits the role he has held for 23 years. See the cover story beginning on page 6 for more.

“ A passionate advocate for community colleges, Dr. Monaco believes that education transforms lives, and she has consistently demonstrated her commitment to...student success. ” - Mr. Jerry Dasti, board chair of OCC

OCC Presents at Marketing Conference

Jan Kirsten, executive director of College Relations, and Dr. Kathleen Mohr, assistant director of Enrollment Services, were requested to present at the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations' district conference on October 3, 2022, in Syracuse, New York. The session, entitled *Collaborate and Connect: Leveraging Social Media and Marketing to Advance Recruitment and Student Success*, examined the implementation of OCC's Virtual One-Stop Shop and the development of our chatbot, Reggie. The team's presentation demonstrated the ways collaboration between marketing and enrollment services teams led to accomplishments in boosting student success and streamlining onboarding during the pandemic.

During the conference, Ocean County College also received three of NCMPR's top 2022 Medallion Awards. The Medallions celebrate excellence in design and communication at community and technical colleges in each of NCMPR's seven districts. Ocean County College brought home a gold award in the Digital Catalog category for the Camps on Campus catalog, a gold award in the category of Interior Signage/Displays for the Novins Planetarium's "Return to Campus" decals and signage, and a silver medallion in the Magazine category for *Ocean Views*. Ms. Kirsten and Dr. Mohr accepted the awards on behalf of Ocean County College's College Relations team.

The National Council for Marketing and Public Relations is the leading professional organization exclusively serving those working in communications at two-year community and technical colleges. With a focus on learning, networking, and advocacy, NCMPR helps members become better at their jobs and supports two-year colleges in their mission to promote student success.





Dean Rosann Bar Completes Fulbright Award

Dr. Rosann Bar, dean of the School of Business and Social Sciences, was granted a Fulbright International Education Administrators (IEA) award to study higher education in Germany. Dean Bar completed her award this fall, along with 14 American colleagues from across the country and 10 German educators.

in American history in the Civil Rights and Revolutionary War eras with an American colleague from Alabama.

During this experience, Dean Bar discovered that, despite their cultural and geographical differences, she and her counterparts shared many of the same challenges. She intends to use what she learned to analyze the apprenticeship models she observed and assess their applicability here at OCC.

Through lectures and visits to Humboldt University, the University of Potsdam, and Hochschule Ruhr West, Dean Bar had the chance to study Germany's higher educational system, including three models of apprenticeships available at universities of applied science. She also had the opportunity to develop partnerships that could potentially lead to new global learning opportunities for OCC students, including a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) project for business students through Hochschule Ruhr West and a summer exchange program opportunity in immersive German language and culture through the University of Potsdam, as well as short-term travel experiences

The IEA awards are designed to familiarize administrators from U.S. universities, colleges and community colleges with higher education systems in other countries. Over the course of two weeks, recipients have the opportunity to learn about the host country's education system, establish connections with their U.S. and international counterparts, explore opportunities for new international partnerships, and gain additional insights into serving and supporting international students and prospective study-abroad students.



OCC Partners with SCHi to Establish Adult Transition Center

Ocean County College has partnered with the School for Children with Hidden Intelligence (SCHi) to expand opportunities for adults ages 21-24 in Ocean County with special needs. The goal of the collaboration is to provide programs and support to help individuals transition into the most independent living possible, based on their personal achievement level.

of SCHi's Disability Services. With this program, funded through a grant from the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, Ocean County College has established an Adult Transition Center, enabling county residents with special needs to continue their education and prepare for independent living. The new center will be located at SCHi, utilizing the extensive experience and expertise of the school's professional staff to provide essential services and help students build the skills necessary to make that transition.

SCHi is a therapeutic and educational center founded in 1995 that provides professional services to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. The center offers individualized education programs designed to fit each student's specific needs.

OCC President Dr. Jon H. Larson expressed his thanks to everyone who worked on the partnership for their support of the project and their hard work and collaboration in getting it done. "There's a tremendous need out there for this type of program," Dr. Larson said. "We are very proud to be a part of this and very excited to see it grow."



Transitioning out of public education and into adulthood is complex for adults living with disabilities, and programs for this age are underdeveloped, according to Rabbi Binyomin Rosenberg, executive director



New Hotel Assistant Apprenticeship Launched

OCC GRAD CHELSEA BURO '22 has earned the distinction of being the first participant in the College's new Hotel Assistant apprenticeship program, made possible through a partnership between Ocean County College, the U.S. Department of Labor and Hotel LBI in Ship Bottom.

Registered apprenticeship programs provide an opportunity for students to earn while they learn and offer the first step on a path toward a lifelong career. While most people associate apprenticeships with trades such as electrical work and plumbing, opportunities for non-traditional apprenticeships are becoming more common as employers search for new ways to fill talent gaps.

At Hotel LBI, Buro will earn a competitive salary in her chosen field while obtaining valuable workplace experience, career training, and industry credentials. Chelsea received her associate degree in Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism Management (HRTM) in May.

"Chelsea is breaking a barrier," said Jannette Ball, OCC's manager of apprenticeship programs. "We're learning about what apprenticeship means from the trades and taking it into non-traditional roles. We are changing the vocabulary, because it's something that has not been done before."

"Non-traditional apprenticeships are groundbreaking, and OCC is a leader," said Dr. Rosann Bar, dean of OCC's School of Business and Social Sciences. "We have a program in Addictions, and now we have one in Hospitality. Students get not only a quality education, but the chance to work in the field, which will pave the way for them to get a career. I'm thrilled that Hotel LBI is doing this. I know they will give our students a top-notch job experience."

As an apprentice, Chelsea must be assigned a mentor and work for a probationary period of 1000 hours in order to satisfy the Department of Labor requirements. Julie Barlow, Hotel LBI's General Manager, said that Chelsea will start out working in sales, and will also be shadowing the hotel's banquet manager in order to learn the ins and outs of planning events. Assistant Manager Christine Mahalik will serve as Chelsea's mentor during the initial period.

