



EYE ON ESSEX

FEBRUARY 2011

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE

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ALUMNA JOINS ECC BOARD OF TRUSTEES



PUTTING OUR STUDENTS FIRST

Here at Essex County College, we anxiously await Mother Nature to visit Essex County and to bring Spring with her! There's also another arrival that we are anxiously awaiting — our Middle States Accreditation visit, scheduled from April 3 through April 6. We established a well-suited theme for this visit—**Essex County College: Putting Students First.**

This newsletter is dedicated to our students and former students, with stories about their successes...from our newest Board member, to our plans to ensure student success. There's also an article that overviews our Middle States visit.

We celebrate our students' achievements within this newsletter and every day here at the College.

We hope you will enjoy reading about their successes, and perhaps, you will consider making a Springtime visit to campus as well.



When Elizabeth Santiago graduated with Honors from ECC last May it did not mark the end of her time at Essex. Now a junior at Montclair

State University, Elizabeth is also student representative to the college's Board of Trustees.

"ECC really helped me develop academically, so this is a great way for me to give back to my alma mater," said Elizabeth.

Elizabeth sits on the dais with the 10 board members and

represents student interests and concerns as they arise. As per State mandate, she is a non-voting student representative.

"Having a student representative on the Board adds additional breadth of perspective to the Board's discussions, and also demonstrates the level of importance that the Board placed to students, alumni and what is important to them," said Reverend Reginald Jackson, Chair, ECC Board of Trustees.

Elizabeth will have a wide perspective, having attended classes at both the main Newark and West Essex campuses as well as the Ironbound center.

While attending Essex, she was vice president of the Latino Student Union and a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She was also the recipient of the college's Alumni Association Scholarship and the Puerto Rican Heritage Scholarship.

A resident of Newark, Ms. Santiago earned an A.A. in Early Childhood Education and is now majoring in Family and Child Studies with a concentration in preschool to grade three. A member of Montclair's Kappa Omicron Nu National Honor Society, she is on line to graduate in May of 2012.

In addition to her studies, she works as a teacher assistant in Orange.

ECC CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The college celebrated Black History Month throughout February with an wide array of educational and cultural programs at the main Newark and West Essex campuses. Many of the programs were sponsored by the Africana Institute.

"This was an opportunity to feature programs highlighting the contributions of African culture in history and society in general," said Institute Director, Dr. Akil Khalfani.

The month began with the annual opening ceremony held in the Africana Institute on February 3. Students listened to Lincoln University History Professor Zizwe Poe discuss the life of Kwame Nkrumah, first presi-

dent of Ghana, and heard the debate "Meeting of the Minds: A Discussion Between Black Youth and Elders."

For the art-lovers, The Gallery featured "Draped: A Display of African Fabric Art." The beautiful and colorful display of intricate fabrics were on loan from college personnel and community members.

"We had an outstanding mix of educational programs geared toward our diverse student population and general community," said ECC College President Edythe Abdullah. "And, the issues discussed and included were not purely celebratory in

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WALK THE WALK: An ECC student walks on stage to perform in the "Exposition of African Culture" event held on February 23 in Morton A. Siegler Hall.

ECC STUDENTS IN THE NEWS:

ECC STUDENT WARMS UP TO INTERNSHIP

An Essex County College student interning with New Community Corporation made a real difference in the lives of the residents of NCC's Extended Care Center over the holidays. Sharonda Alexander of Irvington, working with a fellow intern, led a project that warmed heart and body at a critical time.

Gift bags containing the blankets, cards and candy canes were then distributed by the two interns with the aid of members from the High Rollaz Jr./Teen division.

The gifts were part of a blanket drive spearheaded by ECC student Sharonda Alex-

ander. President of the school's Student Support Mentoring Club, Sharonda organized the drive with the help of club members and members from an outside recreational organization, High Rollaz SUV Club.

"The blanket drive was such a huge success," Ms. Alexander said. "The residents had such big smiles after seeing the children and the love they received from people they didn't even know."

There were even excess blankets that were donated to children at Harmony House, NCC's transitional housing facility.

*By Sharonda Alexander
Article reprinted with permission from
New Community Corporation*



GIFTS FOR THE TROOPS: Recruits from ECC's Police Academy collected food, toiletries, and recreational items for an U.S. Army platoon stationed in Afghanistan. The items were collected in January and February. The drive, which showed support to our armed forces, served as a class community service project. The class pictured above will graduate from ECCPA on March 15 after 22 weeks of training.

MIDDLE STATES VISIT ON HORIZON

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education team who are evaluating ECC to reaffirm its accreditation, will visit the campus April 3-6.