"We are so glad to be a part of this," Barlow said. "Chelsea is our first student, and she is already an asset to us." The possibility for bringing in additional students and growing the program even further in the future is also very exciting. "This is important to us. We are growing as a hotel year over year. In season, we have over 200 employees. At the end of this program, we'll have well-rounded student employees who know all facets of the industry. That is very valuable."

Buro is excited for the opportunity to start a career in the industry she has chosen. She credits HRTM College Lecturer Sean Bips with opening her eyes to the possibilities. "I always thought food and beverage was my calling, but Mr. Bips really changed my outlook on the hospitality industry. That's what led me into hotels," she explained. "Best decision I've ever made."

Bips is confident that Buro is ready for whatever comes her way. "Chelsea has a great background, and she is prepared for all kinds of opportunities," he said. "To see her move on into this role and grow is more powerful and rewarding than anything. It's been a real pleasure to work with her."



Jon H. Larson



With a focus on innovation, President Larson built the community college of the future at Ocean.

As president of Ocean County College, Dr. Jon H. Larson has been helping the students of Ocean County obtain a top-quality education, pursue career goals and achieve success for more than two decades. Last January, Dr. Larson announced he will step away from the role in June. As the College transitions to new leadership, Dr. Larson will continue to serve the institution for two additional years in a part-time capacity, assisting with the transition and strengthening the relationships he has formed with OCC's affiliated university leaders in the U.S. and its international partners.



LEAVING A

LEGACY

FOUNDING A FUTURE

It's impossible to consider Dr. Larson's legacy without using superlatives. After 23 years, he is the longest-serving president in the College's history, and his remarkable impact can be found everywhere on campus, throughout Ocean County, and even abroad, where OCC's international programs continue to grow and expand. During his tenure, OCC has distinguished itself as an institution committed to excellence in all respects, one willing to go beyond the traditional boundaries of the community college to explore new frontiers in education and discover new opportunities for ensuring student success.

"I speak on behalf of the entire Board of Trustees and the College community when I say how much we appreciate President Larson's service and steadfast commitment to the students, faculty, and staff of Ocean County College," said Board of Trustees Chair Jerry Dasti. "His visionary leadership over the past 23 years has transformed the College, built pathways to success for generations of students, and ensured OCC's position as the finest community college in New Jersey."

INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY

When Dr. Larson joined Ocean County College in August 2000, higher education—like the world at large—was in the midst of a technological revolution. OCC was proactive in embracing that change, with Dr. Larson leading the charge.

His vision included establishing the College as the technology hub of Ocean County, believing that investing in technology would not only enhance the quality of instruction at OCC, it would demonstrate to the community that the College was serious in its efforts to stay on par with the largest and most

advanced colleges and universities. Dr. Larson wasted no time getting started, working with his leadership team to make improvements to campus technology—upgraded equipment, electronic access to student records, and online reference technology in the Library, to name a few—that would support students well into the future.

Dr. Larson saw, early on, the opportunities that technology offered in the classroom, and he embraced it not as a supplemental tool, but as a necessity for student success in the 21st century. "I see such great potential for the computer in its application in the learning environment," he told tech magazine *Ubiquity* in 2004. "I really think this is the golden age of higher education."

Under his leadership, OCC welcomed new advancements in technology and fully supported the evolution of online learning from the first online course to the development of 100% online degree and certificate programs, eventually establishing a dedicated e-Learning department that offers educational experiences to students all over the world.

This vision enabled OCC to pivot rapidly to remote learning in March 2020, as COVID-19 forced colleges to move operations online. In fact, OCC used the unprecedented circumstances of the pandemic to reimagine higher education, transitioning to a HyFlex environment and transforming the OCC learning experience. Dr. Larson's commitment to technology as an imperative allowed OCC to maintain its promise of an affordable education—including a zero tuition increase for several years in a row—at a time when many colleges were hard-pressed to stay open for business.

A NEW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The rapid pace of change in the 21st century required a brave and bold hand at the helm, and Dr. Larson proved himself ready for the challenge.

In a 'state of the college' address in 2004, he outlined his strategy to become "a new community college." Underscoring that ambitious agenda was Dr. Larson's commitment to growth and innovation.

The new community college, he explained, is one that reexamines traditional methods of higher education and embraces new approaches to student success.

"As a new community college," he said, "we aspire to be a leader among our peers—and a learning institution that rivals the best liberal arts colleges in terms of academic quality and student experience."

That emphasis on quality and innovation would become a hallmark of Larson's legacy—and the catalyst for two decades of remarkable progress that led to Ocean County College receiving the highly esteemed Bellwether Award in 2022.

Board of Trustee member Carl V. Thulin, Jr., who has served on OCC's board since 1984 (including 15 years as chair) and worked closely with Dr. Larson throughout his presidency, credits him with bringing OCC to the fore. "Ocean County College would not be the top-ranked, premier institution it is today if not for the hard work and dedication of President Larson," Thulin said. "He has been an exemplary partner to the Board of Trustees as we worked together to guide OCC through two decades of innovation and growth, laying the foundation for the College to achieve even greater success in the future."



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

Dr. Larson often expressed his belief in the power of education to change lives. Under his leadership, OCC has been a consistent supporter of local schools. With programs such as NJ STARS and Early College, OCC is building new pathways for students and making higher education more accessible than ever before.

In 2020, with the generous support of the Grunin Foundation and funding from the county and the state, the Ocean County Vocational Technical School relocated its Performing Arts Academy to OCC's Toms River campus.

The Kean Ocean program—an innovative partnership between OCC and Kean University that enables students to earn their associate degree at OCC and then continue towards a degree from Kean, with classes still on the OCC campus, was the first of its kind in New Jersey, and remains a model for collaboration between community colleges and four-year schools. Larson called the alliance between OCC and Kean “a study in forward-thinking and cooperation.”

The College also established a series of dual admission and transfer agreements enabling students to transition smoothly to bachelor's degree programs. Partnerships with institutions such as Southern New Hampshire University and NJIT allow students to transfer credits toward advanced degrees, and 3+1 programs allow students to complete their junior year at OCC. All of these programs were made possible by a focus on fostering student success through innovation.