The 8-member team, plus an associate member, is composed of regional college educators. Team members will visit all areas of the college and conduct interviews with administrators, faculty, staff and students before issuing its report.

Essex prepared a detailed self-study, analyzing 14 standards set by Middle States that are vital to the ongoing

process of improving college services to students and the community. The 14 standards are:

- Standard 1: **Mission & Goals**
- Standard 2: **Planning, Resource Allocation & Institutional Renewal**
- Standard 3: **Institutional Resources**
- Standard 4: **Leadership and Governance**
- Standard 5: **Administration**
- Standard 6: **Integrity**
- Standard 7: **Institutional Assessment**

- Standard 8: **Student Admissions & Retention**
- Standard 9: **Student Support Services**
- Standard 10: **Faculty**
- Standard 11: **Educational Offerings**
- Standard 12: **General Education**
- Standard 13: **Related Educational Activities**
- Standard 14: **Assessment of Student Learning**

ECC was reaccruited for 10 years in 2001, and was reaffirmed in 2006 during a periodic review report.

Essex County College, an open access community college dedicated to academic excellence, serves the dynamic needs of diverse constituencies through comprehensive educational programs and services.

*- The Mission of
Essex County College*

KEEPING IN TOUCH: ECC RECONNECT ON FACEBOOK

The college's Alumni Association Facebook page continues to grow in popularity since being launched late last year.

Currently, the page has over 30 "friends" who provide

status updates an average of 50 times each day.

Alumni Advisor Lola Akiwowo said the page helped generate awareness for the annual Angel Tree Gift program in December, as well as spread-

ing the news about upcoming activities and events.

"Having a Facebook page promotes the objectives of the Alumni Association while bringing more traffic to the college website," said Rev.

Akiwowo, Associate Director of Development.

The Facebook page also allows faculty, staff and current students apprised of alumni activities and promote the college community to outside audiences.

IN HONOR OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Essex County College participated in off-campus and on-campus events that celebrated the life and philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

In South Orange, ECC President Edythe Abdullah delivered the keynote address at the 41st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration held January 9 at the South Orange Middle School.

This year's theme was "Education: Equity and Expectations." ECC trustee Alfred

Bundy received the "Beloved Community" Award at the celebration. The event was co-sponsored by the South Orange Civic Organization and the South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race.

On campus, the College's Africana Institute hosted a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King at the College's Africana Institute on January 13.

Dr. Antoinette Ellis-William, professor of Women and Gender Studies at New Jersey City University and director of the University's Lee Hagan Africana Studies Center, was the keynote speaker.

Also in memory of Reverend King, ECC's West Essex campus aired the documentary film *Martin Luther King* on January 18.



BELOVED IN THEIR COMMUNITY: ECC Trustee Alfred Bundy (far right) is flanked by fellow "Beloved Community" Award recipient, Margaret Prentice (far left) and presented Assemblywoman Mila Jasey (middle) at the South Orange Civic Center's 41st Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration held on January 9, 2011 at the South Orange Middle School.

ECC FURTHERS STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The Faculty Technology Resource Center (FTRC) continues to look for innovative ways to support faculty in the classroom. Its latest output is two new utilities — Online Course Withdrawal and Early Alert — designed to help professors meet the changing academic needs of their students.

With the Early Alert utility, students and counselors can submit course withdrawal requests online, providing better student service and eliminating long line waits. The utility also allows faculty to view the request and provides enough time for academic intervention or counseling, with the ability to can-

cel pending requests after dialoguing with students and when students have the opportunity to succeed in the course.

"The Early Alert utility allows faculty to better communicate with students regarding academic issues in an ongoing manner," said Dean Mohamed Seddiki, who oversees the Center.

The support can range from advising students to concentrate more on a specific area of the course, to recommending tutoring help at The

Learning Center. The intended outcome is to enhance dialogue between students and their instructors in an efficient and ongoing manner to help increase students' academic success.

The FTRC, located in the King Library at the main Newark campus, was designed by the college's Information Technology (IT) department and opened last October. It was created to support faculty in their effort to integrate instructional technologies into teaching and learning for academic success.

"These utilities allow faculty to better communicate with students regarding academic issues in an ongoing and efficient manner."

- Dean Mohamed Seddiki, Chief Technology Officer

ECC POLICE ACADEMY EXPANDS SCOPE TO INCLUDE FIREFIGHTING COURSES

Essex is one of only two counties in the state without a fire training facility. But thanks to the Essex County College Police Academy, that has just changed.

The Academy, in Cedar Grove, launched this spring a series of fire service courses for both veterans looking to hone their skills and new recruits seeking to become certified firefighters. As with the highly successful ECC

Police Academy, the firefighters can also take advantage of any academic classes the college offers.