An extraordinary achievement under Dr. Larson's leadership was the development of OCC's groundbreaking international

programs, including partnerships with several prestigious universities in Egypt: Ain Shams University, Badr University, and Al Alamein National University. These programs provide international students with a pathway from OCC's associate degree to four-year degrees with U.S. affiliate universities, such as the University of Maryland Global Campus, William Paterson University, Kean University and SNHU, and have established OCC as a true pioneer.

A COMMUNITY PARTNER

Knowing that the success of a community college is measured by its ability to meet the needs of the communities served, Dr. Larson has endeavored to make OCC a model of excellence in this regard through meaningful outreach and engagement, and by seeking out new ways to partner with community members.

Under his leadership, OCC established a Veteran and Military Resource Center on campus. This vital initiative, which led to OCC's designation as “Military Friendly” and “Best for Vets,” is a testament to Dr. Larson's commitment to support veteran and military-affiliated students and their families. His support has also been a driving force behind the development or expansion of the Helping Hands food pantry, Displaced Homemakers, the Ocean County Achievement Center, the O.C.E.A.N., Inc., Kids Child Development Center, and many other programs and services that have a profound impact on the Ocean County community and the people who live in it.

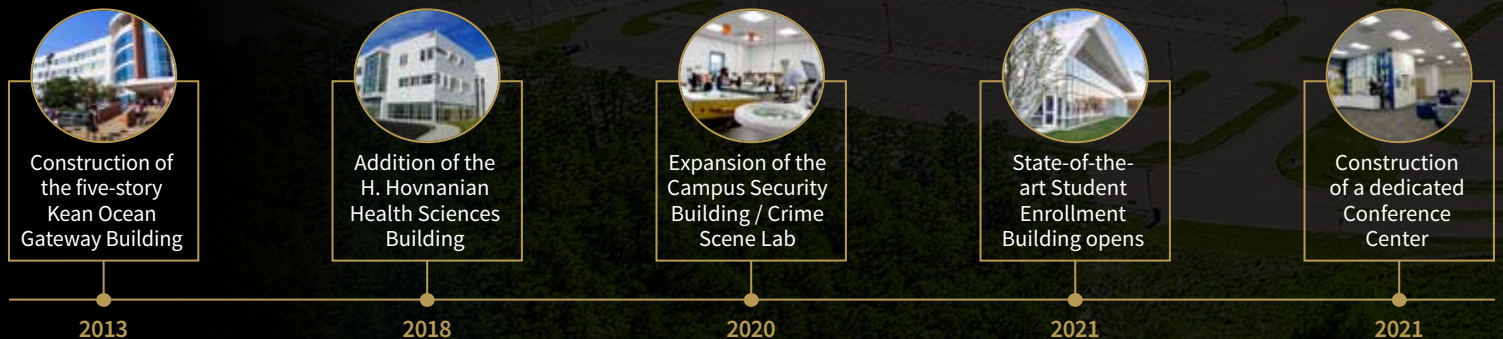
Additionally, support for OCC from the Ocean County Board of Freeholders (now the Board of Commissioners) can be attributed to Dr. Larson's partnership with the Commissioners, based on mutual respect, trust, fiscal responsibility and a shared vision for OCC. In particular, he and John

C. Bartlett, Jr., long-serving Freeholder Liaison to the College and a member of OCC's first graduating class, were united in their deep commitment to education. As a result, the Board of Commissioners, with Virginia Haines as the current Liaison to the College, continues to provide unwavering assistance to OCC in annual operating support and capital project funding for the benefit of Ocean County residents.

“Dr. Larson has been an exceptional president for Ocean County College,” said Commissioner Haines. “His vision and dedication to not only the students and faculty but to the people of Ocean County are second to none. Ocean County College has grown to become the premier community college in the state, and it is recognized across the country. Just look at our campus now, and remember how it was when Dr. Larson arrived. OCC's new president will have the opportunity to build on his rich legacy. Thank you, Dr. Larson, for your vision.”

THE JON AND JUDITH LARSON STUDENT CENTER

The construction of a new, modern student center was designed to encourage on-campus activity and provide a place for students to relax, eat, rest and study. “For 15 years, Dr. Larson and his wife Judy have dedicated themselves to promoting and bettering the College,” said then-Board Chair Thulin in 2015. “Dr. Larson has been a student-centered college president who strives to ensure that Ocean County College provides the best educational experience possible for each and every student enrolled here. I am very pleased to announce that this new building will be named ‘The Jon and Judith Larson Student Center.’ I can think of no other people who are more deserving of this special honor.”



Community Recognition:

- NJ Council of County Colleges
- NJ Presidents' Association
- NJ Higher Education Student Assistance Authority
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education Chair
- Lions Club Melvin Jones Fellowship Award
- Boy Scouts of America Good Scout/Loyal Buffalo Award
- PTK's Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction
- Ocean County Business Association Champion of the Year
- Ocean County Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year
- MODC Silver Gull Award
- Soroptimist International of Toms River Award
- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Above and Beyond Award



LOOKING AHEAD

President Larson has dedicated himself to making Ocean County College an institution of distinction, known for its quality, commitment, and exceptional programs. As its president, he led the College through its most formidable challenges and its most transformative growth. He had the foresight to anticipate major disruptions to higher education, addressing them by infusing the faculty, staff, and students with hope and the desire to achieve excellence.

“Dr. Larson demonstrated unbridled passion for his work and never missed an opportunity to tell others how lucky he felt to be the President of OCC,” said Executive Vice President Sara Winchester, who has worked with Dr. Larson for almost 20 years. “His enthusiasm and love for the College was contagious and inspired those around him to do their best work every day. I am honored to have been one of them.”

As a result of his dedication, Ocean County College is strong, well positioned for the future, and fully prepared to address new challenges while continuing to serve its students and meet the needs of the community for years to come.



“ I believe we are on the verge of founding something ... that in later years, as we look back, will permit us to say, “We were there at the dawn of a new era, and we were, once again, first.” ”

- President Jon H. Larson, September 1, 2004

AUSTIN GREITZ '15

The LGBTQ activist and public health advocate found perspective at OCC



“ It was really important to me, as a queer person, to bring awareness to my community and understanding to campus. ”

- Austin Greitz, public health representative for the NJ Department of Health's Communicable Disease team

As a performing arts major at OCC in 2014, Austin Greitz was required to take two semesters of a language. He chose American Sign Language. Years later, the LGBTQ activist and public health advocate credits those classes with giving him a new perspective on the world around him.

“It changed how I think about language,” said Greitz ‘15. “Formerly, I thought of language as written and spoken, but I learned that it could be visual, and movement.” The class also made him think more carefully about things like access and disability, teaching him to challenge his own viewpoint whenever he can.

“It’s about looking at things from a different perspective,” he said. “Realizing that maybe everything I see in the world is not all there is.”

That shift in perspective began soon after Greitz enrolled at OCC. Growing up in Ocean County, he always knew that community college was an option but didn’t always believe it was the right one for him.

“The fact of the matter is, OCC was not my first choice,” Greitz said with a laugh. “I actually wanted to go as far away from home as possible.” When that wasn’t feasible, he enrolled at OCC and quickly realized that all his preconceived notions were wrong.

“I was really enjoying my classes, the students and teachers, so I asked myself, ‘why was I so against this?’” He decided to get more involved on campus, discovering new interests, and by the end of his first semester, he was prepared to take advantage of everything OCC could offer him.

Immersing himself on campus led Greitz to his involvement with OCC’s Gay-Straight Alliance (now Ocean Pride), a student-run club whose mission is to provide a supportive environment for LGBTQIA+ students and their allies.

“It was really important to me, as a queer person, to bring awareness to my community and understanding to campus, and to have a space where we all feel like we can understand each other.”

The club gave Greitz the opportunity to address issues he was passionate about and led to his plan to continue his studies at Montclair University after graduation. He is grateful to OCC for giving him the skills to look at things differently and be open to experiences beyond his own.

“The perspective from ASL really helped me at Montclair,” he said. “What other lenses can we use to look at the world? It really changed my worldview. I’m so glad I had the opportunity to do that.”

At Montclair, Greitz found his calling. “I was planning a theater major and LGBTQ studies minor,” he said. “Then I took my first class, and it opened my eyes to the fact that I could work within my community as a career.” As a volunteer at the campus’ LGBTQ center, he helped charter the first gender-inclusive multicultural fraternity to ensure that all gender identities have a place on campus. He also served as a peer educator, leading a campaign to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS resources and working with the University Health Center to develop new protocols for the HIV prevention medication PrEP, making it more accessible on college campuses. He also served as an intern at the Hudson Pride Center, an advocacy group for LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS communities in Jersey City.

After graduating, he worked at the Coalition on AIDS in Passaic County (CAPCO), linking clients to medical care and social services, and then at Planned Parenthood, where he worked with community action teams to ensure access to reproductive and sexual health care for NJ residents, before returning to clinic work, counseling patients in HIV prevention and connecting individuals to access to PrEP. “I loved the advocacy work,” he said, “but I missed not seeing people.”

That opportunity to connect with people was a key to Greitz’s success at OCC, one he thinks more students should consider when choosing a college. “Going from a class of 20 or 30 kids to lecture halls with 200+ students is a big jump. At OCC, you can develop a relationship with your professors. That makes a huge difference.” Greitz believes that personal attention helped set him up for the future, leaving him better prepared for success and even more thankful that his college experience began at OCC.

“It’s all about connection,” he said. “Especially in this world today. It’s scary! People need to feel that it’s OK to reach out for help. There are so many people in your community to help you out, if you just ask for it.”

In his current role, as a public health representative on the NJ Department of Health’s Communicable Disease team, Greitz now has what he calls the best of both worlds: analyzing the issues and also working directly with people—talking to them, providing support, and linking them to prevention and treatment options.

“It feels really great when I’m able to work with folks and get them the help that they need. It’s really rewarding, being able to make a difference in their lives.”

These days, he urges students to consider community college after high school. “I’m a big proponent of community college,” he said. “At OCC, I had the ability to explore my interests without it having to be a big deal if I changed my mind, and it was a great place to connect with peers. I really loved my experience there. I would not change it for anything.”

FOUNDATION LEGACY CAMPAIGN

Investing in the future of Ocean County students

The OCC Foundation has been expanding its efforts on behalf of local students for more than 50 years. To continue that growth, which is essential to meet the needs of tomorrow's students, the Foundation has launched a multi-year, \$25 million Legacy Campaign, chaired by David C. Wintrode. Contributions will ensure scholarship and program support well into the future, and support fundraising efforts toward the expansion of the Grunin Center, the renovation of the planetarium into an immersive space and science experience, the establishment of a Foundation Art Collection and more. Pledges of over \$1.5 million have been received so far.

"The campaign is dedicated to enhancing the Ocean County College experience, from expanding scholarships and graduating awards to increasing our support of

domestic and international travel, vital to shaping a responsible and informed global citizen," said Executive Director Kenneth Malagiere.

Planned giving options include wills and living trusts, beneficiary designations, charitable gift annuities, memorial and tribute gifts, and more. For information about these opportunities, contact the Ocean County College Foundation at 732-255-0492 or visit go.ocean.edu/foundation.

"I believe the Ocean County College Foundation's Legacy Campaign is the perfect vehicle to make a transformational gift that will help to ensure the success of our future leaders," said Wintrode. "It is my hope that you, too, will partner with the Foundation in this endeavor to reach our goal of \$25 million for the students of OCC."



FOUNDATION ANNUAL SUPPORT

Making an impact since its inception in 1965

The Ocean County College Foundation has been a steadfast and committed partner of the College, providing more than \$18.5 million in assistance to local students through direct support and contributions to OCC programs.