West Orange Fire Chief Peter Smeraldo, president of the Essex County Fire Chiefs Association, noted that the county's 20 fire departments respond to more than 40,000 calls annually. "We've been looking for a

local fire academy for years and the momentum here has been growing. Now, with help from Essex County College, we're seeing results."

For additional information on the program, go to www.essex.edu/pacademy/ or call (973) 877-4350 to gain information about all the Academy's programs.





ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE

WE ARE ESSEX:
CHANGING LIVES. BUILDING FUTURES.

EYE ON ESSEX

A publication of Essex County College

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nature, we addressed some tough topics, too.”

February 7 marked National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, and ECC’s Student Life & Activities Office, in conjunction with UMDNJ, participated by offering HIV testing. Sixty-two students were tested.

ECC Professor Robert C. Spellman spent February 16 at the West Essex campus with a visual presentation. The presentation focused on contributions of Black Nubian Egyptians to world civilization and of America as a culturally pluralistic society. The Feb. 23 program, “An Exposition of African Culture” featuring costumed dancers, was co-sponsored by the African Student Association.

Finally, both campuses hosted an eight-hour marathon of the classic 1977 mini-series based on Alex Haley’s book, *Roots*.

ECC EVENTS MARCH 2011

All programs are free and open to the public. Events are held at the Newark campus, unless noted:

- March 17 WISE Women’s Center: Domestic Violence Empowerment Day, J. Harry Smith Hall, 8:30 AM–2:30 PM
- March 18 Job Fair & Resource Event presented by St. Matthew’s AME Church & NJ Dept. of Labor & Work force Development, 2nd floor, 8:30 AM–2 PM
- March 22 Women’s History Month Recognition Celebration 2nd Floor, 4 PM–8 PM
- March 22 Basic Course for County Corrections Officer Graduation, ECC Police Academy, 7 PM

(More events are listed on the “EVENTS” section on our website at essex.edu)

WHO WILL BE THE NEXT ECC JANET MAY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT?



MAY DAY HOORAY! 2010 WEC Janet May Memorial Scholarship Recipient Erica Gramp-Cerutti of Montclair during ECC’s Commencement in May 2010.

Each spring, the West Essex Campus Advisory Board members award the Janet May Memorial Scholarship to students with at least a \$500 award. Here’s an update on last year’s scholarship recipients:

Erica Gramp-Cerutti of Montclair transferred to New Jersey City University on a full tuition Presidential Scholarship, where she is majoring in Art Therapy. She has spearheaded the effort to form an Art Therapy Association.

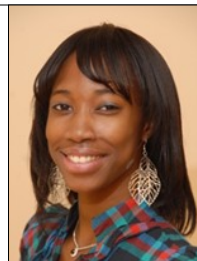
Erica was nominated to the National Society for Leadership and Success, all while raising her family and maintaining the highest academic standards.

Jeana Largin of Bloomfield was the 2010 Class Salutatorian. After graduation, she transferred to Bloomfield College, where she maintained her 4.0 GPA while completing a double major in Mathematics and Secondary Education. Jeana’s aspirations include earning a Master’s degree at Columbia University.

Charlene Sasso of West Caldwell has rejoined the work

MORE KUDOS FOR ECC’S TRACK TEAM

Sophomore Kanika Beckles led ECC’s women’s indoor track and field team to a 5th place finish, out of 23 teams, at the Terrapin Indoor Invitational at the University of Maryland in January. The men’s team placed 9th out of 28 teams.



ECC’s first place finishers include Beckles in the 400 meters; Adrian Smallwood in the 600 meters; and Dembele Moussa in the 60-meter hurdles.

Nine members of the ECC Wolverines track team will compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association indoor track and field championships in Texas in early March.

force before continuing her education. She works as Recruiter for Steno-Tech in Fairfield. Her present position makes use of her Associate’s degree as well as her previous experience as a legal stenographer. Charlene also earned her substitute teacher certification.

“Our low student-to-teacher” ratio allows us to provide personalized attention to our students,” said Dr. Elvy M. Vieira, Associate Dean, West Essex campus. “What’s also nice is we enjoy staying in touch after graduation, too, to see where life takes them.”

The Janet May Memorial Scholarship is awarded annually to

“Our low student-to-teacher ratio allows us to provide personalized attention to students. And, we enjoy staying in touch after graduation, too.”

- Dr. Elvy M. Vieira,
Associate Dean, West Essex Campus

graduating students who attended the West Essex Campus and who have the highest cumulative grade point average. The 2011 award recipients will be announced in May.