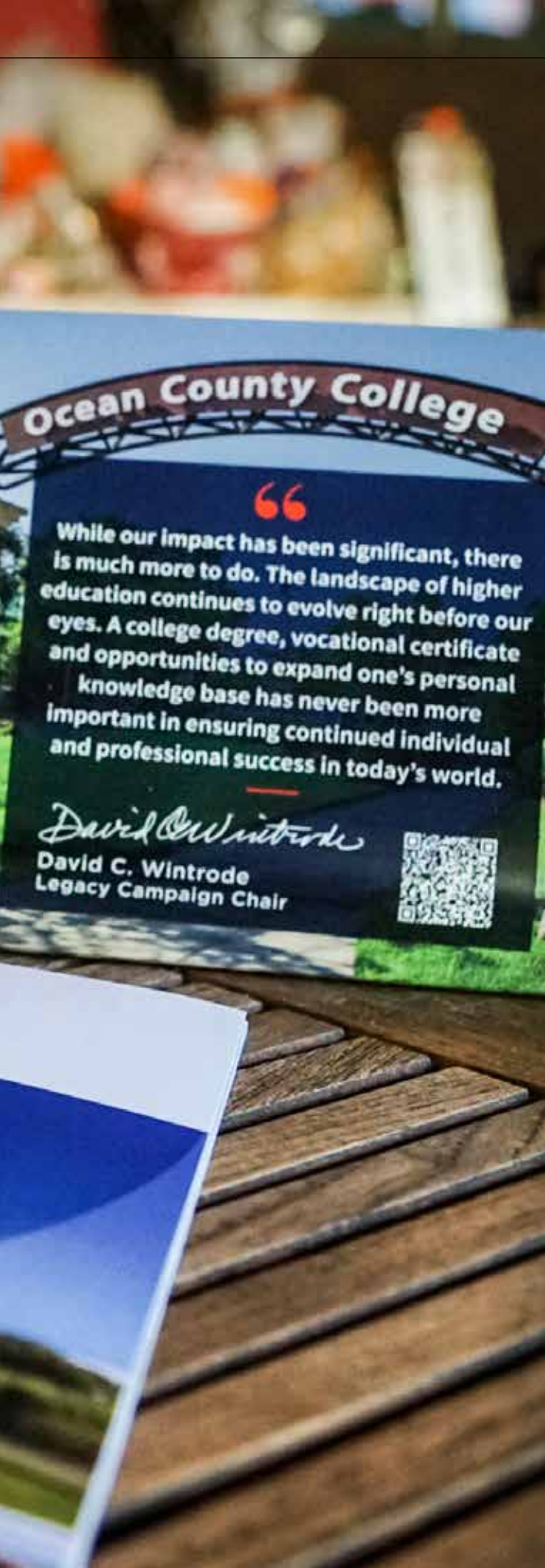
Through the generosity of our donors, the Foundation has provided scholarship awards for thousands of deserving students, including new and returning students, JumpStart and Academy students, and students in certificate programs offered through OCC's Workforce and Professional Education. The Foundation currently awards over \$1 million in scholarships and grants annually.

Furthermore, the Foundation supports the College by providing opportunities not typically accessible to community college students, such as the Global Travel Experience, as well as funding for programs that enhance the lives of our entire community, including the Helping Hands Food Pantry, Veterans Services, the Grunin Center for the Arts, the Novins Planetarium, the Citta Sailing Center, Viking Athletics and many other college and student-led initiatives.

Some of the Foundation's most impactful successes include:

- More than \$500,000 is awarded annually in scholarships and special grant support to deserving OCC students to help alleviate the burden of tuition.
- Over \$300,000 is provided each academic year to support campus programs and to further Foundation and institution initiatives, such as the Global Travel Experience, Arts on Campus, the Visiting Writer Series, and the Blauvelt Speaker Series.
- The Foundation actively assists the Helping Hands Food Pantry to address food insecurity among our OCC students and community.
- The Student Emergency Relief Fund (SERF), supported in part by the Citta Fund, was established to provide financial assistance to students so they can remain in school in the event of financial emergencies.
- The lives of over 31,000 students and community members are touched through program support of OCC initiatives each year.

Every donation to the OCC Foundation supports not only the academic endeavors of our students and the richness of their experiences at OCC, but also the new initiatives, new growth, and new opportunities that all Ocean County students deserve.



TEE off for SCHOLAR



The Ocean County College Foundation held its 21st Annual Golf Classic at the Pine Barrens Golf Club in Jackson on October 11, 2022. Players enjoyed a beautiful and relaxing day out on the green while supporting the students of Ocean County College.

The annual outing, always a popular event, plays a major role in the Foundation's fundraising efforts to make higher education more accessible to Ocean County residents. Net proceeds from the event will support Ocean County College with

21ST ANNUAL
GOLF CLASSIC IS A HIT

**RAISING
OVER
\$63,000**

scholarships, essential services, and special programs that expand educational opportunities for students. By providing

students with these opportunities, the Foundation and its supporters open a new world of possibilities for them, paving the way for their future success.

The day was sunny and warm as the golfers gathered for this year's festivities, which featured putting contests and a "Beat the OCC Student" competition in addition to the main event. An awards ceremony and cocktail reception followed the tournament, which raised more than \$63,000 to benefit the students of Ocean County. The Ocean County College Foundation

RSHIPS

SAVE THE DATE!

BLAUVELT SPEAKER SERIES



PRESENTED BY

OCEAN
COUNTY COLLEGE
FOUNDATION



MIA HAMM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8
6:00 p.m. – IN PERSON

With two World Championships, two Olympic Gold Medals and near unparalleled success as a marketing icon, Mia Hamm has served as an outspoken advocate for Title IX and gender equality across sporting lines.

MICHAEL BESCHLOSS

TUESDAY, APRIL 25
6:30 p.m. – IN PERSON

Join us for a presentation by an award-winning presidential historian for NBC News, bestselling author of ten books, and contributor to the PBS NewsHour and the New York Times



ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP CELEBRATION

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

extended its appreciation to all of the event's generous sponsors, both corporate and individual, for supporting the outing and ensuring that deserving OCC students will continue to receive the scholarship dollars they need to earn a college education.

"We are truly grateful for the support and generosity of all of our sponsors and golfers. Their generosity and participation in this event help make a difference in our students' lives," said Michael B. York, chair of the Foundation's Annual Golf Outing. "Thank you for helping us continue our mission."

EPHRAT ASHERIE: UNDERScoreD

The Grunin Center at Ocean County College has been awarded a grant from the Association of Performing Arts Professionals to support artists in the presenting and touring fields. The purpose of the ArtsForward grant program is to support safe and equitable reopening and recovery efforts and to fuel collaborations between presenters and performing artists.

The grant enabled the College to collaborate with Ephrat Asherie Dance on several activities in support of the company's original dance theater piece, *UnderScored*. The collaboration included a two-week residency at the Jay and Linda Grunin Center, the first in June and the second in October; educational and intergenerational workshops at the OCVTS Grunin Performing Arts Academy and the Toms River North High School Dance Academy; and several public performances, culminating in a spectacular evening performance of *UnderScored* on Friday, October 21 on the Grunin Center's Main Stage.

Ephrat Asherie Dance is a company rooted in street and social dances, according to founder, choreographer and artistic director Ephrat Asherie. Dedicated to revealing the inherent complexities of these forms, the company explores the narrative qualities of various styles, including breaking, hip-hop, and house, as a means to tell stories, develop innovative imagery, and find new modes of expression.

The company evolved as a collaboration of like-minded artists sharing a desire to tell stories through dance. Asherie, a 2016 Bessie Award winner for innovative achievement in

dance, has been immersed in New York City's underground dance scene for more than two decades, and credits that community's enormous influence on her as an artist.

The company's newest work, *UnderScored*, is a celebration of those connections, an exhilarating journey through the ever-changing physical landscape of New York City's underground dance community. Created and performed by members of the company along with special guest artists from New York City's underground scene, the show is inspired by the intergenerational memories of club dancers.

"*UnderScored* is a piece that's really near and dear to my heart," Asherie said. "It's really reflecting the intergenerational conversations that already occur very naturally on dance floors in the underground scene."

With the world battling a pandemic, the project took on even greater importance, fueled by a sense of urgency to tell the story of the community that had such an impact on modern dance. The goal, Asherie explained, was "to rejoice and celebrate and share our stories ... with

the elders and the people that are really responsible for why we are here as dancers."

UnderScored is a recipient of a National Performance Network Creation and Development Fund and is commissioned by Works and Process at the Guggenheim Museum. For more information about programs at the Grunin Center, visit www.grunincenter.org

"...reflecting the intergenerational conversations... on dance floors in the underground scene."

- Ephrat "Bounce" Asherie,
artistic director of ephrat asherie dance



ARTS | ENTERTAINMENT | EXPLORATION
EXPERIENCE OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE!

Concerts • Theater • Jazz • Dance • Planetarium • Family Shows



**POP-UP
 CONCERTS**

The Grunin Center organized two pop-up concerts in the Student Center this fall. Both events were free and open to the campus community.

String quartet Brooklyn Rider surprised students, faculty and staff alike with a pop-up lunchtime concert in the Larson Student Center on September 29. The dynamic quartet, known for its eclectic classical and new age music arrangements, performed a lively 30-minute set in advance of their scheduled performance at the Grunin Center that evening.

In November, Matt and Eryn O'Ree of the Matt O'Ree Band gave a pop-up performance in the Student Center just hours before the band's 7 p.m. concert in the Gia Maione Prima Theatre, to celebrate the release of their seventh album, *Hand in Glove*. The event was made possible through the support of the Gia Maione Prima Foundation.

UPCOMING EVENTS - visit: www.grunincenter.org



**Jazz at
 Lincoln
 Center**
March 10
8 p.m.



**Red Hot
 Chilli Pipers**
March 12
7 p.m.



**The
 Tamburitzans**
April 1
7 p.m.



**Paula
 Poundstone**
April 13
7 p.m.



**Nibmus
 Dance**
 Falling Sky
April 21
7 p.m.



**Dayna
 Kurtz**
May 20
8 p.m.



Ephrat Asherie dance photos: Robert Altman and Ibarra Studio



BASEBALL GOES BANANAS!

Pro player Matt Malatesta revisits his Viking roots

Like many high school students in Ocean County, Matt Malatesta knew that enrolling at Ocean County College could be the first step toward a successful future. But he never could have predicted the way his career was about to go.

“I’m doing a lot of dancing,” he said with a laugh. “I was not a big dancer, but now I am.”

Malatesta, a 2015 graduate of Southern Regional High School who played varsity baseball at OCC, returned to Ocean County College for a visit this fall and sat down with Head Coach Ed McRae and Executive Director of Athletics Ilene Cohen to talk about his new career – as a pitcher for the Savannah Bananas.

“It’s really rewarding,” Malatesta said. “It’s about being able to share the love of the game in another way.”

WHAT’S IN A NAME

Malatesta came to Ocean County College in 2016 and quickly made a name for himself as a player for Vikings Baseball. He threw a no-hitter for OCC in his sophomore year, was named NJCAA Pitcher of the Week, and was ranked #1 after the regional championship.

“I loved everything about Ocean County,” he said. “This is where it all started.”

LOVE OF THE GAME

If you’re never heard of the Savannah Bananas, it’s certainly not for the team’s lack of trying. With their eccentric rules, over-the-top costumes and choreographed field routines, their antics have made headlines and captivated fans all over the world. Calling themselves “The Greatest Show in Sports,” the team has reimagined the professional baseball experience. And although it’s impossible to describe a Banana Ball game in mere words, the mission of the team is abundantly clear: Make Baseball Fun.



GOING BANANAS

From OCC he transferred to University of South Carolina-Beaufort, graduating in 2021, and with encouragement from his coach at USCB, he went down to play in summer collegiate league, where players go to get scouted. Shortly afterward, he got a call from the Savannah Bananas and was asked to pitch for their collegiate team in the Coastal Plains League. He did well, and the team asked him to stay.




ILENE COHEN INDUCTED TO UNION H.S. HALL OF FAME

Ocean County College Executive Director of Athletics Ilene Cohen was inducted into Union High School’s Athletic Hall of Fame during a dinner ceremony at Galloping Hill Caterers in Union, NJ.

Cohen was all-county in both field hockey and softball during her high school career, and earning first-team all-state honors in her senior year before graduating and moving on to Trenton State College (now The College of New Jersey). She earned NCAA D-III All-American and NJAC first-team honors as part of the national championship-winning Lions softball team in 1987. Coach Cohen was inducted into TCNJ’s Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

In addition to lauding Cohen’s remarkable success in her athletic and coaching career, UHS also acknowledged her history of service to the community, demonstrated by awards such as the National Girls & Women in Sports’ Woman of the Year, Garden State Award from the Collegiate Athletic Administrators of New Jersey (CAANJ), and the Equal Opportunity Fund award at Ocean County College in recognition of her role as a mentor and service to students in need.

Congratulations to Coach Cohen for this well-deserved recognition!



One thing that attracted Malatesta to the Savannah Bananas is the team's legendary commitment to their Fan First attitude. "The goal is to entertain, always," he said. "It's not about the player – it's about the whole show. If you make the fans smile, even just one person, you've done your job."

But that's not to say the job is easy. "Playing for the Bananas is actually like having two jobs," he said. Although the performances are fully scripted, rehearsed, and a media crew is in the dugout to direct, the actual baseball game is entirely real. "Once the game starts, you flip the switch. You were performing – now it's time to play." And despite the circus-like atmosphere, the team is competitive, and plays to win.

ONCE A VIKING, ALWAYS A VIKING

Malatesta is quick to credit Ocean County College, and especially his coaches, for giving him a strong foundational experience, encouraging him to enjoy the game and to be the best player he can be.

"They have a great coaching staff here," he said. "They're incredible. It all started with them. This was my first real experience in the college baseball world, and they made it fun to play. I always had a good time. And they always had our best interests in mind."

While baseball was definitely a high point of his college experience at OCC, Malatesta also learned a lot along the way about setting priorities, working hard, and the discipline required to do well—all things that helped him be successful once he moved on. "USCB wanted us to be the best," he said. "OCC definitely set me up to succeed and complete a four-year degree. And I got really comfortable making new friends. That helped me a lot."

His former coaches couldn't be prouder of Matt's success. "It's really exciting to see my kids do well," McRae said. "It's like family checking in with me."

"Thank you for everything that you have done," Matt said. "It's been an incredible ride. I couldn't have done it without you."

“OCC definitely set me up to succeed and complete a four-year degree.”

- Matt Malatesta

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



State of the Bay Conference

The Barnegat Bay Partnership hosted its State of the Bay conference, *Planning for a Future Barnegat Bay*, on September 29, 2022 in the Gateway Building at Ocean County College. The event, which was free and open to the public, was also presented virtually for those who wished to attend remotely.

Topics of discussion at the conference centered on reviewing the current conditions of the bay and examining the steps being taken to improve them. Through reports from BBP member scientists and presentations from expert speakers, attendees of the conference learned how current and future research and restoration activities can help reach the BBP's ecosystem-based targets for protecting and restoring the bay and its watershed. Eight holistic ecosystem targets were identified during the development of the BBP's 2021 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).

Dr. Neil Ganju

Dr. Neil Ganju from the U.S. Geological Survey spoke about what the future might hold for Barnegat Bay shorelines and salt marshes.

Virginia Rettig and Kimberley McKenna

Virginia Rettig, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Kimberley McKenna from Stockton University's Coastal Research Center presented *Bay Islands Initiative: Restoring Lost Habitat in the Face of a Changing Environment*.

Dr. Christine Thompson

Stockton University's Dr. Christine Thompson discussed lessons learned from the Tuckerton Reef in her presentation, *Barnegat Bay Oyster Restoration: Six Years of Successes and Challenges*.

Dr. Elizabeth Lacey

Dr. Elizabeth Lacey, also from Stockton University, presented *Seagrasses of Barnegat Bay: Past, Present and Future*.

W. Scott Douglas

W. Scott Douglas from NJ Department of Transportation's Office of Maritime Resources presented *A Regional Sediment Management Plan for the Atlantic Coastal Zone*.

Barnegat Bay Partnership

The State of the Bay Conference is held in conjunction with the release of the BBP's State of the Bay report. The report evaluates current environmental conditions of the bay and its watershed and compares those conditions with the ecosystem-based targets identified in the CCMP. For more information about the State of the Bay Conference, or to obtain a copy of the latest State of the Bay Report, visit the BBP at www.barnegatbaypartnership.org.

The Barnegat Bay Partnership is a partnership of federal, state, municipal, academic, business and private organizations working to restore and enhance the Barnegat Bay ecosystem. The partnership is one of 28 National Estuary Programs throughout the United States whose mission is to improve the environmental health of nationally significant estuaries.

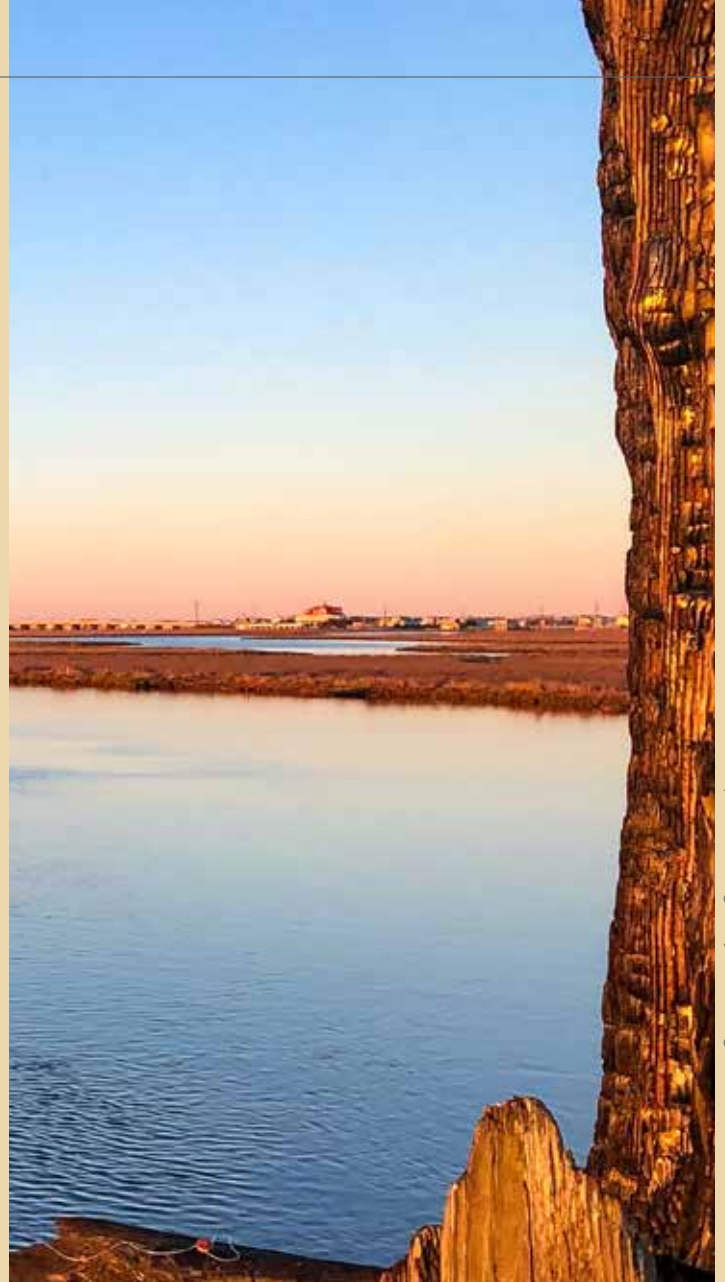


photo: Barnegat Bay - "The Bridge To Nowhere" ©Michael Leon



photo: Barnegat Bay - Little Egg Harbor Estuary ©Michael Leon

lights - camera

ACTIC

The Ocean County College TV studio has been providing educational and entertaining programs and support for campus services and staff for more than 15 years. But you don't need to search the wayback machine to learn more about Ocean TV-20—all you need to do is drop by the modern, fully-equipped studio, located in Building #6, and say hello to the talented staff, led by TV Production Director Mary Granahan '02.

The building, formerly a campus lecture hall houses a recording studio, control rooms, and production and teaching facilities designed to enable students to participate in all phases of the production process. The studio has been updated over the years with state-of-the-art production capabilities, and provides cutting edge educational experiences for students using the same equipment found in professional studios.

Granahan took the reins in June after the retirement of long-time director Ralph Bertini, who led the studio for nearly two decades. She is grateful to him for his years of dedication to Ocean TV-20 and for trusting his legacy in her hands.

"Ralph worked really hard getting his team in place, getting the equipment updated, and ensuring that it was a smooth transition," she said. "It showed how much he really cared about the studio."

Ocean TV-20 serves as a vital partner to the OCC community, and its influence can be seen all over campus: supporting academic programs, promoting the College's services and special events, and partnering with students from the Digital Mass Media program and Vikings Video club to create

engaging projects and sponsor educational opportunities with industry professionals.

The studio has been a strong and committed partner of the College's veteran services, working with staff to produce the *Best for Vets* video, highlighting the benefits and services available to veterans at the College, promoting the grand opening of OCC's Veterans and Military Resource Center, and developing the original program, *Veterans' Voices*, to provide a platform for local and community organizations that provide advocacy for New Jersey veterans.

The studio collaborates with departments all across the campus to create original programs that serve the community. *A Slice of Student Life*, a student-oriented program highlighting the latest topics on campus, was the result of a collaboration with the video club and the office of Student Life. The studio worked with Campus Security to produce an Emergency Awareness and Response video, which provided valuable information about responding to an active shooter situation. Last summer, in collaboration with the Grunin Center and the Ocean County Cultural and Heritage Commission, the studio held a virtual *Salute to Ocean County*, honoring outstanding cultural organizations, exceptional local artists, historians, preservationists, educators, and government leaders.

The TV studio is also a strong supporter of the College's community service activities. Through hands-on workshops, local high school students can experience all aspects of TV production and broadcast operations and prepare for a potential career in the industry. These programs also help to

showcase OCC as a first-choice option for an education in Television Production and Digital Mass Media. The studio also collaborates with local media and community organizations to develop programming of relevance to the broader Ocean County community. During the pandemic, these services were more in demand than ever as the studio provided vital support for major campus events that were forced to go virtual.

Going forward, Granahan believes that keeping things modern and innovative will be the key to the continued success of Ocean TV-20. Audience expectations have changed dramatically in recent years—not only in technology, but in content as well. How will we engage younger audiences and keep viewers engaged?

"Building good programming is the most important thing we can do," she said. "Ultimately, why are we here? We're here for the students. We will keep looking for new ideas and developing new projects that provide the quality programming they deserve."



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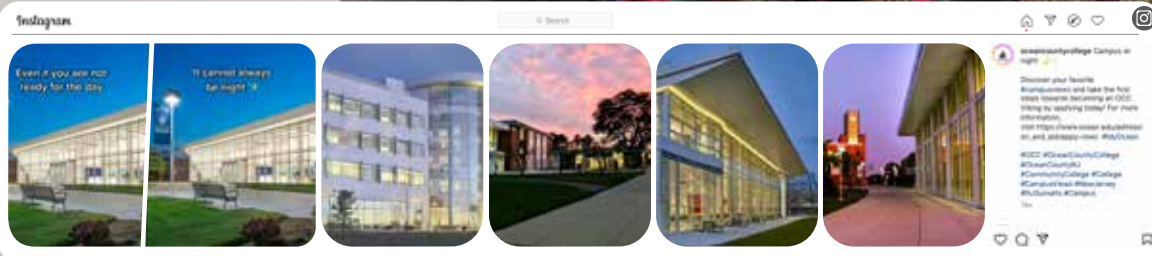
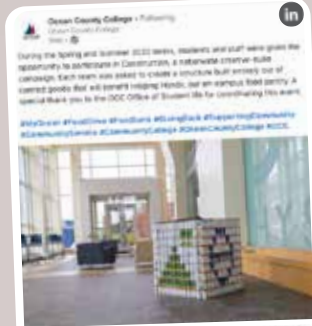




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